

Planning Policy & Economic Development Service  
Test Valley Borough Council  
Beech Hurst  
Weyhill Road  
Andover  
SP10 3AJ

By email only

2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024

Our Ref: IJ/21014  
Your Ref:

Dear Sir / Madam

### Representations to the Test Valley Draft Local Plan 2040 Regulation 18 – Stage 2 Consultation

I write on behalf of my client, Belfield Homes (Ampfield) Ltd to submit representations to the Test Valley Draft Local Plan 2040 Regulation 18 – Stage 2 consultation document and associated evidence.

These representations seek to object to the overall spatial strategy for the delivery of housing in Southern Test Valley, principally through too much reliance being placed on housing delivery at Land South of Ganger Farm and Land at Velmore Farm, Valley Park (through draft Policies SS1, SA4 and SA6), the policies failing to adequately assess development constraints to propose sufficient housing land to meet the Borough's needs, the failure to demonstrate a consistent supply over the Plan period and the lack of a consistent and equitable site assessment process in the Sustainability Appraisal to consider the suitability of sites. Objection is also raised to Policy 8 (SA8) on account of the Land at Upton Lane being an unsuitable location for residential development.

In this regard, we consider the draft Plan is at risk of being found unsound under the relevant tests, as set out at Paragraph 35 of the NPPF (December 2023):

- 'a) Positively prepared – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;*
- b) Justified – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;*
- c) Effective – 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; and*
- d) Consistent with national policy – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant.'*

In order to help improve the soundness of the draft Plan, in particular through boosting the supply of housing both in terms of numbers and phasing we strongly encourage the Council to review the spatial strategy and site selection process and include the **Land at Redburn Farm, Ampfield** (SHELAA Ref. 93) as a draft allocation for

between 40 and 70 new homes, with associated open space. Please find enclosed with this letter the *Redburn Farm Vision Statement* which provides additional details of the site, surroundings, a rationale for development, a concept layout and benefits of a mixed residential development for c. 40 new homes.

This site is in a highly sustainable location, has been assessed in the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment January 2024 (SHELAA) as an achievable site that could commence in 5 years and has no significant development constraints. The site is within the control of our client and is immediately available, achievable and deliverable for residential development, with potential to be extended to deliver a large area of SANG to serve both its own needs and that of other developments if required.

### **Objection – Spatial Strategy Policy 1 (SS1): Settlement Hierarchy**

The overarching aims of draft Policy SS1 are supported, which sets out the *'presumption in favour of sustainable development'*, in accordance with the aims of the NPPF. Furthermore, the recognition of Ampfield as a 'Tier 3' settlement, and therefore a sustainable settlement in Southern Test Valley is also supported, appreciating its range of local services and facilities and the need for some modest growth to support the village. This approach is consistent with Paragraph 83 of the NPPF, which states,

*'83. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.'*

It is considered however that there is a significant deficiency in Policy SS1, in that development at Velmore Farm, Valley Park forms a major part of the Council's housing delivery strategy in Southern Test Valley (draft Policy SS6), yet there is a lack of consideration/reference to justify why there is not a mix of sites suitable for residential development and in sustainable locations that we consider would better help meet the Borough's housing land supply requirement, in particular in the early years of the Plan period and without the risk of delayed delivery often experienced on larger urban extensions.

Paragraph 69 of the NPPF requires the Council to identify through its strategic planning policies a sufficient supply and mix of housing sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability. It also states,

*'Planning policies should identify a supply of:*

- a) specific, deliverable sites for five years following the intended date of adoption; and*
- b) specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for the subsequent years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the remaining plan period.'*

This is a significant omission and consequently this policy and the whole spatial strategy for Southern Test Valley has not been appropriately justified. The draft Plan is therefore inconsistent with the tests set out at Paragraph 35 of the NPPF and at risk of being found unsound.



## Objection – Policy 6 (SS6): Meeting the Housing Requirement

### Overall Strategy in Southern Test Valley

We object to this policy as it fails to allocate the Land at Redburn Farm, Ampfield for between 40 and 70 dwellings and consequently to ensure a sufficient supply and mix of sites to meet the Borough's housing requirement and to direct development to the most sustainable locations.

The Council has sought to outline an overall housing strategy for the southern housing market area that heavily relies on the delivery of two large strategic allocations at Velmore Farm, Valley Park and South of Ganger Farm, Romsey rather than to propose a range of sizes of housing allocation to ensure a continuity of housing supply over the Plan period, including in the first five years. The plan proposes the following sites:

- Land South of Ganger Farm, East Romsey – 340 dwellings
- Land South of the Bypass, South Romsey – 110 dwellings
- Land at Velmore Farm, Valley Park – 1,070 dwellings
- Land at King Edwards Park, Chandlers Ford – 44 C2 units dwellings
- Land at Upton Lane – Approximately 80 dwellings

The Plan therefore relies on two sites (of 340 and 1,070 dwellings) to deliver more than 85% of the total number of draft site allocation dwellings in Southern Test Valley, with the Land at Velmore Farm accounting for the vast majority.

It is well established through experience of delivery in this Borough and elsewhere that there are significant time delays involved in delivering large strategic sites and securing residential occupations to help meet local housing needs (including affordable housing need). These delays are caused initially through planning timescales – for example community consultation, masterplanning, pre-application discussions, outline planning application, reserved matters consent and the discharge of planning conditions. These timescales are often further exacerbated through discussions / negotiations required between landowners, statutory consultees and developers to acquire sites, additional land and / or additional consents to enable a start on site with often significant levels of up-front infrastructure required on large sites before housing development can commence.

The likely delays caused through an over-reliance on large strategic sites is demonstrated by reference in the SHELAA. The SHELAA identifies the Land at Velmore Farm, which accounts for over 65% of dwellings on the draft site allocations, as delivering all of its proposed 1,070 dwellings in the latter part of the Plan period. Whilst the Land South of Ganger Farm is suggested as possibly delivering housing in the short term, the likelihood of a single developer delivering 80 dwellings in years 3, 4 and 5 has to be questioned. It is also interesting to note that the reference is made in the SHELAA to both the draft allocations being unlikely to commence in 5 years.

It is considered that a strategy that relies to such an extent on just two large strategic site is likely to result in delays to housing delivery and a 'back loading' of delivery into the latter stages of the Plan period. Furthermore, such a strategy only requires a delay/non-delivery to these sites to cause significant issues with the Plan's overall strategy to meet housing needs and maintain a deliverable housing land supply. At present it is considered that this Policy is unsound as it is not sufficiently justified to meet the tests set out in the NPPF, due to its over reliance on two large housing sites that can affect the maintaining of a continuous housing supply throughout the Plan period in the most sustainable locations. It is considered that an alternative strategy to allocate smaller housing sites, dispersed amongst the Tier 1, 2 and 3 settlements to bolster and help maintain a supply of deliverable

housing sites, especially in the shorter term would be a more sustainable strategy and improve consistency with the NPPF.

#### **Land at Redburn Farm, Ampfield (SHELAA Ref. 93)**

The site is situated immediately adjacent to the Settlement Boundary of Ampfield, which is a Tier 3 sustainable settlement in Southern Test Valley. The site is well located in terms of access to the primary school, village hall, bus services to Romsey and Winchester, public house, public open space, and place of worship. This promotes the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out at Policy SS1, in accordance with the NPPF and as such is a sound basis for an alternative location for a housing allocation.

The site has been promoted for development in the SHELAA and confirmed by the Council as available for development, without any significant constraint on the principle of development in this location, for 40 - 70 dwellings (SHELAA Reference 93). The constraints identified in the SHELAA could be overcome as follows:

- **Local Gap:** Whereas the site is located within the Ampfield / Chandlers Ford Local Gap designation it does not contribute visually to the separation of these settlements, mainly on account of existing screening and narrow frontage onto Winchester Road and strong sense of enclosure from surrounding woodland. Careful masterplanning and landscaping would further protect the integrity of the gap.
- **TPO trees:** A sensitive landscaping strategy and layout would seek to protect all trees and mitigate impacts where required.
- **SPA / SAC / Ramsar:** A suitable package of measures to mitigate recreational impacts on sites of nature conservation importance could be agreed with the Council and Natural England.
- **Location outside the settlement boundary:** This could be addressed through the allocation of the site for development.

It is also important to note that the site could deliver all of its housing in the 1-5 year period, as such contributing to the housing supply early in the Plan period. Furthermore, the site allocation is principally controlled by Belfield Homes and as such represents a deliverable form of development.

It is not considered that the draft Plan sufficiently recognises the important contribution that this sustainable site could make to the housing land supply. In order to improve the soundness of the draft Plan it is considered that the site should be allocated for 'minimum of 40 dwellings' to reflect the 'minimum' wording in the Borough's housing requirement at draft Policy SS3, the NPPF and to reflect the capacity set out in the SHELAA.

#### **Objection – Southern Area Policy 4 (SA4): Land South of Ganger Farm, Romsey**

The Sustainability Appraisal identifies the Land South of Ganger Farm as comprising 27.7ha with a development capacity of 340 dwellings. It is considered below that this large strategic allocation may not deliver its stated development capacity and therefore the sustainable Land at Redburn Farm, Ampfield should be allocated to assist in meeting the housing requirement for Southern Test Valley.

1. The Land South of Ganger Farm is immediately adjacent to Ganger Wood, a designated ancient woodland and SINC which is functionally linked with the Mottisfont SAC, as recognised in the draft policy text. Any reliance on a new pedestrian link with Winchester Road to access bus services would require a new pedestrian access through the woodland.

2. Draft Policy SA4 states there is the need for a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) in addition to a 50m buffer to the ancient woodland (ref. Sustainability Appraisal Site Assessment Objective 10d) and a sequential approach to direct development away from areas at high risk of surface water flooding. It is clear therefore that there are significant constraints on this site which reduces the extent of the developable area and questions the suitability of the site for the delivery of 340 dwellings.
3. The accessibility of the whole draft allocation should be assessed and not the distance to services and facilities from the closest edge of the site. This has resulted in the Council unequally scoring this site within the Sustainability Appraisal. In the event however that this site is maintained as an allocation, it is considered that the quantum of any development should be reduced in recognition that the furthest locations of development would be outside of a comfortable walking distance to a range of services and facilities, in particular bus stops and destinations that generate higher levels of traffic during peak periods, such as local schools.

### **Objection – Southern Area Policy 6 (SA6): Land at Velmore Farm**

The Sustainability Appraisal identifies the majority of the Land at Velmore Farm as comprising 67 ha with a development capacity of 850 dwellings, which is noted to increase to 1,070 dwellings in Policy SA6 with the inclusion of the adjacent land to the north and abutting Castle Lane. It is considered below that this large strategic allocation may not deliver its stated development capacity and therefore the Land at Redburn Farm, Ampfield should be allocated to assist in meeting the housing requirement for Southern Test Valley.

1. Consistent with comments in relation to Policy SA4 and the need to assess the accessibility of the site as a whole (i.e. for all future residents) and not just the closest edge of the draft allocation. If this site is to be maintained as an allocation, it is considered that the quantum of any development should be reduced in recognition of the western extent of the site being outside of comfortable walking distance to a range of services and facilities.
2. The land at Velmore Farm is located within a landscape of ‘high overall sensitivity’ due to parts of the site being elevated and relatively remote. This is not the case for the Land at Redburn Farm, Ampfield that is not within a sensitive landscape and is well enclosed by surrounding woodland, golf course and residential curtilages. The Land at Velmore Farm would have a far greater impact on the integrity of a Local Gap and landscape character in general. Whereas the presence of Hut Wood provides a degree of visual containment to Velmore Farm, there would be views into the site from the northern boundary with Castle Lane resulting in a greater degree of perceived coalescence.
3. We have serious concerns regarding the suitability of this site to accommodate the scale of proposed housing development due to significant constraints to development that questions whether 1,070 dwellings are achievable and deliverable. Draft Policy SA6 states there is the need for a SANG and a sequential approach to direct development away from areas at high risk of surface water flooding. Sustainability Appraisal Objective 10a) states the site includes a designated SINC and a further SINC immediately to the south both of which would require landscape buffers. Objective 12d) states just over a third of the site is subject to high levels of noise from the M3/M27, there are visual impacts from PROWs that will require mitigation. The site’s capacity is also constrained by the sloping topography, high voltage power lines and route of a Roman Road that dissect the site. It is clear therefore that there are significant constraints on this site which reduces the extent of the developable area and questions the suitability of the site for the development of 1,070 dwellings.

## Objection – Southern Area Policy 8 (SA8): Land at Upton Lane

The Sustainability Appraisal identifies the Land at Upton Lane as comprising 12.3ha with a development capacity of 150 dwellings, reduced to 80 dwellings in the draft policy. It is considered below that this strategic allocation is not sustainably located and therefore the Land at Redburn Farm, Ampfield should be allocated as a more suitable location to help meet the housing requirement in Southern Test Valley.

1. The Land at Upton Lane is located beyond comfortable walking distance from a range of key local services and facilities and of particular importance there is not a continuous footway connecting the site to local early years, primary and secondary schools and convenience store, as referred to in Objective 3 a) to d). It is almost 1km from the nearest bus stop and due to its proximity to the M27, M271, A35 and A3057 the additional traffic generated by the limited sustainable transport options and pedestrian links would be likely to impact on the nearby AQMA, as referred to in Objective 7a).
2. We have serious concerns regarding the suitability of this site to accommodate the scale of proposed housing development due to significant site constraints that questions whether 80 dwellings are achievable and deliverable. Objective 12d) refers to the whole of the site being located within an area exposed to high night time road traffic noise (i.e. above 55dB(A). Furthermore, Objective 10c) states the whole site is identified as an Ecological Network Opportunity Area and Objective 8a) refers to woodland and pylons located within the site. It is clear that there are significant constraints on this site which reduces the extent of the developable area and questions the suitability of the site for the development of 80 dwellings.

## Vision and Rationale for the Development of Land at Redburn Farm, Ampfield

The Land at Redburn Farm, Ampfield relates well to the urban edge of Ampfield and is accessible by walking and cycling to a wide range of facilities and services, including primary school, bus stop, community hall, open space, place of worship and public house.

The site has been assessed by the Council as part of its SHELAA and identified as a deliverable site for housing development. The site is not constrained by any statutory landscape designations and is not largely visible from its surroundings, unlike the case of Velmore Farm.

The site adjoins an area of woodland, although this is not ancient woodland or designated for nature conservation importance. The site is at low risk of flooding, and unlike Upton Lane as it is not constrained by high noise levels, poor air quality and has a footpath link to the primary school, community hall and public open space. Furthermore the site has the potential to deliver an area of SANG to serve between 40 and 70 dwellings, which was advised to officers in discussions last year.

It is considered that there are serious uncertainties about the suitability of the Land at Velmore Farm and South of Ganger Farm to accommodate this scale of development. Furthermore, there are significant issues associated with the soundness of these sites in terms of suitability to deliver the level of development proposed due to the combination of significant constraints, in particular the potential for impacts on the sensitive landscape character and the integrity of the Local Gap (Velmore Farm), flood risks, accessibility and impacts on nature conservation designations.

Conversely the Land at Redburn Farm, Ampfield is not located within an area of high overall landscape or ecological sensitivity. It is well contained and defined by strong defensible boundaries to the north, east, west and south that would contain any further growth and provide a well-defined settlement edge.

The allocation of this site for housing in the draft Local Plan could assist in bolstering the housing supply to deliver a range of housing types, sizes and tenures, including much needed affordable housing, especially in the early part of the Plan period. This would help support Ampfield and address many of the issues identified to improve the soundness of the strategy set out at Policy SS6 to allocate large strategic sites and address likely delays to delivery likely to be experienced with this strategy, in accordance with the tests set out at Paragraph 35 of the NPPF – ensuring it is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. Overall, the site is available, suitable and deliverable under the terms of the NPPF and should be considered positively for a housing allocation to provide between 40 and 70 new homes in the Council’s emerging Local Plan.

The opportunity to comment on the Regulation 18 – Stage 2 draft Local Plan is appreciated and it is respectfully requested that the Council takes into account the comments made and support this proposed allocation in order to help accommodate the Borough’s housing need and improve the soundness of the plan. We would welcome the opportunity to meet to discuss these representations, however in the meantime please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Yours faithfully



Ian Johnson  
**Managing Director**  
Luken Beck mdp Ltd







# BELFIELD HOMES (AMPFIELD) LTD REDBURN FARM, AMPFIELD

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## Vision Statement

December 2022

LUKEN  BECK





Developer: Belfield Homes (Ampfield) Ltd.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[www.belfield-homes.co.uk](http://www.belfield-homes.co.uk)



Planning: Luken Beck

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Disclaimer

This document has been prepared by Luken Beck on behalf of Belfield Homes (Ampfield) Ltd. as a vision statement for development on Redburn Farm, Ampfield. All drawings within the document are not to scale and only for diagrammatic and illustrative purposes.

Notes

REVISION:	DATE:	AUTH:
v1	24/11/22	JB
v2	02/12/22	JB
s1	07/12/22	JB/IJ



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An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the upper left, there is a cluster of residential buildings with brown roofs. To the right of this, a large, open, light-brown field stretches across the middle of the image. The right side of the image is dominated by a dense, dark green forest. A road or path runs horizontally across the middle, separating the buildings from the field and forest.

## OUR VISION

Ampfield is an attractive and accessible settlement that has been identified in the Adopted Test Valley Local Plan (2016) and the emerging Local Plan as a 'Rural Village' and therefore a location for modest sustainable growth due to the availability and proximity to services and facilities. This Statement sets out the background to why the Land at Redburn Farm is a suitable location, and is immediately available, to help achieve the Borough's additional housing needs to 2040. The vision is to deliver,

**"A locally distinctive new neighbourhood of mixed house types and sizes that is both integrated within the landscape and with the adjacent residential area. It includes improved pedestrian access with bus stop; pedestrian crossing point on Winchester Road; a generous area of natural green space within easy walking distance of Ampfield Primary School to provide both an outdoor learning resource; informal recreation; sustainable surface water drainage; nitrate mitigation and enhancement to the natural environment"**



# INTRODUCTION

## Purpose of this Statement

This statement has been prepared by Luken Beck on behalf of our client, Belfield Homes (Ampfield) Ltd, in response to the Stage 1 Regulation 18 Consultation into the Draft Local Plan 2040 for allocations of specific development sites. The emerging Local Plan is a progression of the considerable amount of assessment and analysis undertaken during the production of the 2011-2029 plan which resulted in the Council identifying Ampfield as a rural village that can accommodate modest growth.

In addition to setting out the vision for a new sustainable neighbourhood, this statement is also a strategic planning document. It provides supporting information on a range of social, environmental and economic factors affecting the site.

This statement is submitted as supplementary information to the formal representations submitted at the Stage 1 Regulation 18 public consultation process.

## Site Location

The site is located east of Ampfield village centre and immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary for Ampfield (i.e. the status is therefore 'countryside').

Further north of the site, beyond Winchester Road is the junction with Knapp Lane and Ampfield Church of England Primary School. There is a bus stop close to the north west-corner of the site and the Morleys Green development, which is discussed further below.

With regard to heritage considerations the northern and north-eastern boundary is adjacent to the Ampfield Conservation Area. There are two Grade II listed buildings on Knapp Lane, in relative close proximity to the site (Monks Barn and Kingfisher House) and a further Grade II listed building on Winchester Road (The Vicarage) which is adjacent and to the north east of the site.



## Site Description

The site is almost entirely screened from public viewpoints due to King's Mead woodland to the east and south, mature vegetation on the northern boundary with Winchester Road (A3090) and the Ampfield Golf Course to the west. The only clear viewpoint from the public highway, from which the site can be seen, is limited to the gated access with Green Pond Lane.

The site is not located within or adjacent to a statutory designation for international, local or ecological importance or of landscape character. There are no listed buildings within the site and the Ampfield Conservation Area is located to the north.

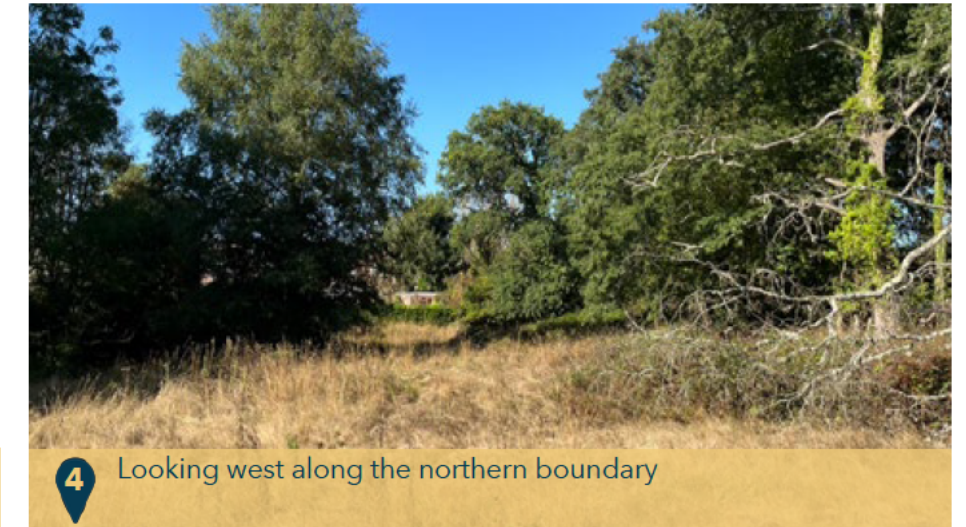
The site is located within an area of low flood risk (Flood Zone 1). It is also located within the Ampfield / Chandlers Ford Local Gap, although a development in this location would not undermine the function of the gap due to the strong sense of visual enclosure provided by the surrounding woodland and existing developments.

Vehicular access to the site is currently served from an existing field gate on Green Pond Lane. There is a bus stop immediately adjacent to the north-west corner of the site on Winchester Road which provides access to frequent services running between Romsey and Winchester.

Site Boundary (Source: Ampfield Village Design Statement)



## Site Photographs







7 Looking north along Green Pond Lane at the site access



10 Looking west along the site toward Ampfield Golf Course



13 Looking northeast at the southern boundary of the site



8 Looking south into the site from Green Pond Lane



11 Looking south along the eastern boundary



14 Looking north across the site toward the access at Green Pond Lane



9 Looking west along the site toward Ampfield Golf Course



12 Looking west across the site toward Ampfield Golf Course



15 Looking west toward Ampfield Golf Course



# PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

## National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in July 2021, provides guidance for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in drawing up plans for development. The NPPF establishes a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' which, for decision making, means approving development that accords with the statutory Development Plan without delay.

The NPPF sets out in Paragraph 11(d) that, where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless;

"i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole."

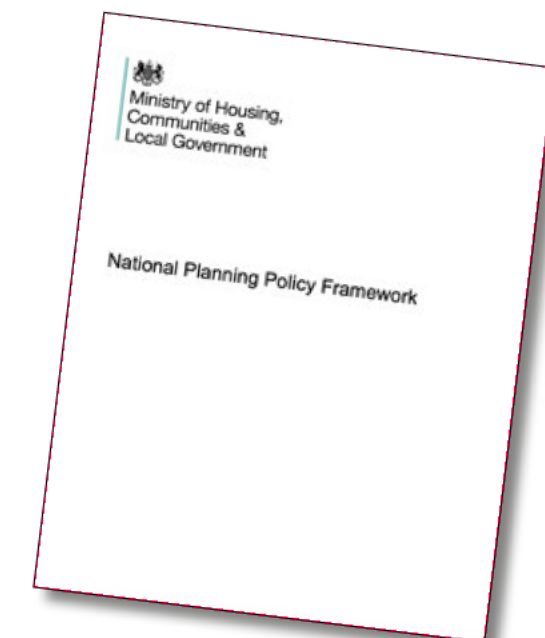
A presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the core of the NPPF which, in practice, means that LPAs need to positively seek opportunities to meet their area's development needs. With specific regard to housing delivery, the NPPF also seeks to significantly boost the supply of housing. This includes a requirement to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and

affordable housing in the housing market area. The NPPF advises that deliverable sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable.

The NPPF sets out in Paragraph 68 that strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA). LPAs are expected to identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability. Policies are expected to identify a supply of:

"a) specific, deliverable sites for years 1-5 of the plan period, and

b) specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the plan."





In addition to the NPPF, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides guidance for LPAs on the factors that should be considered when assessing the suitability of sites and broad locations for development. A site can be considered suitable if it would provide an appropriate location for development when considered against relevant constraints and their potential to be mitigated. The following factors are considered to form part of the assessment of site suitability for development and in the future;

- Physical limitations or problems such as access, infrastructure, ground conditions, flood risk, hazardous risks, pollution or contamination;
- Potential impacts including the effects upon landscapes including landscape features, nature and heritage conservation;
- Appropriateness and likely market attractiveness for the type of development proposed;
- Contribution to regeneration priority areas;
- Environmental / amenity impacts experienced by would be occupiers and neighbouring areas.

Both the NPPF and PPG are significant material considerations in terms of establishing the principle of development on this site, with particular regard to the following

- The presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- Ampfield is identified as a rural village which is earmarked to support additional housing development;
- The 'suitability' of the site for a residential development compares favourably when assessed against the policies of the NPPF and is in an area unconstrained by environmental designations;
- The site is available now and can deliver homes that would provide a significant boost to housing delivery, and particularly the supply of much needed affordable housing in the area;
- Development of the site is achievable and viable, being able to meet site specific infrastructure requirements.

Source: Ampfield Village Design Statement

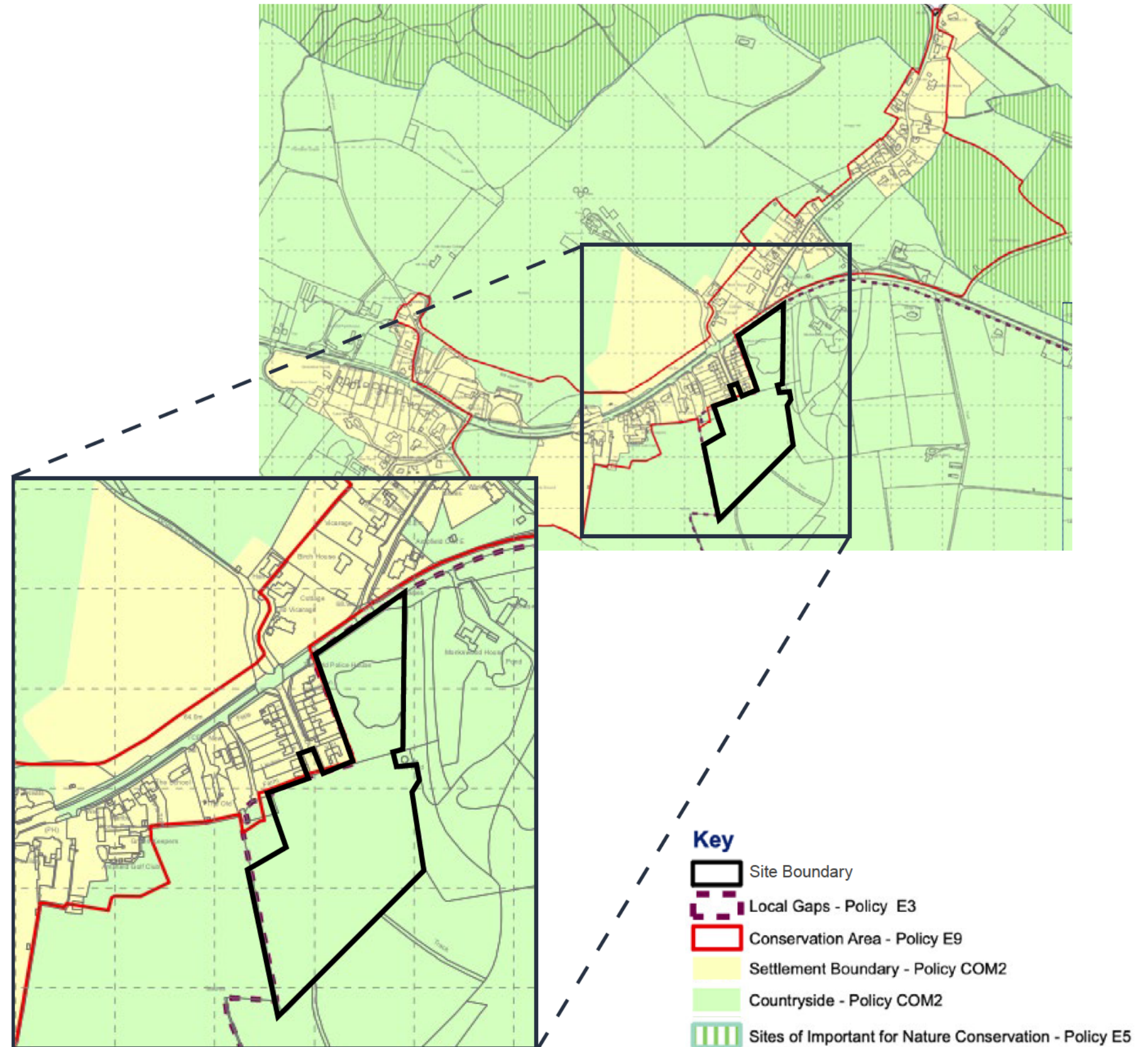
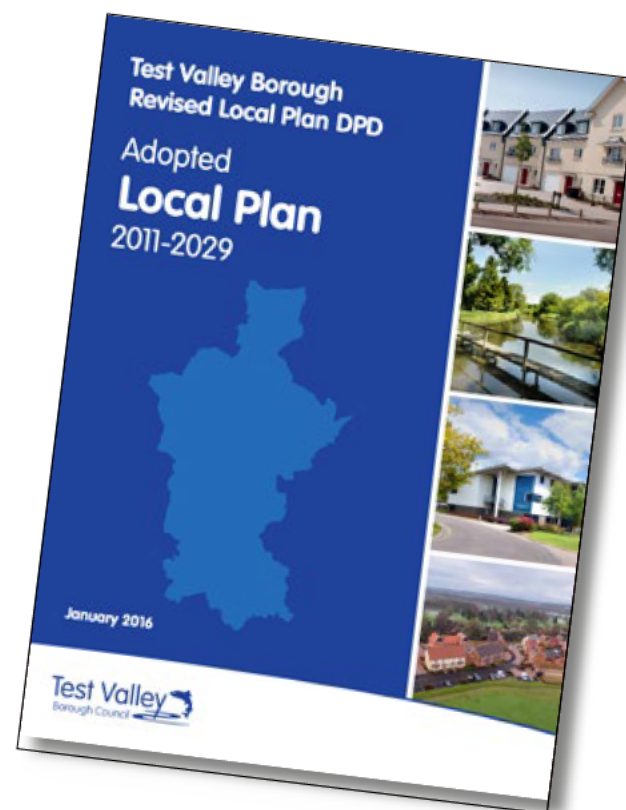




## Adopted Test Valley Local Plan (2016)

The Test Valley Local Plan was adopted by the council on 27 January 2016 and contains the proposed policies for determining planning applications and identifying strategic allocations for housing, employment and other uses.

The document has classified Ampfield as a 'Rural Village' within Policy COM2: Settlement Hierarchy. As such, Ampfield is able to accommodate: windfalls, rural affordable housing sites, replacement dwellings, community-led development, small business uses and re-use of buildings. Ampfield has also been identified as one of the seven parishes that make up the Southern Test Valley (STV) area and is also part of the area covered by the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH). Up to 2029, the STV is required to provide 194 dwellings p.a. over the seven parishes.





## Emerging Test Valley Local Plan: Issues and Options (Reg 18 Stage 1)

Stage 1 of the Draft Local Plan 2040 is currently underway. The Test Valley Draft Local Plan Regulation 18 Stage 1 Issues and Options Document sets out the vision, key challenges and objectives in the District alongside a spatial strategy, strategic policy framework and needs requirements.

Similar to the Adopted Local Plan, Policy SSP1 identifies Ampfield as Tier 4 in the settlement hierarchy which means it has five or less of the 'key facilities' as well as a public transport service. These 'key facilities' are (facilities in Ampfield highlighted in bold);

- Food Store;
- **Public House;**
- **Primary School;**
- **Outdoor Sports Facility;**
- **Community or Village Hall;** and a
- **Place of Worship**

Ampfield has five of the six 'key facilities' and is classed as having excellent public transport.

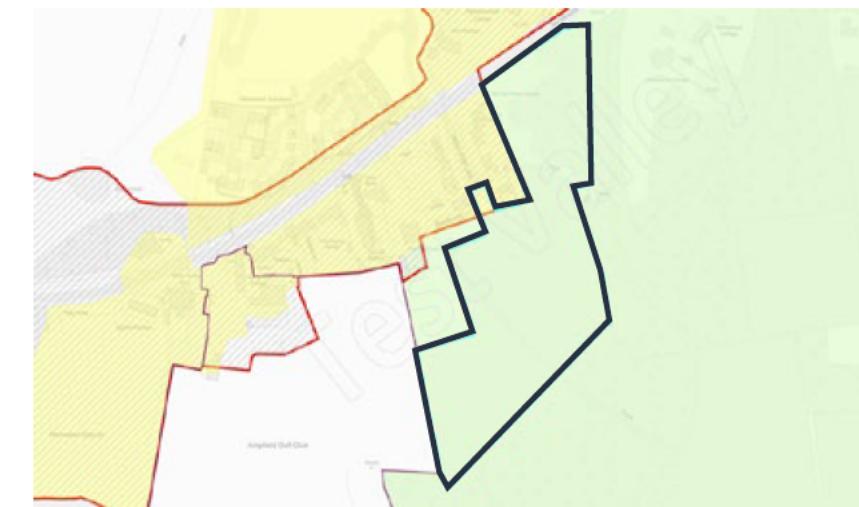
With specific regard to housing, the document confirms that 10,820 new homes are required in the Test Valley Region in the period up to 2040 (541 homes per year). In the STV Housing Market Area, 4,653 homes (233 homes p.a.) are needed. Currently, STV has a shortfall of 948 homes in the period 2020 to 2040. In order to meet this shortfall, the Council will need to ensure that a suitable number of sites, of the right size, are allocated to ensure the requirements are met.



## Strategic Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment (2021)

The site has been identified in the SHELAA as available and achievable for residential development with capacity for up to 70 dwellings to be delivered within 1-5 years, dependent on its inclusion as an allocation within the forthcoming Local Plan.

Careful consideration is required due to its location within the Local Gap; however, due to the previously mentioned shielding from thick shrubbery surrounding the site, this is unlikely to have a significant impact.





## Ampfield Village Design Statement

Although the site is outside of the settlement boundary of Ampfield, the Ampfield Village Design Statement is referenced here for additional context.

The VDS aims to “channel the change to ensure that the natural demand for development within our community can be guided along the lines that best suit the community’s needs, is harmonious with its current surroundings and can complement and enhance the community and its environment for a future period.”

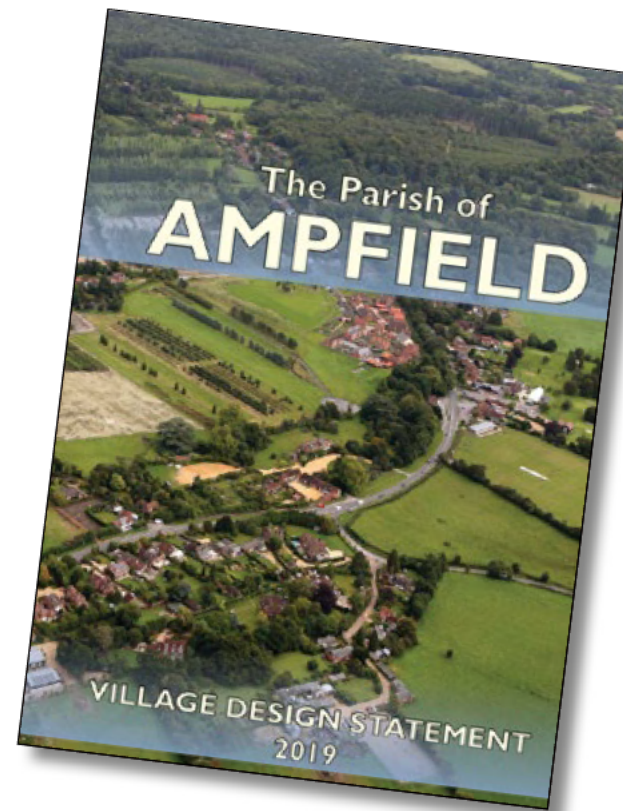
As part of the vision for the community in Ampfield it aims to:

- safeguard the character of its settlements with new developments respecting and complementing the existing character of the neighbourhood in which it takes place;
- promote and encourage good design;
- attract younger people to the village and enable older residents to stay by encouraging the provision of smaller, more affordable dwellings;
- seek opportunities to improve road safety conditions across the parish for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers alike.

The VDS has identified the threats Ampfield village faces:

- Encroachment of new development into the countryside;
- Unsympathetic infill-development within existing settlements;
- Ribbon development along roads.

The VDS notes the properties around Green Pond Lane (adjacent to the site) as being defined by low rooflines, attractive use of roof hips, decorative gables, decorative clay tile hanging, plain tile, slate or thatch roofing, windows in proportion to the elevations, good use of dormer and cottage style windows, timber framed porches.





## Examples of recent urban extensions in and around Ampfield

### Development for 39 homes at Morleys Green (12/01133/OUTS)

- Date of Consent: 12<sup>th</sup> May 2014 (Committee Report - 27<sup>th</sup> August 2013)
- Planning Considerations:
- Affordable Homes - 31% (12 dwellings of which 70% affordable rent; 30% shared ownership)
- Ampfield is a rural location
- Justification for development should be comprehensive and consider all the relevant issues
- Council could not demonstrate a Five-Year Housing Land Supply or the requirement for a 5% buffer
- Need for more spacious landscaping arrangement
- Extension to the village hall as part of the scheme



### Development of 12 dwellings in the countryside (14/01145/OUTS) for the Land at Broadgate Farm

- Date of Consent: 21<sup>st</sup> August 2014 (5<sup>th</sup> August 2014)
- Planning Considerations:
- Affordable Homes - 40% (6 dwellings (4x1 bed flats and 2x2 bed houses))
- Deficiencies in housing land supply was a strong material consideration in the decision to approve
- No objections to loss of trees, principle of development, highways, environmental health, drainage or utilities
- s106 agreements secured contributions on parkland and highways





# DEVELOPMENT RATIONALE





# Opportunities and Constraints

## Opportunities

- High quality houses to meet local needs
- Dual site access to spread traffic movements
- Maintenance of existing trees along boundaries that maintains the strong sense of enclosure on site
- Opportunity to work with local school and community groups to implement a Community Education Space on site
- Promote modal shift through new housing in close proximity to regular bus service
- Potential to provide improved access for Ampfield Primary School with pedestrian link to the bus stop on Winchester Road
- Majority of the site is completely screened from public viewpoints

## Constraints

- Potential traffic noise from A3090/Winchester Road
- Sensitive edge to neighbouring properties
- Location within a Local Gap designation
- Proximity to water treatment plant and need to retain access
- Presence of trees on site may reduce capacity for development
- A3090/Winchester Road creates severance from primary school

## Potential Solutions/Mitigation

- Set houses back from the road and add additional screening to reduce impact on setting of the Conservation Area and Local Gap
- Access to water treatment plant can be retained and reduces the need for additional infrastructure
- Trees will be retained and protected where possible with replacement planting to mitigate any tree loss
- Implementation of a new pavement linking the development to the bus stop and an informal crossing point over Winchester Road
- On-site mitigation of nitrate impacts to offset residential development



# Development Rationale

## Landscape and Visual Impact

With the exception of the Local Gap designation the site is not located within or adjacent to an area designated as of landscape sensitivity.

The site is generally flat, and rises gently to the north. It has an urban fringe character, typified by its location adjacent to the Ampfield Golf Course and residential development to the north and west. The eastern extent of the site is enclosed by King's Mead woodland and by a mature treed boundary with Winchester Road (A3090) to the north. There are no public rights of way that cross the site or in the immediate area.

Through careful masterplanning and structural landscaping of the new neighbourhood there is an opportunity to create a green buffer along the northern boundary and minimise the appearance of new development from Winchester Road. Whilst the approach to Ampfield from the east along Winchester Road provides very limited views of the site, the reinforcement of the tree belt, as part of a green buffer, would create a significant natural feature to screen and form part of the green infrastructure for the site. The southern section of the site would remain open to accommodate surface water attenuation ponds (wetland planting) and a buffer to the woodland to the south.

Public open space, avenue tree planting, wildflower and grassland planting and structural planting could further soften the edges of the new neighbourhood and filter views into and out of the development.



## Arboriculture

The trees located on the northern boundary are included within 2 group Tree Preservation Orders. There is evidence of ash dieback within these TPO groups, meaning a number of Category C and U trees within these groups will have limited life expectancy. As such they should not be seen as a development constraint.

Within the northern area of the site there is a group of Oak trees, which are of good quality, and would be retained. Although there are other trees in close proximity, these are of a lower quality and are mainly self seeded Ash (with Ash dieback present) or wetland species trees such as Willow; all of which are of relatively low quality.

The New Neighbourhood will result in the removal of some trees on the northern boundary to facilitate the creation of a new vehicular access and associated visibility splays. Further removal of the self-seeded trees in the northern area will enable some small scale development and access to the remainder of the site where compensatory native tree planting would be provided as part of the proposed green infrastructure.



## Biodiversity

The proposed development is not within close proximity of any statutory designated sites. The site is bordered to the east and south by dense woodland and to the north by a tree belt that separates it from Winchester Road and provides both a visual screen and wildlife corridor. The site comprises a field of semi-improved neutral grassland with a small semi-natural broadleaved copse in the northern parcel. The semi-improved grassland habitat is of lower ecological value and its loss is unlikely to result in a significant ecological impact.

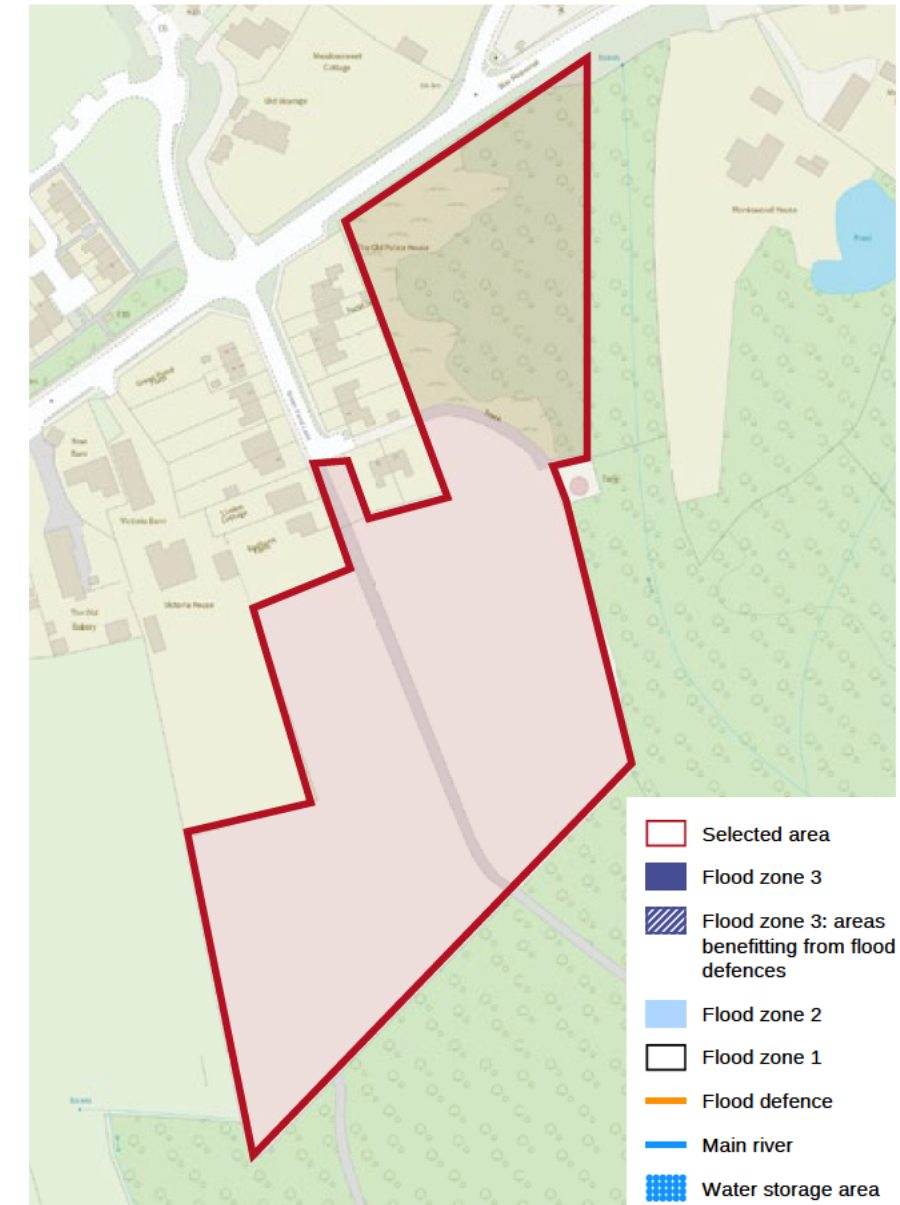
The most ecologically valuable habitat on the site is the species rich woodland edge which should be reinforced through floristically rich grasslands and using native species to increase the overall ecological value of the site. This woodland is identified in the Priority Habitat Inventory as Deciduous Woodland, but is not designated as Ancient Semi Natural Woodland.

## Flood Risk

The NPPF aims to reduce flood risk through a sequential approach to development opportunities. The NPPF and accompanying Technical Guidance aims to ensure flood risks and the predicted effects of climate change have been taken into account and appropriate measures put in place to ensure that development is safe, where possible the flood risk overall is reduced and increased flood risk does not occur elsewhere.

Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 Hampshire County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority and is responsible for coordinating the management of local flood risk. As Lead Local Flood Authority for Hampshire, the County Council is in the process of preparing Surface Water Management Plans.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 according to the Environment Agency Flood map, as shown below, where the principle of development would be acceptable.



Source: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk>

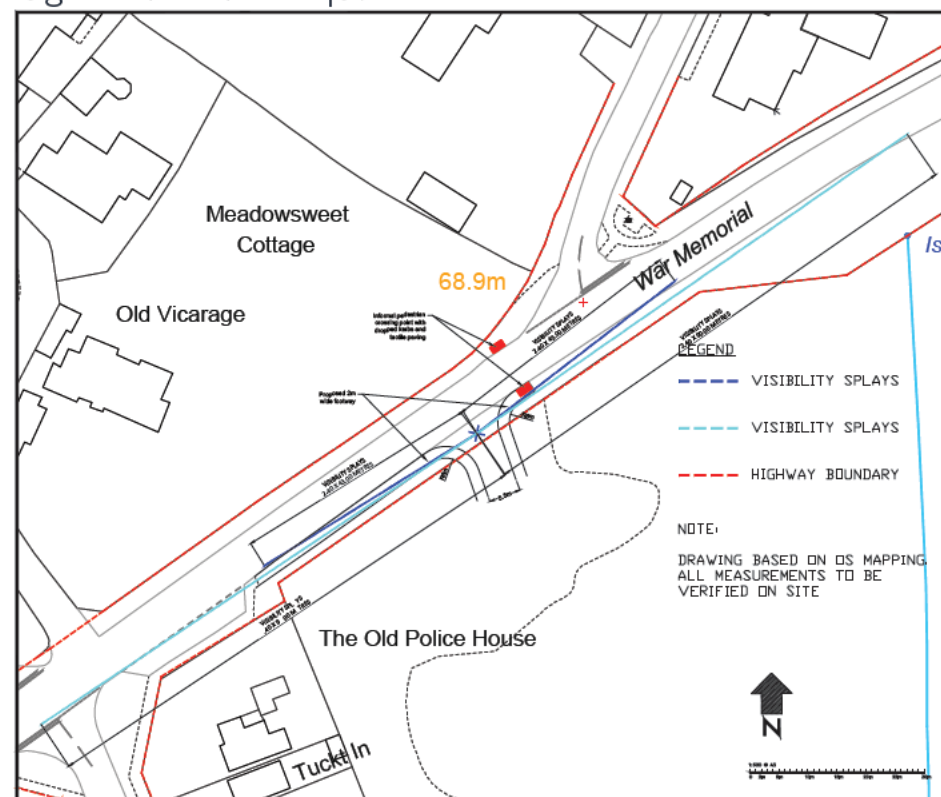


## Transport and Connectivity

The site is in an accessible location for residential development, whereby it is feasible for residents to travel via sustainable modes of transport to key facilities. There is also a direct pedestrian connection with Ampfield Primary School.

The bus stop located adjacent to the site on Winchester Road provides direct access to the major employment and shopping centres of Romsey and Winchester which also include regional rail links, health care and education (including Winchester University, Winchester General Hospital, Romsey Community School, Mountbatten School and Peter Symonds Sixth Form).

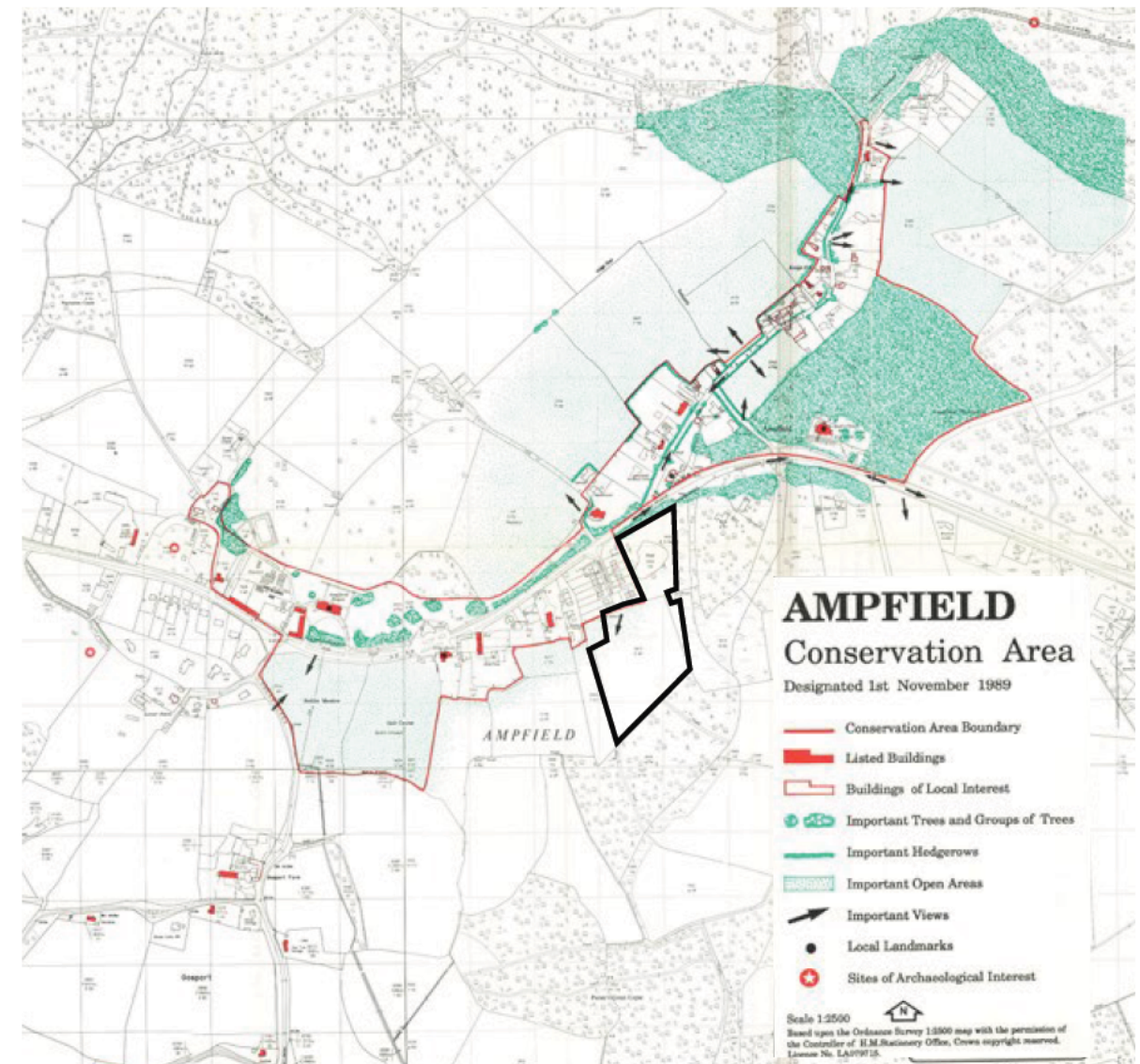
A proposed new vehicular access onto Winchester Road is achievable due to the generous frontage, although this will require some clearance of trees/ planting to achieve associated visibility plays. A secondary access is proposed via Green Pond Lane, which is circa 4.8-5.0 metres wide and therefore appropriate to accommodate the traffic generation of a new neighbourhood of this modest scale. This access would also provide a direct walking route to the bus stop on Winchester Road.



## Heritage

The site is not designated as of archaeological sensitivity or as part of a Conservation Area. There are no listed buildings on the site. There are two Grade II listed buildings on Knapp Lane, in relative close proximity to the site (Monks Barn and Kingfisher House) and a further Grade II listed building on Winchester Road (The Vicarage) which is adjacent and to the north east of the site. Ampfield Primary School is identified as a Building of Local Interest within the Ampfield Conservation Area Policy Document.

The Ampfield Conservation Area was designated in 1989 and is located immediately to the north of site. The Conservation Area is tightly drawn around the built up area although is not visible from the site due to the tree belt along the northern boundary and low lying nature of the site that drops gradually away towards the south.







Junction of Knapp Lane and Winchester Road



# DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

## Concept Layout

The new neighbourhood would provide an opportunity to significantly boost the supply of market and affordable housing in an accessible location close to primary school education and to bus services providing direct connections to employment, shopping, hospitals and secondary, 6th form and university education in the wider area.

Through our vision and a detailed understanding of the natural and built context of the site the following principles have been identified to guide the Concept Layout for a future Strategic Allocation, although these have not yet been consulted on with the community:

### Landscape Character

The new neighbourhood should not be visible from the east or south due to the dense woodland. Some additional planting along the western boundary should help soften the appearance of new development in views from the golf course. Reinforcement of the existing tree belt along the boundary with Winchester Road (A3090) to the north would also help screen the development and reduce the impact on the Local Gap and setting of the Conservation Area and listed buildings.

The site retains an urban fringe character requiring a sensitive approach to density, layout and landscaping.

### Green Infrastructure

Mature vegetation around the site boundary should be retained and reinforced wherever possible to form the basis for green corridors for habitat linkages and to soften the appearance of new development.

A larger area of open space is focused in the south of the site to provide a woodland buffer and accommodate surface water attenuation ponds.

### Community Cohesion and Well-being

A range of new homes will be offered for those wishing to stay in the village and provide access to house types, tenures and affordability.

An area of open space will be set aside for community use as an outdoor learning resource in close proximity to Ampfield Primary School. Potential to include an informal pedestrian crossing point / traffic calming measure will be explored with the County Highway Authority.

Housing will be well designed and arranged to reduce the appearance of new development to adjacent residents and in views from the public highway.

### Transport

To encourage modal shift through providing a convenient and attractive pedestrian link with the bus stop on Winchester Road via the access at Green Pond Lane.

To provide a new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access onto Winchester Road which meets highway safety standards.







# DELIVERABILITY

## Site Suitability

Paragraph 60 of the NPPF sets out that, to significantly boost the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed. Local Authorities should specifically identify a sufficient number of sites to meet a 5 year housing land supply.

There is currently one vehicular access into the site and the opportunity to enhance various pedestrian routes into the site.

The surrounding topography and treelined boundaries provide a good degree of enclosure and screening of views into the site. The location of the site near the A3090 means it is conveniently located on the edge of Ampfield with suitable connections to Romsey and the rest of Hampshire.

A review of the Environment Agency Flood Data Map has identified the site is entirely within Flood Zone 1. The site is not within an area of landscape character sensitivity or of international, national or local ecological importance.

The predominant land use in the surrounding area is residential and open countryside. Ampfield is classed as a Tier 4 settlement meaning it has five or less of the 'key facilities'. The site would benefit from the local primary school, leisure facilities, public houses, community facilities, church and recycling facilities as well as being served by an 'excellent' public transport network.

## Site Availability

The land is within the control of a private landowner and Belfield Homes (Ampfield) Ltd.. There are no known legal or ownership issues that would constrain the site coming forwards for development in the immediate future.

## Site Achievability

A comprehensive development for circa 40 dwellings is considered to be achievable in the next five years, subject to planning consent. The site is located adjacent to the settlement boundary of Ampfield with direct vehicular and pedestrian/cycle access from Winchester Road/Green Pond Lane. There are no significant physical or potential environmental constraints on the site that would restrict the economic viability of a residential development of this scale.







# SUMMARY

## Summary of Benefits

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The proposed residential allocation would provide the following:

- An accessible new neighbourhood of circa 40 new homes of mixed type and tenure including affordable homes suitable for first time buyers and low-income households in the local community.
- Provision of pedestrian link to bus stop on Winchester Road.
- Delivery of a new parkland comprising sustainable urban drainage, mitigation of nitrate impacts, habitat enhancement and amenity areas that would serve existing and new neighbourhoods.
- Support for the local primary school and other community groups in Ampfield through provision of an outdoor learning resource.
- Delivery of a new access onto Winchester Road incorporating an informal pedestrian crossing point to enable safe access to the site.







This document has been prepared by Luken Beck on behalf of our clients:

**Belfield Homes (Ampfield) Ltd.**

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