



APPLICATIONS & APPEALS SERVICES

ERECTION OF NINE DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, PARKING AND LANDSCAPING

**LAND AT ALFOLD FARM LOXWOOD ROAD,
HOOK STREET, ALFOLD GU6 8HP**

PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

SEPTEMBER 2024



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning permission is sought for the erection of nine dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping.

1.2 This supporting Planning, Design and Access Statement sets out the detail of the proposal which is described and appraised having regard to the following aspects.

- **Physical Context** – explains the physical context of the site and its surroundings;
- **Planning Context** – relevant planning history of the site and broad policy requirements;
- **Use** – the purpose of the proposed development;
- **Amount** – the extent of development on the site;
- **Scale** – details of the physical size of the proposed development;
- **Layout** – the relationship of the proposed development to the site and its setting;
- **Appearance** – details of materials, style and impact upon the existing and neighbouring properties;
- **Landscape** – impact of the proposal on the existing landscape and proposed planting and surfacing;

- **Access** – access to the proposed development and associated parking.

1.3 The Statement will demonstrate that the proposed development accords with the relevant planning policies and is acceptable in all respects.

2.0 PHYSICAL CONTEXT

- 2.1 The application site comprises a parcel of land measuring 0.63 hectares situated to east of Loxwood Road. It was formerly used as a horse schooling arena and is currently used as a builder's yard/storage of construction materials. It is a level plot enclosed by timber close boarded fencing with an access from the existing shared access/track serving it and neighbouring properties to the west, including Alfold Business Centre. This shared access also serves as a public bridleway.
- 2.2 The land is open with vegetation largely limited to managed modified grass with an area of native hedgerow and brambles to the north boundary.
- 2.3 The site is approximately 200m to the north of the defined settlement boundary for Alfold and is the countryside beyond the Green Belt. It is situated to the east of Loxwood Road where several new build dwellings have been constructed and residential conversions have been carried out in recent years.



Figure 1 - Site location plan



Figure 2 - Aerial view of site and settlement area

- 2.4 The area is characterised by open fields enclosed by hedges with some mature wooded areas in the vicinity. There are two areas of ancient woodland located approximately 115m to the southwest and 130m to the north east.
- 2.5 The following are photographs of the application site and surrounding context:



Figure 3 - View of site from shared access (site on left)



Figure 4 - View of site from neighbouring site to west



Figure 5 - View of site from west(site beyond far fence)



Figure 7 - Alfold Business Centre to southwest of site



Figure 6 - New dwellings to west of site



Figure 8 - Alfold Business Centre to southwest

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 There is no relevant recent planning history in relation to the application site. However, the following planning applications are considered relevant to the proposal.

3.2 However, applications for neighbouring sites are relevant are noted below:

- WA/2022/01751 – Alfold Farm Loxwood Road Alfold Cranleigh GU6 8HP - Erection of a detached bungalow and associated parking following removal of existing mobile home. APPROVED 15 December 2022.
- WA/2020/1794 Land At Alfold Farm Bungalow Loxwood Road Alfold. Refused 7 October 2020 - Erection of 3 dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping. APPEAL ALLOWED 20 December 2021.
- WA/2017/0758 – Alfold Farm Bungalow - Erection of an extension to existing dwelling to provide 2 additional dwellings. APPROVED 7 September 2017.
- WA/2016/2287 - Alfold Farm Bungalow - Erection of 5 dwellings following demolition of existing dwelling. REFUSED 12.1.2017

- WA/2016/0683 – Alfold Farm - Change of use of existing equestrian building containing 1 dwelling to provide 7 additional dwellings and alterations to elevations. APPEAL ALLOWED 30/12/2016

4.0 PROPOSAL

4.1 Planning permission is sought for the erection of nine detached dwellings ranging from three to five bedrooms with associated landscaping and access.

4.2 Housing mix is summarised as follows:

- 3x three-bedroom dwellings (Type 1, Plots 1, 5 and 7)
- 3x four-bedroom dwellings (Type 2, Plots 2, 4 and 9)
- 3x five-bedroom dwellings (Type 3, Plots 3, 6 and 8).

4.3 Each of the dwellings would include double garages. These are attached to the dwellings in all but two plots (4 and 7). In addition to the garages, each dwelling would be provided with two off-street parking spaces. Provision is also made for five visitor parking spaces in two location

4.4 The two-storey dwellings would be of traditional design with elevations faced with brick and weatherboarding and pitched, tiled roofs. Detached garages at plots 4 and 7 would feature brick plinth courses with weatherboarding above and tiled roof. Materials would match those of the dwelling.

4.5 The dwellings would be arranged around a central spine road leading from an existing access into the site at its southwest corner. The internal access road would also lead to two adjoining plots to the west of the site.

4.6 A further pedestrian access would be provided between plots 2 and 8 linking the centre of the site to the shared access road/public right of way.



Figure 9 - Proposed site layout plan

4.7 The existing timber close boarded fencing would be replaced with timber post and rail fencing and hedging along the

external site boundaries. The proposed landscaping scheme includes a considerable number of trees and understory planting within the site and to the site boundaries.

5.0 POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the Development Plan for the Borough includes the relevant policies of the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan, Part 1: Strategic Policies and Sites (2018) and the Waverley Borough Local Plan, Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies.
- 5.2 In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and other national planning guidance are material considerations.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023)

- 5.3 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and Wales and how these should be applied. It provides a framework for the preparation of local plans for housing and other development. The NPPF should be read as a whole.
- 5.4 Paragraph 2 of the NPPF sets out that ***'Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material***

considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements'.

- 5.5 Paragraph 7 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has the following three overarching objectives which are independent but need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:

- a) ***'an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;***
- b) ***a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient***

number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy'.

5.6 Paragraph 10 states '**So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).** For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

5.7 Where there are no relevant development plan policies or the relevant policies are out of date, the NPPF states that planning permission should be granted unless the policies of the Framework indicate otherwise or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the Framework considered as a whole (paragraph 11 d).

5.8 Paragraph 12 of the Framework states that '**The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making.** Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not normally be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed'.

5.9 In terms of decision-making, the Framework states at paragraph 38 that '**Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range**

of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible’.

- 5.10 Paragraph 60 states ‘To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay’.
- 5.11 Paragraph 70 sets out that ‘Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built out relatively quickly’.
- 5.12 Paragraph 83 states ‘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.’

- 5.13 Paragraph 84 states that ‘Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) *there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;*
- b) *the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;*
- c) *the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;*

d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling; or

e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:

- **is truly outstanding or innovative, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and**
- **would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area’.**

5.14 Paragraph 108 requires transport issues to be considered at the early stages of plan-making and development proposals. This is to ensure that (inter alia) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed.

5.15 Paragraph 109 acknowledges that **‘opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making’.**

5.16 Paragraph 111 states that if setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account the accessibility of the development, its type, mix and use, the availability of land and opportunities for public transport, local car ownership levels and the need to ensure that adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles. Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport.

5.17 In assessing development proposals, paragraph 114 states that it should be ensured that there are appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes, that there is safe and suitable access to the site (for all road users) and that any significant impacts on the transport network or on highway safety terms can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.

5.18 Paragraph 115 makes it clear that **‘Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or**

the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe’.

5.19 Paragraph 123 of the Framework states that **‘Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.’** Paragraph 118 (a) encourages multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes.

5.20 Paragraph 124 confirms that planning policies and decisions should (inter alia) **‘promote and support development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure).’**

5.21 Paragraph 125 states that **‘Local planning authorities should take a positive role in identifying and helping to bring forward land that may be suitable for meeting development needs.’** Whilst paragraph 126 notes that

‘Planning policies and decisions need to reflect changes in demand for land.’

5.22 When considering land which is developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in the local plan, local planning authorities should take a positive approach to application for alternative uses including using **‘retail and employment land for homes in areas of high housing demand, provided this would not undermine key economic sectors or sites or the vitality and viability of town centres, and would be compatible with other policies in this Framework...’** (paragraph 127).

5.23 In terms of design, Section 12 seeks to achieve well designed places sets out that the **‘The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities’** (paragraph 131).

5.24 Paragraph 135 further states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and

add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping. Development should also be sympathetic to local character and history and should be designed with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

- 5.25 Paragraph 139 states that **‘Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:**

a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes: and/or

b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of

design more generally in an area, so long as they fit with the overall form and layout of their surroundings’.

- 5.26 Paragraph 180 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural local environment by (inter alia) ***‘recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside....’.***

Local Development Plan

- 5.27 The Development Plan for the Borough is made up of the following:

- Waverley Borough Local Plan (Part 1): Strategic policies and sites (2018) (the LPP1)
- Waverley Borough Local Plan (Part 2) (2023) (the LPP2)
- Alfold Neighbourhood Plan (2021) and
- Supplementary planning documents/guidance.

Waverley Borough Council Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies (2018)

- 5.28 The Local Plan supports the presumption in favour of sustainable development in Policy SP1. The Council will always work proactively with applicants to find solutions so

proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Proposals which accord with the Development Plan will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 5.29 Policy SP2 sets out the overall strategic policy to ensure that development needs are met in a sustainable manner having regard to existing settlements, constraints and strategic allocations. Development will be directed to appropriate areas and proposals should ensure that appropriate infrastructure is available.
- 5.30 Policy ALH1 Amount and Location of Housing sets out the housing targets for the Borough and breaks down the overall requirement by parish.
- 5.31 Policy AHN1 sets out the affordable housing provision requirements for residential developments. This will be required for schemes producing a net increase of 6 dwellings or more in designated rural area or 11 dwellings or more in non-designated rural areas. However, the thresholds have been adjusted to reflect national planning policy which states

that affordable housing should be required on major developments (development of 10 units or more).

- 5.32 Policy RE1 Countryside beyond the Green Belt states that development in this area and outside the settlements the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside will be recognised safeguarded in accordance with the NPPF.
- 5.33 Policy TD1 seeks to ensure that new development is designed to create safe and attractive environments which protect the character and amenity of the Borough and meet the needs of users. Proposals should incorporate the principles of sustainable development and maximise opportunities to improve the quality of life of current and future residents.
- 5.34 Policy ST1 Sustainable Transport states that opportunities for sustainable transport modes will be maximised. Where necessary, contributions will be sought to improve or introduce transport schemes. Development should include measures to encourage sustainable and modes.
- 5.35 Policy AHN3 Housing Types and Size seeks to ensure that proposals include an appropriate range of different types and sizes of houses to meet local need. New developments should

meet Building Regulations M4(2) Category 2 standard to meet the needs of older people and those with disabilities.

- 5.36 Policy NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Conservations seeks to ensure that biodiversity is conserved and enhanced with particular regard to the hierarchy of important sites and habitats in the Borough.
- 5.37 Policy NE2 Green and Blue Infrastructure states that the Council will seek, where appropriate, to maintain and enhance existing trees, woodland and hedgerows within the Borough.
- 5.38 Policy HA1 seeks to ensure that the significance of heritage assets is conserved or enhanced.
- 5.39 Policy CC1 Climate Change supports development which contributes to mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change, including measures that use renewable and low carbon energy supply systems.
- 5.40 Policy CC2 Sustainable Construction and Design promotes sustainable patterns of development and the reduction of the level of greenhouse gas emissions through appropriate design and measures.

- 5.41 Policy CC4 Flood Risk Management seeks to ensure that the overall and local risk of flooding in the Borough is reduced. Development should be located, designed and laid out to ensure that flood risk is minimised and should not increase risk outside the side. Sustainable drainage systems will be encouraged.

Waverley Borough Local Plan (Part 2): Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (2023):

- 5.42 Policy DM1 requires that development should not harm the health or amenity of occupants of nearby land or the local environment generally. Measures to avoid contamination and exacerbating climate change should be incorporated with appropriate proposals for mitigation.
- 5.43 Similarly, Policy DM2 states that all development should seek to maximise energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions through its design, structure, orientation and positioning, landscaping and relevant technology.
- 5.44 Policy DM4 states that all new development will be expected to be of a high-quality design. Development should respond effectively to its surroundings, reinforcing local distinctiveness

and landscape and historic townscape character. It sets the principles of good design.

- 5.45 Policy DM5 requires that development should avoid harm to the amenity of future occupants and existing occupants of nearby land, buildings and residences including by way of overlooking, loss of daylight or sunlight or overbearing appearance. DM9 accessibility and transport
- 5.46 Policy DM9 states that development should provide safe and convenient access for all highways users and promote sustainable transport modes and patterns. Adequate parking and cycle storage should be incorporated in accordance with parking guidelines alongside provision of appropriate electric vehicle charging points.
- 5.47 Policy DM11 seeks to ensure that development should retain trees, woodland and hedgerows with suitable landscaping appropriate to the scale, nature and location of development. Proposals which would result in significant harm to woodland, important trees should be avoided or the loss mitigated or compensated (as a last resort). The loss of irreplaceable habitats or detrimental impact upon the landscape character of the area will not be permitted unless there are wholly

exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy is proposed.

Alfold Neighbourhood Plan (2024): (the “ANP”)

- 5.48 Policy ANP H1 Residential Development sets out that proposals for small-scale housing developments must meet the following criteria:
- The proposed development is for an infill gap, or on previously developed land, within existing Settlement Boundaries (as defined in Local Plan Part 2) or within the continuity of existing buildings.
 - The proposed development contributes positively to the physical and social infrastructure of the Parish either within the development site or at other suitable locations.
 - The proposed development reflects the scale, grain and density of built development in the vicinity of the site.
 - The proposed development has been informed by and responds positively to the Alfold Neighbourhood Plan Design Code.
- 5.49 Policy ANP H2 – Housing Type and Mix seeks to ensure that development provides a suitable mix of housing. It also seeks

to protect against the loss of small homes and promotes housing designed for the occupation of the elderly.

5.50 Policy ANP DS1 – Dark Skies seeks to protect the visual amenity of the rural landscape by reducing light pollution arising from development.

5.51 Policy ANP PSC1 Protecting Settlement Character requires that development should be appropriate in scale, nature and location, having regard to the Alfold Design Code. Proposals should positively respond to the rural character of the area and avoid coalescence between the existing settlement clusters.

5.52 Policy ANP BD1 Biodiversity in New Developments seeks to ensure that development achieves a minimum biodiversity net gain of 10% on site. This should be achieved on site if possible and where practicable, existing trees and hedges should be retained and incorporated into green areas and open spaces. New green infrastructure should provide connectivity of habitats and native species should be incorporated where practicable.

5.53 Policy ANP BD2 – Improving the Existing Natural Environment seeks to support development proposal to enhance the natural environment and planting.

5.54 Policy ANP TT2 – Footpaths Cycleways and Public Rights of Way seeks to promote and protect infrastructure to support active travel, including routes for walking and cycling. Development proposals which would unacceptably affect existing public rights of way would not be supported unless an appropriate and suitable replacement or mitigation is offered.

5.55 Policy ANP TT3 – Road Safety and Amenity notes that proposals which include appropriate mitigation measures to contribute towards traffic safety, speed reduction and improvements to the public realm will be supported.

5.56 Policy ANP TT4 – Movement Corridors states that proposal which would create or enhance movement corridors (new or historic) will be supported. n

5.57 It is noted that the Alfold Neighbourhood Plan Design Code 2020 sits alongside the ANP and is a material consideration. This provides a framework for design to ensure that local heritage, character and landscape are respected.

Other material considerations

5.58 Other material considerations include

- The National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (NPPG)
- National Design Guide (2021)
- Waverley Borough Council Parking Guidelines (2013)
- Surrey Vehicular and Cycle Parking Guidance (2018)
- Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan (2020-2025)
- Alfold Design Code (2020)
- Climate Change and Sustainability Planning Document (2022)
- Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (2023)

Housing land supply

5.59 The NPPF requires that Councils identify a five-year housing land supply. Based upon the Standard Method, this requires delivery of an average of 755 dwellings per year or 3,775 dwellings over a five-year period. The Council's Five Year Housing Land Supply Position Statement (Base date 1 April

2023, published October 2023) identified a total housing supply of 2,939 dwellings to be delivered between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2028. This equates to a 3.89 year housing land supply.

5.60 In January 2024, a Planning Inspector concluded that the Council could demonstrate a 3.08 year housing land supply¹. The Inspector considered that there was insufficient evidence to support the Council's projections in relation to six development sites, four of which are strategic allocation sites.

5.61 Consequently, there is a significant shortfall in housing land supply. In accordance with Footnote 8 of the NPPF, policies related to the delivery of housing are out-of-date and the presumption in favour of sustainable development detailed in paragraph 11 of the NPPF may apply subject to the criteria set out in paragraph 11d).

¹ APP/R3650/W/23/3326412 Land East of Knowle Lane Cranleigh

6.0 APPRAISAL

Principle

- 6.1 Policy SP2 of the LPP1 sets out the spatial strategy for development within the Borough and seeks to ensure that development needs are met in a sustainable manner by focussing development in the four main settlements. It notes that limited levels of development may be acceptable in and around villages, including Alfold, recognising that villages outside the Surrey Hills Landscape and Green Belt offer more scope for growth.
- 6.2 Paragraph 80 of the NPPF states that isolated homes in the Countryside should not be permitted unless certain circumstances apply.
- 6.3 Policy RE1 of the LPP1 states that development in the countryside and outside the Green Belt will be permitted provided that it preserves the intrinsic beauty and character of the countryside.
- 6.4 Policy H1 of the ANP states the proposals for small-scale housing development may be acceptable where it relates to an infill gap, previously developed land, land within the Settlement Boundaries or within the continuity of existing buildings. It also requires that development should contribute positively to social infrastructure, respect the character and pattern of development within the vicinity and adhere to the Design Code.
- 6.5 The proposal is outside the defined Settlement Boundary of Alfold as defined in the LPP2 and in the Countryside beyond the Green Belt. The site is just 250m from the north boundary of the settlement and within walking distance of its services. As such, the proposed dwellings would not be isolated and would be situated in a sustainable location.
- 6.6 Furthermore, whilst the settlement boundary is drawn just north of the dwellings along Glebelands Meadow, the visibly developed area of the “village” of Alfold extends to the north and east with residential and commercial development to both sides of Loxwood Road. The development to the west of the site includes a second tier of dwellings which extends the depth and density of development within the immediate vicinity. This is reflected in the identification of the land to the west of the site as within the “Built Area” in an illustration from the ANP (see Figure 10). As such, the site and proposal

represent a logical continuation of the village of Alfold as viewed on the ground. It would comply with the principles of development plan policies.

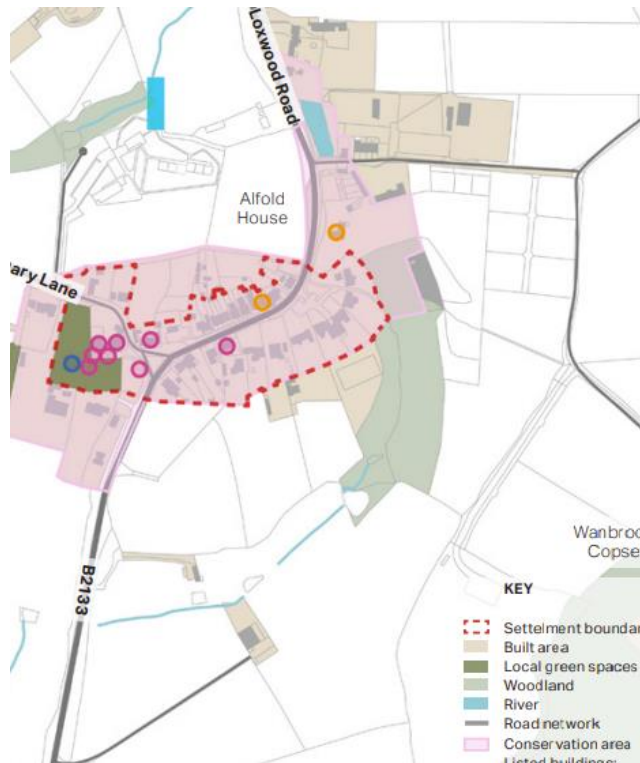


Figure 10 - Extract from Alfold Design Code (Figure 21)

Five year housing land supply

- 6.7 Notwithstanding the above, there is a significant shortfall in the housing land supply as noted in paragraphs 5.59 to 5.61. Therefore, unless the site is located in an area, or involves an asset, of particular importance, that provides a clear reason for refusal, then permission must be granted unless it can be demonstrated that any adverse impacts demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole.
- 6.8 The 'tilted balance' detailed in paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is therefore engaged and the development plan policies most important in the determination of the application must be considered out-of-date. Permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The application proposes a net gain of nine residential units which is a modest benefit to which significant weight must be attached given the scale of the shortfall.

Housing mix

- 6.9 Policy AHN3 sets out that proposals will be required to make provision for an appropriate range of different types and sizes of housing to meet the needs of the community, reflecting the most up to date evidence in the West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The supporting text and justification states that the policy for a mix of homes should be able to react to changing circumstances and ensure that it contributes to the mix of both the wider area as well as the development site itself. Therefore, the policy for a mix of homes should not prescribe the size of homes.
- 6.10 Table T1 of the ANP details the suggested target percentage of housing mix. This target should be considered a guide rather than a hard requirement against which planning permission should be refused as it is not possible to use a prescribed formula as the size and configuration of developments will be dictated by the particular site constraints and character. Thus, each site and proposal must be considered on its individual merits.
- 6.11 The proposed development provides for mid- to large family-sized dwellings ranging from three-five bedroom

accommodation. These are evenly split as 33.3% of the total development. As noted in the Alfold Housing Needs Assessment (2022), Alfold requires mid-sized homes in relation to market housing, and there is an emphasis upon three-bedroom units.

- 6.12 The proposal includes a 67% provision of three-bedroom and the four-bedroom dwellings, which constitute mid-sized family homes. It is the applicant's intention to fill a gap in the housing supply in Alfold and its surrounds where there is a greater proportion of small and very large dwellings. As such, the proposed dwellings would support those seeking to both upsize and downsize, thereby encouraging people to move as required. Due to the setting, the dwellings are loosely arranged with spacious but not excessively large gardens which impact upon affordability. The proposal therefore provides much-needed mid-sized accommodation and pragmatically considers housing needs, the character of the area and issues of affordability.

Design and character (including trees and landscaping)

- 6.13 National planning policies as detailed in paragraphs 135, 136 and 139 require the development is of high quality design

which respects the local setting and pattern of development. This is reflected in policies TD1 and RE1 of the LPP1, Policy DM4 of the LPP2 and Policy ANP H1 of the Local Plan which states that development in the countryside but outside the Green Belt should recognise and safeguard the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

- 6.14 The proposed dwellings are of traditional form and design. The external materials (brick, weatherboarding and tiles) reflect that simple material palette which would reflect materials visible within the surrounding locality. Details can be submitted to the Council for approval subject to condition. The dwellings are similar in overall design but with variations, even within each of the three proposed design types. This coupled with the non-linear arrangement of the dwellings would ensure a harmonious but sufficiently varied design and appearance across the development.
- 6.15 In terms of the impact upon the visual amenity and character of the surrounding area, the site is open and flat with open fields to the north, east and south but considerable development to the west and southwest. The site is fenced with limited long distance views across the site given the neighbouring development and existing boundary treatments.

- 6.16 Whilst the countryside is generally characterised by open space and a lack of development, well designed development that respects the character and beauty of the area can be acceptable. The site is at the end of a reasonably dense area of development to the west featuring a mixture of detached and terraced dwellings and commercial premises. As such, the development would not be visually isolated.

- 6.17 The loose arrangement and spacing of the dwellings contrasts with the denser development to the west and therefore provides a softer transition between the built area and the open countryside. This balances the efficient use of land with the principles of good design which respects local context. The generally layout would not look out of place within the local area which includes small developments/clusters of dwellings of similar design arranged around a shared drive from the road.

- 6.18 The appearance of the application site would be further enhanced through the landscaping scheme which includes the replacement of the existing timber close boarded fencing around the site boundaries with timber post and rail fencing. The considerable soft landscaping measures both internally and along the site boundaries would further soften the

appearance of the development within this countryside location and setting. Overall, the proposal would not lead to an urbanising effect and would enhance the landscape value of the site within this location.

- 6.19 The presence of fields around the site would also preserve the gap between Alfold and Alfold Crossways to the north.
- 6.20 Accordingly, the proposal would represent high quality design which respects the intrinsic character and openness of the countryside in accordance with national and local policies and design codes.

Housing space

- 6.21 The dwellings would provide suitable and satisfactory habitable accommodation which would meet the minimum standards set out in the Government's Technical Guidance: Nationally Described Space Standards. Given the layout of the dwellings, the habitable spaces would benefit from appropriate natural light and ventilation.
- 6.22 The private gardens would be of suitable size for the family sized dwellings. The proposed landscaping scheme would provide a pleasant appearance and outlook without adversely

affecting light to these spaces. The layout and orientation of the dwellings within the site would provide suitable outlook from the properties and prevent direct overlooking between the dwellings.

Residential amenity

- 6.23 The nearest neighbouring dwellings are situated to the west in the form of the new bungalow and terraced dwellings. These dwellings are situated more than 17m from the west boundary of the site, and the proposed development would maintain a minimum distance of 30m between the elevations of the nearest proposed dwellings (plots 1 and 3), and the neighbouring dwellings. Taking into account the orientation of the dwellings within plots 1 and 3, the proposal would not result in harm to the neighbouring occupiers in terms of privacy, outlook or light.
- 6.24 As noted above, although introducing development, the proposal would improve the overall appearance of the site when compared to the existing through the planting and landscaping scheme.

6.25 Furthermore, the development would not result in harm in relation to noise and disturbance to the occupiers of the neighbouring dwellings taking into account the residential use and the relatively small scale and layout of the development.

Access and parking

6.26 As noted, there is an existing access into the site from the shared track leading from the east side of Loxwood Road. The proposed access would modify this slightly to ensure that it is of sufficient width and has suitable visibility to allow passing and safe access and egress both into the application site and internally. It would also ensure that movements do not adversely affect other users of the public right of way.

6.27 The addition of nine dwellings would increase the use of the access, but the scale of this increase would not be significant. The accompanying Transport Statement includes appropriate surveys and analysis, including details of the level of traffic generated by the proposal. This states that the development would generate up to 13 trips during the three hour morning peak period and again during the three hour evening peak period. During off peak periods, the frequency of vehicle movements would be lower. Given the projected level of

vehicular movements, it is unlikely that there would be an impact upon highway safety either along the shared access or at its junction with Loxwood Road. Moreover, this movement would be no different to the characteristics associated with the existing dwellings in the area.

6.28 Swept path analyses show that sufficient space has been allocated within the development to allow for the turning of emergency and other large vehicles within the site. This would ensure that such vehicles can enter and exist in forward gear to prevent harm in relation to their movement to and from the site.

6.29 The proposal allows for two off-street parking spaces for each of the dwellings in addition to the provision of enclosed garages. This would respect the adopted parking standards, and the layout plans and Transport Statement demonstrate that it would be possible to turn vehicles within the allocated drives to be provided. The provision of visitor parking standards also accords with adopted standards.

6.30 Secure cycle storage facilities are not shown but can be accommodated within the residential curtilage of each dwelling. The proposal would also introduce a pedestrian path

within the development to link to the access/public right of way, thus encouraging walking and cycling away from the vehicular access.

- 6.31 As such, the proposal would accord with Policy DM9 of the LPP2 and with adopted supplement planning documents/guidance.

Biodiversity and the natural environment

- 6.32 Policy NE1 of the LLP1 aims to conserve and enhance the biodiversity within the Borough. Development will be permitted where it retains, protects and enhances features of biodiversity and geological interest and ensures appropriate management of those features. As such, new development should make a positive contribution to biodiversity in the Borough. The application site does not lie within, or close to, any of the special protection areas. The application site does not lie within a designated landscape area or within an area which would have significant impact upon protected or important habitats.

- 6.33 As noted, the site features very limited planting comprised of managed grassland. The application includes a Preliminary

Ecological Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain Report. The concludes that the habitats within the sites are of low and moderate ecological value. There is no evidence of protected flora within the site. The site serves as a commuting or foraging ground for local wildlife, with some potential to support reptiles and breeding birds. The PEA suggests mitigation and enhancement measures.

- 6.34 These recommendations are included within the biodiversity net gain (BNG) proposals. The NPPF encourages BNG (paragraph 180) and it is not a statutory requirement that development provide a minimum 10% gain when compared to the existing baseline values of the site. The BNG report and associated metric set out that the site has a baseline value of 1.59 units. Having regard to the proposed site layout and landscaping plans, the post-development biodiversity value would be 2.96 units. This net gain of 1.37 habitat units equates to an 86.5% net gain. In addition, whilst the existing site has 0 hedgerow units, the development would result in a net gain of 1.51 hedgerow units

- 6.35 The proposed development would therefore exceed the minimum values required by legislation and would meet national and local plan policies.

Flooding

- 6.36 Policy CC4 of the Waverley Local Plan Part 1 (dated February 2018) and paragraph 165 of the NPPF states that development should be directed away from areas at highest risk (existing or future). The PPG provides guidance on which developments are incompatible with certain Flood Zones. This site lies in Flood Zone 1, an area of low probability of flooding. As such, there is no objection to development within this zone.
- 6.37 The development would introduce hard surfacing within the site, but would incorporate appropriate drainage measures as detailed in the accompanying Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy report. Moreover, the development the proposed inclusion of water butts to harvest rainwater and the proposed planting scheme would provide for added measures to ensure that surface water is addressed as far as possible within the site boundaries.

Energy efficiency

- 6.38 Building regulations have been updated since the adoption of the LPP1. In order to meet its climate change commitments to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, the Government introduced

the Future Homes and Building Standard. The objective is to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from buildings by 75-80% when compared to previous building regulations. The amended approved documents which came into effect in 2021 represented the first phase of this transition, and these will be updated to meet the ambitious reduction targets. As the proposed dwellings would be constructed under this amended regulatory regime, the proposals would go beyond the aims and objectives of the existing Development Plan policies.

- 6.39 Notwithstanding the above, a Sustainability Statement has been submitted with the application. The development would be constructed with appropriate energy efficiency measures designed to prevent heat loss. In addition, there are options to incorporate renewable energy technologies, including solar photovoltaics and air source heat pumps. The combined fabric first approach with renewable energy generation would ensure that there is a significant uplift in dwelling emissions rate (DER) compared to the target emissions rate.

- 6.40 The Statement also details further measures which go beyond building regulations, including the selection of white goods and the incorporation of energy monitoring and other energy efficient technologies. The development would also seek to

harvest rainwater whilst minimising water usage. Where heating is installed, this would include A rated equipment, and provision would be made to allow for the future installation of a heat pump. Electric car chargers would also be installed alongside existing parking spaces.

- 6.41 On the basis of the above, the proposal would comply with Policies CC1 and CC2 of the Local Plan Part 1 and Policy DM2 of the LPP2.

Contamination

- 6.42 The site was formerly used for equestrian purposes prior to its current use in part as a yard for the storage of construction materials. A Preliminary Contamination Risk Assessment is submitted as part of the application. This advises that there are moderate risks of contamination arising from the historic use arising from imported materials to the site and recommends further sampling/intrusive investigation. The applicant advises that this can be required by condition along with associated follow up requirements/verification reports.

Waste and recycling

- 6.43 The proposed development would allow for bin storage within the residential curtilage of each dwelling. This would accord with Policy TD1 of the LPP1.

CIL

- 6.44 Waverley Borough Council has adopted a CIL charging schedule, and Form 1 has been completed and submitted with the application. However, the development falls under the category of "All other uses" to which the applicable CIL rate is £0 per sq.m. As such, no funds are payable under the CIL charging regime adopted by the authority.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement supports the proposal for the erection of nine dwellings at Land at Alfold Farm, Loxwood Road, Alfold.
- 7.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that where an adopted or approved development plan contains relevant policies, an application for planning permission or an appeal shall be determined in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.3 It has been demonstrated that, having regard to the advice set out within the NPPF and the Council's Development Plan, the proposal is acceptable in principle. Although outside the defined settlement boundary, it is a continuation of existing buildings within the built up area of Alfold as viewed on the ground which would not lead to the coalescence of settlements. It has suitable access to local services which can be accessed readily on foot and bicycle. The proposal meets the definition of sustainable development.

- 7.4 It has been further demonstrated that the design of the development would constitute high quality design which respects the character and setting of the site. In light of the current fencing and land character, the proposal would result in an enhancement of local landscape quality and visual amenity. There will be no adverse impact upon neighbouring residential amenities, and there would be no harm to highway safety or the local road network. Adequate off-street parking and cycle storage can be provided within the site.
- 7.5 Having regard to the existing site characteristics, the proposal would lead to considerable biodiversity net gain far in excess of the minimum statutory requirements. The buildings would be built to standards exceeding the original aims of the Council's development plan policies in relation to sustainable construction and would allow for adequate measures to address drainage and other environmental considerations.
- 7.6 It is therefore concluded that the proposal complies with the NPPF and the relevant policies of the Development Plan.
- 7.7 The Council is not able to demonstrate at five-year housing land supply and there is a significant shortfall. This Statement sets out that there are no implications to protected assets or

harm when having regard to the planning policy framework as a whole to warrant refusal. Therefore, the tilted balance is engaged. Significant weight should be attached to the provision of housing particularly where no harm is identified. Moreover, the housing to be provided would meet a particular gap in the housing offer within this specific area.

- 7.8 In conclusion, the proposal would result in benefits to housing supply, housing mix, the visual amenity of the area and to biodiversity without harm in relation to other policy considerations. It is therefore hoped that planning permission will be granted.