

## **Policy SPS5.15: Land at West End Farm, Mortimer**

### **Summary of changes made since the Regulation 18 2024 Consultation:**

- This is new site allocation policy.

### **Policy SPS5.15 – Land at West End Farm, Mortimer**

The site, as shown on the Policies Map and Illustrative Concept Plan, is allocated for a well designed and sustainable development that will:

- a) Make provision for the delivery of approximately 350 homes including 5% serviced plots for custom and self-build homes;
- b) Be in accordance with the principles of the Concept Plan;
- c) Provide for permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches, proportionate to the size of the site when considered in relation to the overall need for pitches as set out in the latest version of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment;
- d) Be subject to the submission of a detailed Transport Assessment and supporting Travel Plan that seeks to:
  - i. Provide safe, suitable and convenient access for all users;
  - ii. Ensure access to a genuine choice of transport modes;
  - iii. Demonstrate that safe, suitable and convenient access to local facilities, services and employment opportunities, can be achieved via active travel and/or public transport services;
  - iv. Provide appropriate parking and servicing provisions as well as measures to minimise the need to travel, prioritise and promote active travel and public transport use, to minimise the transport impacts arising from the development; and
  - v. Ensure that the development will not have a severe adverse impact on the local highway network, including West End Road and the connecting routes, nor have unacceptable impact on highway safety, with the inclusion of suitable measures to mitigate the impact;
- e) Ensure that development of the site does not have an adverse impact on the landscape qualities of the area including the Pamber Forest and Heaths Valued Landscape located to the north and west. The density, scale, layout and hard and soft landscaping must respond positively to, and take opportunities to enhance, the landscape characteristics of the site and wider area;
- f) Retain the western part of the site as undeveloped green space in order to protect rural views. The design and layout of development should include a strong and defensible green buffer in the western part of the site to limit the visual impact of development;
- g) Retain and enhance existing tree belts and hedges along the eastern and southern boundary to protect the rural setting of the site, with suitable buffers. Housing should be sited away from the southern boundary to protect longer distance views towards the site from the south. Development

should consider trees that contribute to visual amenity, biodiversity, climate resilience and local character;

- h) Ensure that suitable buffers and accessible greenspace are provided across the south and west of the site in order to protect Simm's Copse SINC and Ancient Woodland and Hundred Acre and Fifty Acre Pieces SINC from any impacts of the development;
- i) Protect and enhance the ecological network by ensuring adverse impacts on key species and habitats are avoided, adequately mitigated, or compensated as a last resort, avoiding the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitat, and securing the creation and management of green open spaces and linkages that provide high levels of habitat connectivity within the site and to the wider green infrastructure network;
- j) Achieve a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain with onsite and offsite habitat enhancements secured as appropriate under an Overall Biodiversity Gain Plan;
- k) Demonstrate that any heritage impacts are thoroughly investigated and understood owing to the proximity to the setting of the Scheduled Monument The Late Iron Age oppidum and Roman town of Calleva Atrebatum to the south of the site and the archaeological potential within the site;
- l) Respond sensitively to the significance, and setting, of listed buildings, including (but not limited to) the Grade II Windabout cottage through the siting, scale, layout and character of development;
- m) Provide technical investigation and assessment of all sources of flooding (including surface water and groundwater) to determine flood risk management measures to ensure sustainable development and provision of on-site sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) as appropriate to the site's local geology and environmental characteristics;
- n) Ensure the protection of groundwater by undertaking a Hydrogeological Risk Assessment to inform development design and any necessary mitigation;
- o) Make appropriate use of mineral resources as established via a Mineral Resource Assessment;

### Infrastructure

In line with the IDP, the site should:

- p) Provide safe, suitable and convenient access facilities for all users, including an on-site movement network and connections, that maximises accessibility by active travel modes and local public transport services, together with appropriate parking and servicing provisions as well as measures targeted to minimise the transport impacts arising from the development. This includes retaining the alignment and providing suitable connectivity with the existing Public Rights of Way within and adjoining this site as appropriate;
- q) Provide suitable infrastructure for sewerage (on and off site), foul water and other utilities; and
- r) Make provision for suitable amounts of open/green space (including allotments) in accordance with the council's Green Space Standards, which is well related to the overall layout and character of the development and how it relates to its surroundings. This includes the provision of a neighbourhood park and allotments in the western part of the site and a

kickabout space in the housing area to the south. Provision needs to incorporate effective green infrastructure links within and through the development which links to the surrounding countryside, habitats and Public Rights of Way, utilising appropriate planting in order to support their biodiversity and landscape function.

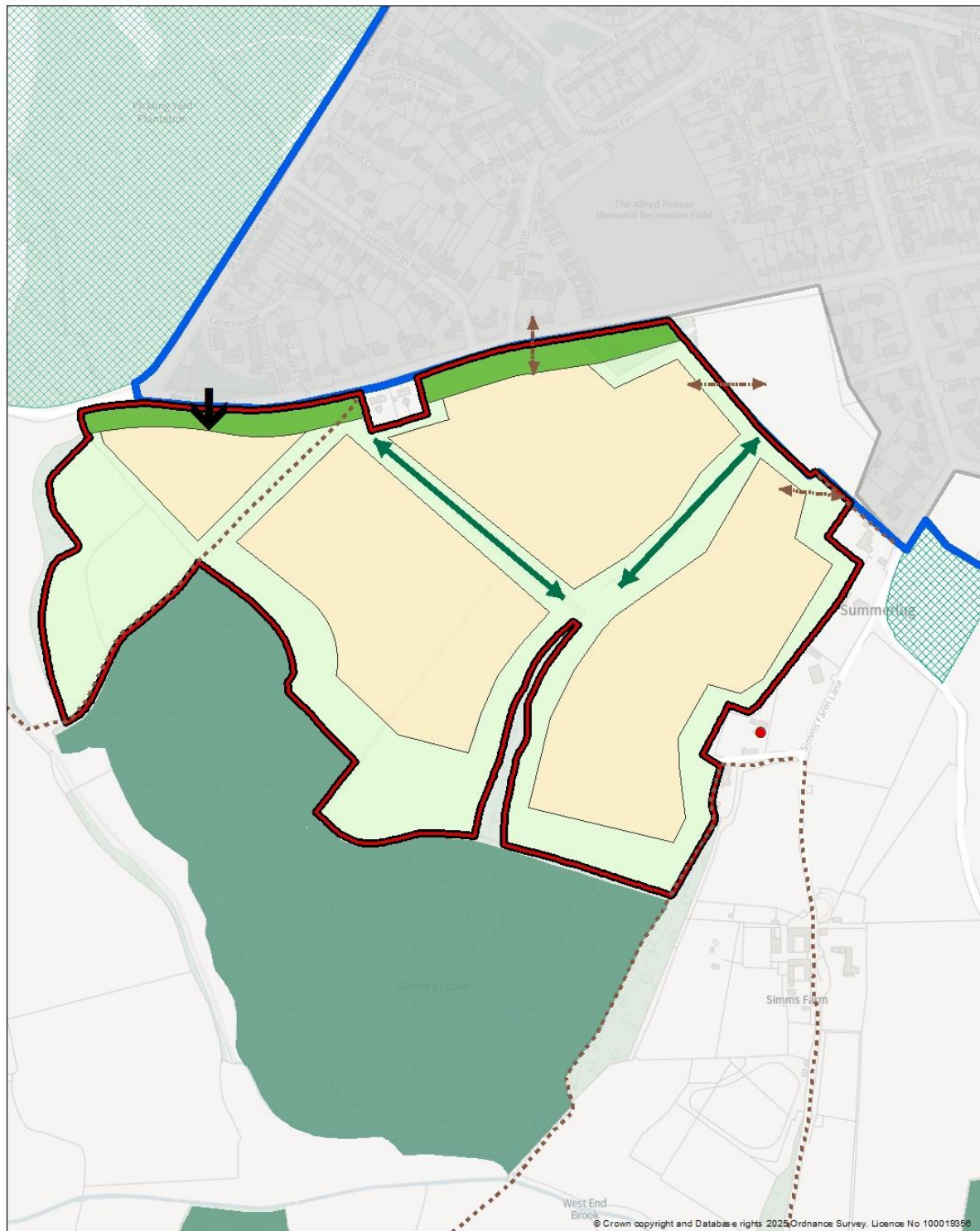
- 5.15.1 The site, which would form an extension to Mortimer, is allocated for approximately 350 homes. These are to be provided via a range of suitable dwelling types and tenures including 40% affordable housing. Mortimer is considered to be a Rural Service Centre within the West Berkshire Local Plan (2023) in the District Settlement Hierarchy, which is defined as providing a focal point for surrounding villages and rural areas in terms of provision of services and facilities.
- 5.15.2 Development will be supported by the timely delivery of supporting infrastructure including open space and allotments, in accordance with the councils Green Space Standards. Proposals for the site should be designed and, although a formal design code is not required, the vision for the development should demonstrate a high quality and comprehensive approach to design.
- 5.15.3 The site must be well integrated and connected to Mortimer via a suitable walking and cycling network which will enable access for all users to nearby facilities including education and community facilities, which will be available off-site. It is expected that this is to be achieved by enhancing the existing footpath network where possible, including a buffer either side of the footpath in the north west of the site. In order to minimise the impact of development on West End Road, as well as surrounding connections, the development must include measures to improve accessibility by non-car modes. A site wide Travel Plan will need to be submitted to minimise car use and deliver sustainable transport objectives.
- 5.15.4 Development proposals will need to be informed by a robust and comprehensive site-specific Transport Assessment to demonstrate how a how safe, suitable and convenient access can be provided for all users in agreement with the Local Highway Authority.
- 5.15.5 Proposals are to be informed by a coordinated and integrated approach to green and blue infrastructure provision which links with Mortimer and ensures impacts on Simm's Copse SINC and ancient woodland and Hundred Acre and Fifty Acre Pieces SINC are avoided. Where ancient woodland abuts the southwestern edge of the site, a buffer in excess of 20m will be required between the development and the ancient woodland. The allocation will preserve rural views of Mortimer by retaining the western part of the site as undeveloped open green space. Protection and enhancement of existing tree and hedge belts on the site's boundaries will create strong and defensible strategic planted buffers to limit visual impact of development. The existing tree belt in the south of the site will be retained and enhanced to create a biodiversity corridor with a second green corridor to be introduced northwards to break up the housing blocks as seen on the

concept plan. Development of the site must not have a significant impact on the landscape qualities of the area including the Pamber Forest Valued Landscape which lies to the west. It will be necessary for the development to achieve a minimum 10% measurable biodiversity net gain with habitat creation and enhancements prioritised on site, in line with the biodiversity gain hierarchy.

- 5.15.6 Proposals will need to demonstrate that they protect and enhance the natural environment, through the provision of a Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan. This should include, but not be limited to, the protection and enhancement of habitats, provision of play and open spaces, protection of trees and woodland, and a designed landscape that results in high quality visual amenity.
- 5.15.7 In order to ensure there is an appropriate transition to adjacent countryside and to avoid a hard edge to development, the layout along the northern and western edges of the site should be of a lower density and scale with a greater separation of buildings. Open spaces along the edge should incorporate suitable levels of planting (including trees and hedging) to help give a soft transition to the countryside. Development will need to face out to the countryside to provide active frontages, with no rear gardens facing outwards and also avoid prominent parking areas on the edge of the site. New housing development should be predominantly up to 2-storeys in height with discrete elements at 2.5-storeys.
- 5.15.8 The site lies 1.2 kilometres away from Scheduled Monument: The Late Iron Age oppidum and Roman town of Calleva Atrebatum and associated features. Development of the site will need to demonstrate that it has considered the potential impact on the setting of the Scheduled Monument. There is also archaeological potential within the site which will require further investigation. Development of the site will need to ensure that any impact on these heritage features is understood, and suitability mitigated.
- 5.15.9 The site is in close proximity to Grade II listed Windabout cottage which lies to the west of the site. Development along the eastern edge will be required to provide appropriate buffers between development and the edge of the site and the distance may need to be larger to protect the setting of the listed building. It is expected that a Heritage Assessment would also appraise the listed building and ensure that opportunities are taken to preserve the significance and setting of the building.
- 5.15.10 The site is located within the Middle and Outer Consultation Zone of Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) and therefore comments received from the Office for Nuclear Regulation will need to be taken into account in line with Policy SPS8.
- 5.15.11 The site is within a Source Protection Zone 2 and development would need to be designed to prevent the pollution of groundwater. A Flood Risk Assessment will be required, which will need to accord with the requirements set out in Policy ENV10 and national guidance. Sustainable Drainage

Systems must be incorporated in a manner which is well related to the rest of the development, and which takes the opportunity to provide other benefits such as biodiversity enhancements and open space.

**Figure 5.17: SPS5.15 Land at West End Farm, Mortimer Illustrative Concept Plan**



**Key**

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|---|--|--|
| <span style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 2px;"> </span> Site Allocation Boundary                                    | <span style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Developable Area                                 | <span style="background-color: darkgreen; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Ancient Woodland (SINC)                           |
| <span style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Settlement Policy Boundary                                | <span style="background-color: lightgreen; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Retained for Open Space                      | <span style="background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) |
| <span style="background-color: lightgrey; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Mortimer, West Berkshire SPB | <span style="color: green; font-weight: bold;">↔</span> Indicative Green Corridor  | <span style="border-bottom: 1px dashed brown; display: inline-block; width: 50px;"></span> Public Rights of Way                              |
| <span style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 2px;"> </span> Borough Boundary   | <span style="color: brown; font-weight: bold;">↔</span> Indicative Pedestrian and Cycle Access   | <span style="color: red; font-weight: bold;">●</span> Listed Building  |
| <span style="font-size: 2em;">➔</span> Principal Access   | <span style="background-color: green; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Existing Trees/Hedges to be retained and enhanced |  |