



Thatcham Town Council

Examination of West Berkshire Local Plan 2022-2039

Statements of Thatcham Town Council

in response to Inspector's questions in document IN31:

M4. North East Thatcham strategic site &

M7. Housing land supply

(CA12 Henwick Park & CA17 Regency Park Hotel)

1 Introduction

1.1 Introductory comment

1. Thatcham Town Council is extremely disappointed at the modifications that are proposed to the draft West Berkshire, to increase the allocation for Policy SP17 from 1500 to 2500 dwellings and to add sites CA12 and CA17. We share and support the views expressed by the leader of West Berkshire Council in the letter in EXAM50.

1.2 The 'evidence base' for 2500 houses at North East Thatcham

2. Document IN30 states that specified evidence documents "indicates that the allocation has capacity for up to approximately 2,500 homes" while it "casts significant doubt on whether a development comprising around 1,500 homes could viably deliver all of the physical, social and green infrastructure proposed in policy SP17 whilst meeting all of the policy requirements in the Plan." The Town Council disagrees that the evidence documentation can justify this conclusion:
 - The Thatcham Strategic Growth Study Stage 3 is based on an assumption of 2,500 homes. However, it does not provide any evidence or reference any evidence in another document to justify this assumption.
 - The parts of the West Berkshire Strategic Vision 2050 relating to NE Thatcham are based entirely on the Thatcham Strategic Growth Study Stage 3 (see our Reg.19 representations, pages 60-61).
 - The project brief for the Landscape Capacity Assessment for NE Thatcham required "the visual sensitivity of the study site to be considered as a single tract of landscape, and for the site not to be broken down into individual parcels of land." This renders it worthless for assessing the capacity of the site (see our Reg.19 representations, pages 39-41).
 - The Lichfields position statement states (para. 1.61) "that we agree the site at NET could be viably developed for 1,500 homes, and also viably developed for a higher number up to 2,500 homes."
 - The Statement of Common Ground on Secondary School Provision demonstrates conclusively that neither 1500 houses nor 2500 houses will lead to sufficient secondary pupil admissions by itself for a viable secondary school (see section 1.3 below).
 - The Lichfield position statement (in particular, the 'concept masterplan' starting on its pdf page 161) does not provide any additional evidence of the capacity of the site. Indeed, this masterplan appears to assume a larger development than was proposed as the 'developable area' by the Council in Annex C of EXAM23 (Schedule of Main Modifications – 2 May 2024, pdf page 57).
3. Therefore, there is no basis on which to conclude that a development of 1500 houses within site THA20 is less 'sound' than a development of 2500 houses.

1.3 Provision of secondary education for Thattham

4. The Statement of Common Ground on Secondary School Provision (Annex D to EXAM42) finds (paras. 1.12-1.22) that the number of pupils generated by the development would be 240 for 1,500 houses and 400 for 2,500. This represents up to two forms of entry.
5. For a secondary school to be viable, it should have a minimum of 5-6 forms of entry, as described the Thattham Town Council Regulation 19 representations (pages 45-47), the supporting evidence of the West Berkshire Council School Places Plan (starting on pdf page 92) and the DfE guidance note (starting on pdf page 143), our statement on IN6 Matter 4 question 4.5 and the 'Statement of Common Ground for Western Berkshire Councils' (see para. 26 of our Matter 4 statement).
6. West Berkshire Council has provided predictions of the number of pupils entering Kennet School and Trinity School (the two schools with catchment areas including Thattham) up to 2030/31 – see Annex A of this statement. The figures are broadly constant (the annual fluctuation does not represent a trend). Both schools are currently at full capacity, and neither has space to expand on their existing site.
7. It follows that for a new secondary school to be viable, it would need significantly more additional pupils than would be generated by a development of 2500 houses. No explanation has been provided as to where these additional pupils would come from, and we believe that there is no plausible explanation.
8. The Thattham Strategic Growth Study Stage 3 identifies three options for provision of secondary education (para. 4.86): a new secondary school; a second Kennet school campus, for example, this could be for a sixth form centre and/or specialist facilities; and A third possible, but unlikely scenario, a relocated Kennet School to be expanded up to 14FE.
9. The Town Council has resolved to support the relocation of Kennet School (Matter 4 Statement, para. 27), but this has not been carried forward by other parties. A new secondary school is not viable, because of insufficient pupil numbers. Therefore, on the basis of the Local Plan Review evidence base and the submissions to the Examination, the only viable option is a new second campus for one of the existing secondary schools (presumably, Kennet School).
10. No evidence has been submitted on the range of viable sizes for such a second campus, and how this would relate to the developer contributions made towards it for a development of 1500 or 2500 houses, and other potential sources of funding. It follows that there is no basis on which to assess the viability of secondary education provision for either size of development.
11. Given that both Kennet and Trinity schools are at full capacity, the information on expected secondary pupil numbers in Annex A indicates that they would not have capacity for pupils from the CA12 and CA17 sites, at least until the provision for NE Thattham came into operation.

1.4 The North East Thatcham Partnership position statement

12. The Lichfields Position Statement on Matter 4 (North East Thatcham) runs to 314 pages in total, 45 of which are the statement itself¹. It includes nine appendices, which are consultants reports on which other interested parties have had no opportunity to comment. This document makes numerous references to other evidence documents, and the descriptions of some of these references are incorrect or misleading; we give some examples in the following paragraphs. Therefore, the descriptions of evidence in the Position Statement need to be treated with great caution.
13. It is incorrect to state (para. 1.32) that David Lock Associates were consultants to the Council in the preparation of the LCA (see Reg.19 representations by Simon Pike, pages 19-22).
14. The statement that “In arriving at its conclusion that the site could provide “approximately 2,500 homes and associated facilities” the TSGS and findings were appropriately informed by Skyline Assessment work.” is contradicted by TSGS3 (para. 2.46): Although this section presents an overview of landscape issues, detailed skyline and impact analysis has not been undertaken, although a landscape and skyline analysis by the partnership’s consultants has been shared and informed this study. **All proposals should be further substantiated with detailed impact assessments** (our emphasis).
15. Paragraph 1.62 of the Development Statement states that “the concept masterplan at Fig 3.1 of the Development Statement shows how development of up to circa 2,500 homes ... has been based upon initial Landscape sensitivity modelling by the Richards Partnership and is based on the key infrastructure requirements of Policy SP17”. However this document by the Richards Partnership is not within the evidence base for the local plan nor in the Regulation 19 representations for the NE Thatcham Partnership, nor in its lengthy Matter 4 Statement.

The need for a Supplementary Planning Document for North East Thatcham

16. The Town Council welcomes the interim finding of the Inspector in AP76 of IN30 that “the masterplan will be prepared and adopted as a supplementary planning document”. The proposed changes to policy SP17 are extensive, but the Policy is lacking in essential detail. A formal public consultation is therefore required on the detail to be provided by the masterplan, led by the Council. The only means provided in the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement is through the development of an SPD.
17. The SPD will need to be accompanied by a SA/SEA, which will also require a formal consultation.

¹ This statement was submitted in response to IN6 Matter 4, which stated that “All statements should be concise and focussed on the questions, and in any event must contain no more than 3,000 words for each matter.

1.5 The need for timely delivery of infrastructure

18. We invite the Inspector to note the response by The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to a question during the debate on 2nd September 2024 on Community Cohesion²:

Mr Lee Dillon
(Newbury) (LD)

“Could I ask the Secretary of State whether she agrees, given the commitment to build 1.5 million new homes, that community cohesion comes from a planning system where community infrastructure is front-loaded in development, rather than people having to live 10 years on a new build estate without anywhere to come together to celebrate as a community?”

Angela Rayner
(The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government)

“I absolutely agree that it is important that infrastructure is built around our 1.5 million homes target. That is why we set out the proposals in the consultation on the national planning policy framework to ensure that people see the homes they desperately need, the right homes that they need and the vital infrastructure around that.”

² Hansard: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-09-02/debates/0D204C51-88E8-4A4B-BAFC-DCFD4925918F/CommunityCohesion>

2 Statements on M4. North East Thattham strategic site

2.1 SQ4.24. Will the revised modifications to policy SP17 and reasoned justification proposed in response to EXAM46, EXAM51 and EXAM52 relating to the number of dwellings proposed, community facilities, green infrastructure, public open space, heritage assets, flood risk and masterplanning ensure that the Plan is effective in achieving sustainable development on the site?

19. While the Town Council does not support the increase in the number of dwellings in policy SP17, we reluctantly accept the reasons why they have been proposed. However, we believe that Policy SP17 does not as it stands achieve sustainable development, either on the site itself or through its wider impact on the town of Thattham. We therefore propose a number of Main Modifications to policy SP17.

Number of dwellings proposed

20. In IN30, there is a very important caveat on the number of dwellings proposed “In the context of the above, policy SP17 should be modified to refer to up to around 2,500 dwellings, **with the final number to be determined through the masterplanning process**” (*our emphasis*). This is not reflected in the Council’s proposed Main Modifications in EXAM52.

21. The Town Council does not agree that the evidence cited in IN30 provides substantive objective evidence that the site allocation “has capacity for up to approximately 2,500 homes along with the physical, social and green infrastructure proposed ...”. This is addressed in Section 1.2 above.

22. The Town Council therefore proposes the following main modification to paragraph 6.61 of the draft Local Plan:

6.61 Hence, Thattham is now a focus for regeneration, for new housing and for improved provision of services and facilities. A new urban extension to the north east of the town is allocated for development and will provide a new residential neighbourhood with supporting facilities and green infrastructure and enable long term planning for Thattham’s future. Delivery of up to approximately 2,500 dwellings is anticipated, with the final number to be determined through a new Landscape Capacity Assessment and the masterplanning process.³

Community Facilities

23. Paragraph 11 of NPPF states: “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means that: a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; **align growth and infrastructure**; improve the

³ For clarity, the revision marks in EXAM52 have been accepted, so the revision marks in this document reflect the changes proposed.

environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects” (*our emphasis*).

24. Paragraph 20 states that “Strategic policies should ... make sufficient provision for c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure)”.

25. It has been established through evidence and the Examination that the primary healthcare and secondary education provision in Thatcham is already operating at, or beyond, its maximum capacity. It is therefore imperative that the infrastructure to support residents of North East Thatcham is provided in advance of that need. We believe that this must be subject to public consultation, and must therefore be addressed in the SPD, not an outline planning application. To achieve this (and thereby to comply with paragraphs 11 and 20 of NPPF), we propose the following Main Modifications to Policy SP17:

26. Add the following sentence to the end of paragraph 6.6.1:

The phased delivery of residential development must be aligned with the provision of infrastructure and services, such that the existing infrastructure of Thatcham is not overstretched by the additional population of North East Thatcham.

27. Modify the fifth, sixth and seventh new paragraphs numbered x.xx in EXAM 52:

x.xx The site will deliver a number of community benefits, both for the new residents of the site and for existing residents of Thatcham. The community infrastructure required to support the development is set out in the policy, the specific details, including the location, size and phasing in relation to housing completions will be defined in the masterplan and SPD, and funding arrangements will be determined through the planning application stage. There may be opportunities for community infrastructure to be provided off site, or for improvements to existing services or facilities to be made as a result of the development.

x.xx New education provision, including early years, primary and secondary provision will be required to support the needs of the development. Early years and primary provision will be provided on site. The requirements for secondary and SEND provision will be determined following the completion of a feasibility study which will consider the best solution for secondary education requirements in Thatcham and the timeframe in which it would be needed. It is expected that land will be required on the site, and financial contributions to support delivery of the preferred solution.

x.xx Primary healthcare facilities or facilities should be provided, with associated car parking and landscaping. The facilities should be operationally and financially viable and be in accordance with~~take into account~~ the feasibility study commissioned by the NHS Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB-ICB). The facility should provide room sizes

that comply with the Department of Health Building Note 11-01 (or any successor documents). The provision, timeframe for availability, and any contractual arrangement of the facility will need to be agreed as part of any planning application coming forward on the site. Where the onsite provision of a facility in accordance with this policy is considered not to be viable, the Council will only accept ~~expect other~~ offsite mitigation measures, to ensure the primary healthcare provision can support the new population growth if these are equivalent and are agreed by BOB-ICB. The applicant should engage with the BOB-ICB at an early stage to discuss the details of any offsite provision. A further feasibility study, to identify ~~offsite~~ site ~~ice~~ [NOTE: we assume this is what is intended] mitigation measures, would need to be carried out at the applicant's expense and any identified offsite mitigation measures will be funded by the applicant through developer contributions.

Green Infrastructure

28. The status of the 'green infrastructure/new community park' is very unclear within the now proposed Policy SP17. However, its description is well aligned with the criteria for NPPF for designation as Local Green Space. The Town Council therefore proposes that the status of the 'green infrastructure/new community park' by designating it as Local Green Space. We understand that this would be consistent with the stated intentions of the Council and the North East Thatcham Partnership for this land, so we do not envisage any difficulty with this proposal.

The provision will include:

- A band of green infrastructure/new community park across the higher land on the northern part of the allocation (as shown on the indicative map fig.X) to be retained outside the settlement boundary, which will be designated as Local Green Space. This is to create a buffer between the built development of the allocation and the adjoining countryside and the village of Upper Bucklebury to the north. The precise nature of the band of GI to be informed by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and the masterplanning process, having regard to the location of the site within the setting of the AONB;

Masterplanning

29. The Town Council believes that it is essential that it can participate in collaboration **as a council** (rather than as individual Councillors), which means that the process of collaboration must be consistent with the statutory requirements for the function of town and parish councils. The format of the 'stakeholder workshop' during the development of the Thatcham Strategic Growth Study precluded this. The Town Council is the pre-eminent representative of the community in relation to local planning, which justifies it being specifically mentioned.

30. We understand the desire of the Council and the North East Thatcham Partnership for the Masterplan for the SPD to be adopted in a timely manner. However, it is inappropriate for the policy to state a timeframe in which it **will** be adopted:

- The completion of the masterplan is dependent on numerous other policies plans, charters and assessments, all of which will presumably need to be agreed by the Council, and one of which will be prepared by a third party (BOB-ICB).
- The masterplan itself must be agreed by the Council, and the negotiations for this might take some time.
- The process for adoption of an SPD is defined in statute, and the policy must be consistent with this.
- This process includes formal public consultation; provision must be made for the Council to consider amending the SPD based on the response, and allow time for the Council to discuss any proposed amendments with the Partnership.

31. The Town Council therefore proposes the following Modifications to the proposed wording of Policy SP17, as contained in Annex A of EXAM52:

The site will be masterplanned, funded by the applicant and prepared in collaboration with the applicant, the Council, Thatcham Town Council, the community and other stakeholders, and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document. It is expected that the SPD will be adopted within 12 months of adoption of the Local Plan Review and prior to that the submission of any planning application will follow this adoption. The SPD will provide the framework to guide the development and should be based on the evidence base underpinning the Local Plan and outcome of further technical work prepared in line with requirements of this policy. The masterplan will provide a guide as to the location and extent of built development, land uses, green infrastructure including the green buffer, key access arrangements, community and other infrastructure. Proposals must have regard to, and demonstrate how, they have been guided positively by the SPD and agreed masterplan.

2.2 SQ4.25. Is there clear evidence to indicate that there is a realistic prospect that 60 dwellings will be built on the North East Thatcham site by 31 March 2031, and is there a reasonable prospect that a total of 1,760 dwellings will be built on the site by 31 March 2041?

32. For a freestanding development of 60 dwellings, there is little doubt that it could be completed well before 31 March 2031, even with the delay in starting for the completion of the masterplan and SPD. It should be possible to complete 60 dwellings on the NE Thatcham site by this date provided that they are located on a part of the site that minimises the need for supporting infrastructure (e.g. close to an access point). In earlier Examination sessions, it was stated that the site is likely to developed in around five parts; the the prospect of houses being built by that date is dependent on the capacity and willingness of the developers responsible for the 'easy' locations.

33. The total number of dwellings is dependent on the outcome of the LCA and masterplan. See section 1.2 of this statement.

3 Statements on M7. Housing land supply

34. The sites CA12 Henwick Park and CA17 Regency Park Hotel are within the parish of Cold Ash but they are immediately adjacent to the boundary with Thatcham. Their residents will look to Thatcham for services – and the infrastructure to provide them will need to be within Thatcham – either within its existing settlement boundary or through the North East Thatcham development.

35. The West Berkshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan has not been updated to reflect changes to the Local Plan proposed during Examination. In any case, the version that was formed part of the evidence base for the Regulation 22 submission⁴ was inconsistent in several material ways to the submitted draft Local Plan. There is therefore no evidence on how and when this infrastructure could be delivered.

3.1 The status of proposals for CA12 Henwick Park and CA17 Regency Park Hotel

36. The SA/SEA Note to accompany the Council’s Response to Action Point 77 (EXAM53A) states: “Where new sites are proposed for allocation new policies have been drafted and **these have also been subject to SA/SEA**” (*our emphasis*). This statement is incorrect in law, because no consultation has been carried out in accordance with Regulation 13 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. We have not reviewed these assessments in detail, but we have identified below some aspects of the assessment that are incorrect.

37. Sites CA12 and CA17 are immediately adjacent, and would therefore benefit from being considered together. They are largely treated independently in the proposed new policy RSAX (presumably because they have been promoted separately). However, some aspects of these sites are interdependent, such as the LCIA and the assessment of impact on the AONB.

38. The Sustainability Appraisal for site CA12 states that “The LCA [*of 2015*] recommended that the site should be considered in conjunction with CA16 and CA17.

3.2 Proposed Development Parameters for CA12 and CA17

SQ7.13. Are the proposed development parameters for CA12 Henwick Park justified, and will they be effective in achieving sustainable development on the site? In particular, will part (g) be effective in avoiding or minimising adverse impacts on the setting of the AONB and the distinctive separate identify of Cold Ash?

SQ7.15. Are the proposed development parameters for CA17 Regency Park Hotel justified, and will they be effective in achieving sustainable development on the site? In

⁴ Published on 8th October 2021.

particular, will part (r) be effective in avoiding or minimising adverse impacts on the setting of the AONB and the distinctive separate identify of Cold Ash?

Sustainable development and the trajectory

39. The trajectory in EXAM54 envisages that CA17 will be completely built by 2029/30 and CA12 will have 150 completions by 2030/31. However, by 3030/31, it is envisaged that there will only have been 60 completions on the NE Thatcham development. It is therefore very unlikely that any new community infrastructure will have been completed and in operation in time to meet the needs of these two sites.

40. The sustainability appraisal for both sites states:

3: To improve accessibility to community infrastructure	3(a): To improve access to education, health and other services	X	The site is likely to have a positive impact on access to community facilities as it is well located for services and facilities, including education and employment facilities.	The site is likely to have a positive impact on social sustainability as it is located close to existing community infrastructure.
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41. This assessment is clearly incorrect, because it has been established at examination that both secondary education provision for Thatcham and primary healthcare facilities are already operating at (or above) their maximum capacity. Information provided by the Council indicates that it does not expect a statistically significant drop in pupil admissions by 2030 – see Annex A to this document.

42. Policy RSAX does not require the provision of any community infrastructure, and the most recent version of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan does not address the requirements of these two sites.

43. Therefore, these two sites must be considered as not sustainable from the perspective of access to secondary education and primary health services, at least until the approval of the masterplan and SPD for NE Thatcham – and only then, if the infrastructure for these services is both constructed and in operation in advance of any significant construction of dwellings on SP17.

Sustainable development and Green Infrastructure

44. Like SP17, the status of the ‘landscape buffers’ for these sites is very unclear, We therefore propose the same addition to Policy RSAX, that they are designated as Local Green Space.

Impact on the setting of the AONB

45. Section 245(6) of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 has added a new provision to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000: “In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty in England, a relevant authority other than a devolved Welsh authority must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty.”
46. The July 2021 version of NPPF added a new provision in Section 176⁵ relating to the setting of the AONB: “while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.”
47. The Land Capacity Assessment (LCA) for these sites dates from August 2015, and the HELAA was developed some time prior to the Regulation 18 consultation in December 2020. Therefore, the evidence base for these sites has not taken account of these statutory and regulatory developments.
48. The sustainability appraisal for these sites includes the following statement by Natural England:
“Due to the nature of landscape assessment, they are unable to provide any detailed comments at this stage. They will need to see further evidence before they could determine which sites would be damaging to the AONB.”
49. This statement was made prior to the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. Therefore, it remains an open issue as to whether Natural England would consider these sites to be acceptable.
50. The LCA for these sites therefore needs to be reviewed and updated in the light of these developments, in particular the maximum 95m AOD contour. The development of these sites then needs to be in accordance with its conclusions.

Impact on the distinctive separate identity of Cold Ash

51. The Town Council welcomes Policy DM2, on Separation of Settlements around Newbury and Thatcham. Under this policy, “Development which would detract from the open or rural character of these gaps [*between Thatcham and Cold Ash, as shown on the policies map*] will not be permitted.” However, the opposite does not automatically follow: development between the settlements but outside the areas shown on the policies map may still result in the coalescence of the settlements, and should therefore also not be permitted.
52. The Neighbourhood Development Plan for Cold Ash Parish was adopted by West Berkshire District Council in May 2024. It should therefore be given full weight in consideration of sites CA12 and CA17. However, it is not mentioned at all in EXAM53 or EXAM53A (though the draft NDP for Tilehurst is mentioned in EXAM53A).

⁵ The corresponding paragraph in the February 2019 version of NPPF is no. 172.

3.3 Prospect of completions

SQ7.14. Is there clear evidence to indicate that there is a realistic prospect that 150 dwellings will be built on proposed allocation CA12 Henwick Park by 31 March 2031, and is there a reasonable prospect that a total of 225 dwellings will be built on the site by 31 March 2041?

SQ7.16. Is there clear evidence to indicate that there is a realistic prospect that 45 dwellings will be built on proposed allocation CA17 Regency Park Hotel by 31 March 2030?

53. As described in the previous section, the recent statutory and regulatory require the preparation of a new LCA, which may reduce the maximum capacity of these sites below 225 and 45 dwellings respectively.

54. If it is found that the extraction of minerals is required prior to development in accordance with Policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, this may delay the start of development, and also its completion.

3.4 Proposed Modifications to Policy RSAX

55. It is unclear why the wording of the parts of Policy RSAX for CA12 and CA17 are so different. We suggest that they aligned, except where there is a clear planning reason for the difference.

56. While the two sites are currently distinct and are proposed to have separate access, we do not see why it should be a requirement of the Policy that CA17 is accessed through the Regency Park Hotel rather than via the CA12 site – especially as paragraph b. states that access will be provided from CA12 to CA17.

57. The Town Council therefore proposes the following Modifications to new Policy RSAX (only relevant parts are copied from EXAM53):

POLICY RSAX

Land at Henwick Park, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham (Site ref CA12)

The site, as shown on the indicative map, will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

a. The provision of up to approximately 225 dwellings (the number to be determined by a new Landscape Capacity Assessment, having regard to Policy DM2, the Cold Ash Neighbourhood Development Plan and the location of the site within the setting of the AONB);

b. Access to the site will be provided via Cold Ash Hill / Heath Lane and Bowling Green Road, with further pedestrian accesses onto Cold Ash Hill, Heath Lane, Bowling Green Road, and the allocation RSAX (Land east of the Regency Park Hotel);

g. Comprise a development design and layout in line with Policy SP7 and that will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), and will include the following measures:

i. no development above a specified ~~the 95-metre AOD~~ contour (to be determined by the LCA, but no higher than 95 metre AOD);

ii. the balance of land to the north and west of the developed area to be retained as an open landscape buffer in order to maintain the open character between Thatcham and Cold Ash and which will be retained outside the settlement boundary for Thatcham, and which will be designated as Local Green Space; and

Land East of Regency Park Hotel, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham (Site ref CA17)

The site, as shown on the indicative map, will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

m. The provision of up to approximately 45 dwellings (the number to be determined by a new Landscape Capacity Assessment, having regard to Policy DM2, the Cold Ash Neighbourhood Development Plan and the location of the site within the setting of the AONB);

n. Access to the site will be provided via Bowling Green Road, using the existing access to the hotel, or via site CA12. A walking and cycling link to the allocation RSAX (Land at Henwick Park) must ~~also~~ be provided;

o. Main internal walking and cycling routes for the site will be provided, and will be linked to existing routes; *[COMMENT: does a site of 45 houses need any internal walking and cycling links?]*

r. The site will be developed in accordance with the new Landscape Capacity Assessment ~~(2015)~~. The scheme will comprise a development design and layout in line with Policy SP7, that will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), and will include the following measures:

i. No development above a specified ~~the 95-metre AOD~~ contour (to be determined by the LCA, but no higher than 95 metre AOD);

ii. The balance of land in the north of the site to be retained as a landscape buffer which will be retained outside the settlement boundary for Thatcham and which will be designated as Local Green Space;

ANNEX A

The following information was provided by West Berkshire Council in response to a question submitted to the meeting of Council on 18th July 2024, and will form part of the public record of that meeting.

QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 18 July 2024

(D) Question not related to an item of business submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Children and Family Services

“How many children resident within the catchment areas of Kennet School and Trinity School started (or will start) Year 1 of primary education for each of the years 2020-2024, and how many children does the Council predict will start secondary education at each of these schools for each of the years 2026-2030?”

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside answered:

“The number of children resident within the catchment areas of Kennet School and Trinity School that started (or will start) Year 1 of primary education (Reception) for each of the years 2020-2024 is as follows:

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	518	525	533	509	534

The figures provided are those at the point of allocation.

The number of children the Council predicts will start secondary education at each of these schools for each of the years 2026-2030 is as follows:

School	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Kennet	265	284	262	262	254
Trinity	221	236	218	218	211
Total	486	520	480	480	465

It’s important to note that the forecasts are updated annually, and the information provided is based on data from September 2023. It’s also important to note that changing circumstances can often change the choices families make. Very recent changes to school choices won’t therefore be reflected in the forecasts until after the next update is completed”.