

## Executive Summary:

### Planning Application 20/01336/OUTMAJ

#### Introduction

Planning application 20/01336/OUTMAJ ('the application') has been made to West Berkshire Council (WBC) for:

*Hybrid planning application seeking: 1) Outline planning permission (all matters reserved with the exception of access), for development comprising of up to 250 residential units (Class C3), the provision of landscaping, construction of access and street lighting, car and cycle parking, other associated infrastructure, sustainable drainage systems, engineering works and mitigation measures including the construction of internal roads. The proposal includes at least 1.1 hectares of employment land (Class B1) associated with the retention of the Intervet building and a playing field (Class D2) associated with the retention of the existing Cricket Pitch. 2) Full planning permission for the demolition of existing buildings, structures and hardstanding along with preparatory works including earthworks, remediation, utility works and associated mitigation measures. The change of use of land including the creation of public open space and wildlife area.*

The site is allocated by West Berkshire Council under Policy HAS23 for a residential-led mixed use development of approximately 140 homes with no development to the northern section of the site. The community previously contributed to the preparation of detailed guidance on how the site should be developed and have recently published an Interim Statement on how the site should be delivered.

However, the Homes England application does not accord with the planning policies which define how this site should be redeveloped, for the following reason:

1. The application proposes 'up to 250 dwellings' that would equate to a 79% increase above the size of the allocation. This is far beyond the scope of 'approximately 140' and would fail to conserve and enhance the landscape or character of the village. There are no exceptional circumstances that demonstrate a need for more than the allocated 140 homes as the council have met their housing requirements. Additionally, the application does not provide any evidence to explain why 250 homes is necessary in terms of viability.
2. The application does not establish a positive framework for the delivery of employment land and floorspace. It is proposed to retain the exiting Intervet Building and an additional area of land beyond this for employment purposes but does propose any new employment building to replace those being demolished.
3. The application fails to give consideration to the provision of new community facilities that would enhance the villages' social, sporting and educational facilities. The retention of the cricket ground is welcomed, however its value as a sporting / recreational facility is significantly diminished by the demolition of all ancillary facilities with no replacements.
4. The application fails to demonstrate why the hostel site can not be retained and refurbished as part of the redevelopment to help meet a need for smaller homes.

5. No consideration has been given to the need and benefits of integrating accessible and adaptable housing as part of the masterplan in order to deliver an appropriate mix of dwelling types, sizes and heights.
6. The application proposes a density of over 30 dwellings per hectare. This overall density and layout is not reflective of the character of Compton. Additionally, no meaningful attempt has been made to transition to a lower density to the north of the site.
7. The application does not adequately consider the pedestrian connectivity with the rest of Compton. It does not propose any footway improvements, including any crossing of the High Street, and consequently fails to integrate with the south of the village.
8. The application contains insufficient evidence in order to properly assess the impacts of non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest.
9. The application proposes development of open amenity space for nature conservation and biodiversity, outdoor sports, and recreation, as well as the retention of the 'Gatehouse' to be located within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The illustrative drainage strategy additionally conflicts with the illustrative masterplan and green infrastructure plan in respect of the central green.
10. Given the location of the Site within the AONB, the allocation required the restoration of the northern most section of the site into a landscape buffer. The application ignores such a requirement and identifies two residential development parcels within the northern section which will comprise of 29 two-storey homes.
11. The application proposes full planning permission for matters including the '*The change of use of land including the creation of public open space and wildlife area*'. Insufficient details are provided on the creation of public open space and wildlife areas.
12. The scale of development cannot be adequately accommodated by water supply and waste water, as confirmed by the Thames Water response.
13. The application fails to demonstrate how it will support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, in line with West Berkshire's declaration of the Climate Emergency.

**In conclusion, based on the above reasons it is recommended that Compton Parish Council OBJECT to the planning application in its current form.**

Compton Parish Council continue to support the principle of the redevelopment of this brownfield site, however the adverse effects of this development can be reduced, or avoided altogether, by the development of a scheme in accordance with the relevant planning policies, interim statement, and the emerging Compton Neighbourhood Development Plan.

CPC advise Homes England to review the 'Pirbright Site Issues and Policy Objectives Interim Policy Statement' and the emerging Compton Neighbourhood Development Plan prior to preparation of any revised scheme for the redevelopment of this site, which is expected to be accompanied by a design brief or masterplan that has been subject to public consultation undertaken broadly in line with the West Berkshire Statement of Community Involvement.