

WARFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

**LOCAL LANDSCAPE APPRAISAL
HAYLEY GREEN, NEWELL GREEN
AND WARFIELD STREET**

FOR

WARFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

WRITTEN REPORT

**LANDESIGN ASSOCIATES
REF: 1077/DOC 1/ ISSUE 1**

1077 WARFIELD

JANUARY 2017

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Local Landscape Appraisal: Hayley Green, Newell Green & Warfield Street.

1.0 Introduction and Scope of Report

1.02 Neighbourhood planning is a government initiative aimed at trying to empower local communities to help make and take forward planning proposals at a local level. It was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and came into effect in April 2012.

1.03 Under the Act local people have the opportunity to draw up a 'Neighbourhood Development Plan' in order to establish general planning policies for the development of land in a neighbourhood. Any plan must meet 'basic conditions' which include the need for policies to be generally aligned with strategic policies.

1.04 Once a neighbourhood development plan has been 'made' (adopted), it forms part of the overall development plan for the area. It can then be considered in the determination of planning applications.

1.01 Warfield was designated as a Neighbourhood Plan Area in July 2014 and this report has been commissioned by Warfield Parish Council to provide a high-level review of the landscape setting of settlements at Hayley Green, Newell Green and Warfield Street, as defined on LDA figs 1 & 2, in order to inform the ongoing development of the Warfield Neighbourhood Plan which is currently in draft and subject to ongoing Public Consultation.

1.05 This report provides a landscape evidence base comprising;

- an overview of relevant landscape planning policy background;
- a high-level landscape assessment of the character and setting of each settlement area involving desk top study and a site visit to the neighbourhood plan area;
- the identification of strategic and/or sensitive landscape elements contributing to the setting of the three settlement areas;
- general recommendations to inform the development of an emerging, evidence based landscape strategy associated with protecting the separate identity of the three settlements connection with controlled expansion within the settlements themselves and the ongoing and planned expansion of Bracknell to the south.
- conclusions

2.0 Landscape Planning Policy Background

2.01 The local planning authority is Bracknell Forest Borough Council (BFBC) and the current Development Plan for the study area comprises the NPPF and the BFBC Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adopted Feb 2008) and the Site Allocations Local Plan (adopted July 2013), together with a number of saved policies taken from the BFBC Local Plan 2002.

2.02 Bracknell Forest Borough Proposals Map 2 (Adopted February 2008); Warfield and Winkfield North, summarises collective policies in this suite of documents including Saved Policies in the Local Plan, (LDA fig 3).

The National Planning Policy Framework

2.03 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into force on 27 March 2012. The introduction to the NPPF notes that; *'The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.'*

2.04 Para. 14 of the document reads;

*'At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.*

*For **plan-making** this means that:*

- *local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;*
- *Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:*
 - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework, taken as a whole; or*
 - *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.*

2.05 Para 157 bullet 7 states that Local Plans should *'identify land where development would be inappropriate, for instance because of its environmental or historical significance.*

Bracknell Forest Borough Local Development Framework; Development Plan Document

2.06 Para 23 of the Local Development Framework; Development Plan Document (LDF DPD), notes that; *The Borough will continue to grow sustainably, in a planned manner, with new development being directed to sustainable locations and having good access to a range of local facilities, services, housing and employment. New development will be located so as to maximise the opportunity to travel by all modes and to improve relative accessibility for all. New development will be mindful of the character of the area in which it sits and will be designed and located such that it will enhance the quality of life in the Borough.*

2.07 Para 29 reads; *The smaller town, village and neighbourhood centres will be maintained and enhanced to play a valuable role in providing local services and reducing the need for local people to travel for their day to day requirements. A 'design-led' approach to new development will provide a safe and attractive living environment.*

2.08 Policy CS5 of the DPD identifies the land for the comprehensive development of 2,200 dwellings and associated infrastructure in Warfield.

2.09 Map 3, the Core Strategy Key Diagram identifies Newell Green, Warfield Street and Winkfield Row as 'defined settlements' situated to the north of Bracknell with Green Belt to the north and areas to the south and west identified as 'major locations for growth', (LDA fig 4).

2.10 Paras 119 to 123 refer to 'Gaps between settlements and reads;

Para 119; One of the functions of the countryside is to help preserve the physical and visual separation of settlements by protecting the rural areas between them. The more effective of these areas, those which prevent the coalescence of significant settlements with particular identities, are called Gaps. The identification of Gaps is well supported by the local community as a method of preventing the erosion of the countryside and protecting the individual identities of settlements.

Para 120; Bracknell Forest contains a number of distinct settlements separated by areas of open land. The Council attaches great importance to the function of these areas as a means of maintaining individual settlement identity. These predominantly undeveloped areas are often subject to development pressures which if left unrestrained could over time

lead to the merging of settlements and the loss of individual identity. In order to protect their existing open and undeveloped character, it is important that gaps are identified to steer development away from those settlements where coalescence is a real threat.

Para 121; The Submission South East Plan provides criteria for designating strategic gaps to ensure a consistent approach by local authorities. The draft guidance restricts the size of strategic gaps to five miles at their widest point and puts a lower limit on the size of the settlement (a population of greater than 10,000) they can protect. It goes on to describe 'local gaps' which do not meet the above criteria, but which nevertheless have an important role to play in seeking to ensure local settlement identity.

Para 122; The emerging Blackwater Valley Countryside Strategy 2006–2010 seeks to maintain the Blackwater Valley as an important open gap between surrounding urban areas.

Para 123; The following defined gaps were identified in June and July 2006 as part of a landscape assessment of the development submissions in the Borough undertaken as part of the Site Allocations DPD preparatory work:

<i>Strategic Gaps:</i>	<i>Bracknell and Wokingham</i>
	<i>Crowthorne and Bracknell</i>
	<i>Sandhurst and Crowthorne</i>
	<i>Sandhurst and Yateley</i>
<i>Local Gaps:</i>	<i>Bracknell and Binfield</i>

2.11 Policy CS9 – Development on Land Outside Settlements reads (Para 124)'

The Council will protect land outside settlements for its own sake, particularly from development that would adversely affect the character, appearance or function of the land; and

- i. protect the defined gaps within or adjoining the Borough from development that would harm the physical and visual separation of settlements either within or adjoining the Borough; or*
- ii. maintain the Green Belt boundary within Bracknell Forest and protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development.*

Strategic Housing Site Options Landscape Capacity Study (April 2010)

2.12 In April 2010 Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd were commissioned by the Council to assess the landscape capacity of areas for development within the local plan boundary based on Natural England assessment guidelines. The report included an assessment of the landscape character and development capacity of land to the North of Warfield at Newell Green represented graphically on Map 6 (LDA fig 5 and extract of report).

Warfield Supplementary Planning Document (February 2012)

2.13 The Council has produced a Supplementary Planning Guidance Document to provide guidance for applications for a comprehensive mixed use development of the Warfield site (formerly known as land North of Whitegrove and Quelm Park). This was adopted on 21 February 2012 and commits to ensuring the development will be sympathetic and appropriate to Warfield's semi-rural nature whilst enhancing existing, important local spaces. Fig 1 in that document, (LDA fig 6), defines the extent of the Warfield SPD area and is extracted from the BFC Policies Map.

Bracknell Forest Council Local Development Framework; Site Allocations Local Plan (2013)

2.14 The 2013 Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP) allocates sites for different forms of development required to achieve the vision and spatial objectives set out in the Core Strategy. The allocated sites plan, Map 1 shows Haley Green, Newell Green and Warfield Street as settlements adjoining 'land outside defined settlements' to the north with allocated land to the south (LDA fig 7).

2.15 Policy SA 9 deals with land at Warfield as follows;

Land at Warfield, as shown on the Policies Map () is allocated for a comprehensive well designed mixed-use development, including the following:*

- *2,200 residential units (including affordable housing).*
- *Employment.*
- *Neighbourhood centre.*
- *Two Primary Schools.*
- *Multi-functional community hub.*
- *On-site open space and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).*

The infrastructure required to support this development includes:

- *A comprehensive package of on and off-site transport measures to mitigate the development's impact on roads and encourage sustainable modes of transport.*
- *A new north-south spine road linking the Quelm Park roundabout and the Three-Legged Cross junction, unless an alternative solution is agreed with the Council. On-site in-kind provision of waste recycling facilities.*
- *On-site in-kind provision of two Primary Schools.*
- *Financial contributions towards the provision of Secondary School and Special Educational Needs places.*
- *On-site in-kind provision of a multi-functional community hub, including land set aside for the delivery of a Full Daycare Nursery.*
- *Measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of residential development upon the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) in agreement with the Council and Natural England. This will include provision in perpetuity of on-site bespoke SANG of at least 8ha per 1,000 new population. The preferred solution is for a SANG at Cabbage Hill. Part of the solution could be off-site subject to agreement with the Council and Natural England, and, passing an Appropriate Assessment. Further in perpetuity requirements include a financial contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring and any other measures that are required to satisfy Habitats Regulations, the Councils Thames Basin Heaths SPA Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy and relevant guidance.*
- *A comprehensive package of on-site, in-kind Open Space of Public Value, in accordance with standards.*
- *Protection and enhancement of Public Rights of Way.*
- *Integration of Sustainable Drainage Systems.*
- *Provision of Green Infrastructure (in addition to elements listed above).*

The above is not a comprehensive list of requirements. Further details of other matters including mitigation required can be found in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Warfield Supplementary Planning Document (33) and/or any other relevant guidance.

**Map 41 'Extract of Policies Map showing allocation of land at Warfield (Policy SA9)*

Bracknell Forest Landscape Evidence base (September 2015)

2.16 In January 2015, Land Use Consultants (LUC) were commissioned by the Council to review and update the Council's landscape evidence base. In September 2015 LUC prepared documents entitled 'Bracknell Forest Borough Landscape Character Assessment' and 'Bracknell Forest Landscape Evidence Base; Recommendations in relation to landscape designations, gaps and green belt villages.

2.17 The LUC Landscape Character Assessment is a comprehensive study of the landscape character of the district and classifies land to the north of Bracknell, including Warfield, Hayley Green and Newell Green as Character Type C1; Binfield and Warfield Clay Farmland. Key characteristics are listed as;

- *Underlying clay geology, cut by water courses including the Cut River creating a gently undulating landform with mid-distant views across grass and arable fields to low ridgelines and wooded horizons.*
- *A farmed, working landscape of medium to large sized fields of mixed arable and pasture, and smaller fields around the edges of villages.*
- *Small deciduous woodlands and well-managed hedgerows provide rhythm and emphasis to views across the landscape.*
- *Quiet and rural character with limited scattered settlement well integrated into the landscape.*
- *Historic manor houses sited within remnant parkland landscapes, often hidden from view behind high fences or coniferous boundaries.*
- *Rural lanes bordered by hedgerows, grass verges and ditches.*

2.18 Identified forces for change include (7.24) '*continued pressure of urban expansion to the north of Bracknell*' and the proposed landscape strategy (7.25) *includes 'Conserve the open and rural character to the settlements of Binfield and north Bracknell, and maintain the sense of separation between Binfield and the allocation at Blue Mountain'*.

2.19 The Recommendations in relation to landscape designations, gaps and green belt villages report notes that Entec produced a report in 2006 as part of the evidence base for Bracknell Forest Council. The report includes an analysis of Gaps and Green Wedges. The analysis gives specific

consideration to physical and visual separation provided by the landscape and how development may harm the character of the landscape and function of the Gaps/ Green Wedges.

2.20 The LUC report makes a distinction between ‘strategic’ and ‘local’ gaps, the former being described in the South-East Plan as;

i) The gap will prevent the coalescence of settlements each with a resident population greater than 10,000 persons.

ii) The gap must be no greater in size than is necessary, and in all cases, no greater than five miles at its widest point.

2.21 Berkshire Structure Plan Policy DP7 refers to local gaps and green wedges and reads (in part);

2. Local Gaps will be identified in local plans where there is a need

(i) To protect the setting and identity of settlements and avoid their coalescence; or

(ii) To retain a coherent structure of settlement pattern; or

(iii) To retain the openness of an area; or

(iv) To provide access and recreational opportunities for adjacent communities

3. Green Wedges will be identified in local plans as open land, which provides (or has the potential to provide) landscape corridors between the countryside and the centres of urban areas for informal recreation and for the movement of fauna.

2.22 The report proposes (4.13 and Map 4.2) adoption of a strategic gap at Chavey Down, consistent with Bracknell Forest’s current core strategy part of which falls into Warfield Parish to the east of Haley Green. This effectively mirrors, albeit less definitively, ‘Gap 4’ identified in the 2006 Entec Report (LDA fig 8).

The Comprehensive Local Plan (CLP; Draft)

2.23 The Comprehensive Local Plan will set the vision and development strategy for the Borough up to 2036. Once adopted, it will replace many of the saved policies in the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan (2002) and the Core Strategy (2008). In summary, the Plan will include a vision, objectives, and strategy for the level and distribution of development in the Borough up to 2036, including housing, economic and retail development and new infrastructure.

Consultation on Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)

2.24 As part of the CLP the Council will need to include a strategy for the level and distribution of development, including housing and economic uses. This has involved the Council undertaking a 'call for sites' to invite land to be put forward for assessment, and then undertake assessment of land in relation to its suitability for development. The study for Bracknell Forest is known as the 'Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment' (SHELAA).

2.25 The Final Draft of this assessment (part 2) refers to potential development sites at Warfield described as WAR 3 – 19. These are identified collectively on Warfield SHELLA Sites Nov 2016 v2 map, (LDA fig 9).

The Warfield Neighbourhood Plan

2.26 The draft Warfield Neighbourhood Plan comprises land within the Parish Boundary as shown graphically on the Warfield Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map; Pre-Submission Plan (December 2016), (LDA fig 10).

2.27 Once adopted, the Warfield Neighbourhood Plan will be used to assist in the determination of planning applications, as it would form part of Bracknell Forest Borough Council's statutory planning documents in addition to the Core Strategy, SALP and the Warfield Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

2.28 Currently the Warfield Neighbourhood Plan consists of a number of working groups each with their own specific roles within the overall plan. These comprise the Steering Group, Group, the Economy Group, The Environment Group the Housing Group and the Infrastructure Group.

2.29 The stated objectives of the environment group are

- To preserve and enhance the character and rural areas
- To protect important open spaces
- To protect and enhance the high quality and sensitive landscape within the Parish
- To protect the identity of Warfield and prevent any further coalescence with Bracknell and surrounding villages
- To protect and enhance biodiversity and the countryside
- To encourage and enhance access to the countryside

2.30 An initial set of draft policies were proposed by the group to achieve these objectives. These have been subsequently refined following iterations of the draft plan, discussions with Bracknell Forest Council and to reflect the emerging landscape evidence and the need to ensure policies are positively worded. Nonetheless they are included here as they help to establish the landscape significance of the parish in the eyes of the community.

2.31 Draft Policy WNP1 was concerned with the Conservation and Enhancement of Rural and Character Area Settlements as follows; subsumed into the promotion of good design;

Hawthorn Hill, Brockhill, Jealott's Hill, Moss End, Nuptown and Osbourne/Church Lane are the defined Rural Settlements within the Warfield neighbourhood. Newell Green, Warfield Street, West End, Hayley Green and Warfield Park are defined as Character Areas. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to formally recognise these settlements and ensure they are preserved. The Warfield Neighbourhood Plan recognises these settlements and seeks to preserve the rural character, ensuring that farming, rural smallholdings, small housing settlements and vistas are not affected by development.

The rural and character settlements form an intrinsic part of the character of the Neighbourhood and provide informal recreational activities for the community and visitors.

2.32 The associated Policy reads;

Planning permission should be refused for substantial or inappropriate development in the defined Rural and Character Settlement areas other than in exceptional circumstances, when it:

- a) responds to and respects the heritage and distinctive character of the area in which it is situated, and reflects the identity of the local context by way of;
 - i) height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials
 - ii) highways, footways, open space and landscape
- b) respects the natural contours of a site and protects and sensitively incorporates natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site
- c) reflects the local rural economy, such as farm buildings, workshops and stables.

2.33 Draft Policy WNP2 was concerned with the Protection of Open Space within the Character and Built Up Areas.

2.34 Draft policy WNP3 was designed to Protect and Enhance the identity of Warfield and the explanatory note read as follows; now reflected in the Spatial, Design and Gap policies;

Protecting the separate identity of Warfield is a key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan. The gap between the built-up settlements of Lawrence Hill, Quelm Park and Whitegrove with Bracknell is already very narrow, and so concentration should be given to the SADPD Area, ensuring that a physical and visual gap is kept between the new development and the Character Settlement areas of Newell Green, Warfield Street, Hayley Green, West End and Warfield Park. This gap is crucial in retaining the distinctiveness of the village, as opposed to Built-Up Settlements and new development.

The area in West End known as Cabbage Hill is designated as a SANG and will therefore remain as a green area ensuring a visual and physical gap between the villages of Warfield and Binfield.

Development to the north of The SADPD Area, where it is closest to the Character Settlements, must respond to the distinctive character of the areas in which it is situated, and reflect the local context.

2.35 The Policy itself reads;

New development in or adjoining a defined Character or rural Settlement Area will be permitted where it:

- a) responds to and respects the heritage and distinctive character of the area in which it is situated, and reflects the identity of the local context by way of;
 - i. height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials
 - ii. highways, footways, open space and landscape
- b) Respects the natural contours of a site and protects and sensitively incorporates natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site
- c) Creates safe, accessible and well-connected environments that meet the needs of users and existing residents

Development will not be permitted on the Cabbage Hill SANG and defined areas of Open Space (i.e: Larks Hill and Community Orchard)

2.36 Draft policy WNP4 was concerned with the protection and enhancement of biodiversity.

2.37 Draft policy WNP5 was concerned with the protection and enhancement of the countryside. WNP4 and 5 reflected in the 'Protecting and Enhancing the Environment' policy;

Outside of the Built-up Settlement boundary, priority will be given to protecting and enhancing the natural countryside from inappropriate development. Proposals for development will only be permitted where it is in accordance with Policies WNP11, WNP14 and WNP18 in the Neighbourhood Plan and would meet the following criteria:

- a) it would not have a detrimental impact on and would enhance landscape of value or sensitivity
- b) it would not have an adverse impact on the landscape setting of Warfield rural and character settlement areas
- c) it would maintain the distinctive views of the surrounding countryside from public vantage points within, and adjacent to the built-up settlement area
- d) it would maintain the cleanliness and wellbeing of bordering established hedgerows, copses, streams and ponds

2.38 Draft policy WNP6 was concerned with encouraging and enhancing access to the countryside and is now reflected in the 'Enhancing Green Infrastructure' Policy.

3.0 Hayley Green, Newell Green and Warfield Street

3.01 The Warfield Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map (Pre-submission Plan: December 2016) identifies Hayley Green, Newell Green and Warfield Street as proposed character areas and seeks to protect their rural character. Specific policies associated with the three settlements are WNP2, WNP3 and WNP4. This section provides an overview description of the landscape and visual characteristics of in the context of location and setting.

3.02 Warfield is a predominantly rural parish comprising a number of small settlements. Warfield Village in the centre of the parish consists of the few houses clustered around the medieval

parish church, but the West End, Newell Green, Warfield Street and Hayley Green area just to the south is generally referred to as 'Warfield'.

3.03 LDA fig 1 shows the relative locations of the three settlements which are situated east - west alongside the B3034 with Newell Green to the west and Hayley Green to the east. The settlements are separated from each other along the B3034 by sections of woodland and farmland with well-developed roadside hedgerows. Open farmland to the north of the B3034 accommodates the hamlets of Hawthorn Hill, Jealott's Hill, Moss End and Nuptown. Warfield House and Grounds lies immediately to the north-east of Warfield Street.

3.04 To the south is a narrow buffer of open land beyond which lies the urban edge of Bracknell. Warfield Park to the south-west is an area of residential park homes set within well wooded parkland. LDA fig 2 provides an oblique aerial view of the area looking north.

3.05 A site visit to assess existing landscape character and general site visibility was undertaken out in clear conditions on 06 January 2017.

Landscape and Visual Appraisal Newell Green

3.06 Newell Green to the west is the smallest of the three settlements. In broad terms the settlement comprises a linear settlement of well-established large residential detached properties along the south side of the B3034, returning along the western side of A3095. There is a Public House (The Plough and Harrow) and Restaurant Bar (The Yorkshire Rose) at the junction of the B3034 and A3095 and a commercial garage and a restaurant bar (Spice Bar) alongside the B3034 at the western end of the settlement. There is a Memorial Hall, (Brownlow Hall), alongside the A3095. Properties are generally set back from the road edge behind established hedgelines and garden vegetation. There is a dense hedgerow with mature trees to the east of the A3095 which provides a distinct edge of settlement. Immediately to the north-west of the A3095/B3034 junction is an attractive cricket square which is bounded on its southern edge by a clipped hawthorn hedge and overlooked by properties alongside the B3034. To the west of this lies Scotlands Farm with a well-established hedgerow along the northern edge of the road providing containment and a clear edge to development.

3.07 There is attractive open farmland immediately to the north of Newell Green with mature boundary hedgerows containing some large trees (predominantly Oak). Further north towards

Westhatch Lane the field pattern becomes more open with larger field sizes and less well defined field boundaries.

3.08 There is open land to the south of the settlement comprising fields and paddocks with the sub-urban edge of Bracknell beyond. Some of this land has some of the characteristics of urban fringe however there is much well established vegetation including large hedgerows and mature trees which currently provide a physical and visual buffer between the settlement and Bracknell.

3.09 The settlement is closely visually contained to the north, east and west by established hedgelines with a more open boundary across fields to the south providing visual enclosure at distance.

3.10 Council Planning Policy envisages significant future development to the south of Newell Green, effectively extending the urban edge of Bracknell to the edge of the defined settlement boundary.

Landscape and Visual Appraisal Warfield Street

3.11 Warfield Street is a linear settlement straddling the B3034 with a single depth of development to the south of the road and with slightly more extended parallel development to the north served by an access road (Herschell Grange) leading from the B3034.

3.12 Warfield Street comprises a mix of established detached residential properties including both houses and a higher than normal proportion of bungalows. Properties generally address the road and are set slightly back behind low walls and hedgelines. The settlement feel more densely developed than Newell Green.

3.13 There is attractive agricultural land to the north comprising large scale open fields defined by deep hedgelines with mature trees. Warfield House, a large Grade 2 listed country house set in landscaped grounds is situated to the north-east.

3.14 The sub-urban edge of Bracknell lies approximately 0.3km to the south with an intervening buffer of open fields and paddocks defined by hedgerows and small blocks of linear woodland.

3.15 The settlement is visually contained to the north by established field boundaries with more open less well defined field boundaries to the south providing visual enclosure at distance.

Hedgerows along Jigg Lane North to the east and at edge of settlement to the west provide a degree of east –west containment along the B3034.

3.16 Council Planning Policy envisages significant future development to the south of Warfield Street, effectively extending the urban edge of Bracknell to the edge of the defined settlement boundary.

Landscape and Visual Appraisal Hayley Green

3.17 Hayley Green is currently a small settlement straddling the B3034 approximately 0.5km to the east of Warfield Street. The western half of the settlement is arranged to either side of the road whereas the more easterly half is restricted to the southern side of the road.

3.18 The settlement is a well-established residential neighbourhood comprising a mix of detached houses including a significant percentage of single storey properties.

3.19 Properties are generally set back from the roadside behind clipped hedgerows and there are some mature roadside trees which make a positive contribution to the general street scene and landscape character.

3.20 To the north extending up to and beyond the B3032 Bracknell Road lies a patchwork of open fields with mature hedgelines containing mature trees. There are views across these fields from the eastern section of Hayley Green as far as Cricketers Lane.

3.21 Land to the south is generally well wooded, providing a strong buffer between the settlement and the edge of Bracknell.

3.22 The Warfield Neighbourhood Plan Masterplan Concept proposes an expansion of Hayley Green contained by the B3034 Forest Road to the south, the B3032 Bracknell Road to the north, Hayley Green to the west and land to the west of Cricketers Lane to the east, (LDA fig 11). The proposal envisages an extension of housing along north side of the B3034, linking in to a further development cell to the west of the Cricketers Public House mid-way along Cricketers Lane with a local open green space immediately to the west of this providing a green buffer between the existing housing alongside the B3034 and further development cells to the north extending towards Hayley Green and the Bracknell Road.

3.23 In landscape terms, this proposal provides a logical approach to development in that it

- extends the existing linear settlement pattern along the B3034 to the east of existing development on the northern side of the road but no further eastwards than existing development to the southern side
- makes appropriate use of Hayley Green Road and the Bracknell Road as defensible stops to development preventing further expansion into the wider landscape and utilising well established field boundaries and mature vegetation to provide a high quality setting to new development and screening and filtering of views into residential areas from the wider landscape to the north.
- avoids coalescence of settlements through the constraining buffers of open land associated with Warfield House and grounds to the west and Lambrook School to the east.
- avoids incursion into the existing woodland buffer to the south, maintaining linearity of development alongside the B3034.

3.24 The three settlements are closely spaced along the B3034 They are currently separated by agricultural land comprising fields with established boundary hedgerows and woodland and susceptible to coalescence associated with further linear development. The Bull Brook corridor to the south of the B3034 provides additional separation between Warfield Street and Hayley Green.

4.0 Maintaining the Existing Character of the 3 Settlements

4.01 Key objectives of the draft Neighbourhood Plan are to preserve the rural character of settlements including Newell Green, Warfield Street and Hayley Green and to ensure new development is sympathetic and in keeping with settlement character.

4.02 In broad terms the site inspection and high level landscape assessment confirms that the landscape character associated with the settlements is consistent with Character Types C1 & C2; mainly Binfield and Warfield Clay Farmland in the LUC Landscape Character Assessment. The associated proposed landscape strategy in response to Identified forces for change includes '*Conserve the open and rural character to the settlements of Binfield and north Bracknell.....*'.

4.03 Based on this landscape and visual appraisal the key landscape elements intended to contribute to maintenance of existing settlement pattern are defined as follows and illustrated on the Policies Map. Primary elements being the undeveloped gaps to the east and west of Hayley Green, the Bull Brook River Park (Green Wedge) to the north and south of the B3034

(reflecting existing policy EN10), between Hayley Green and Warfield Street, between Warfield Street and Newell Green and the designation of proposed local green spaces both at Warfield Street and at Hayley Green (as part of the draft masterplan)

4.04 Taking the above into account, an appropriate landscape strategy in support of the neighbourhood plan objectives and the recommendations of the LUC Landscape Character Appraisal (September 2015) would be to;

- Maintain local gaps along the B3034 between the three settlements, by retaining existing green space as buffers to prevent the physical and visual coalescence of the settlement areas. Specifically;
 - Identify Memorial Ground to north of Newell Green as protected Local Green Space.
 - Retain green buffer between Newell Green and Warfield Street and resist further roadside development between settlements.
 - Extend Bull Brook River Park towards Warfield House to north of B3034 preventing potential coalescence between Warfield Street and Hayley Green including defining Bull Brook River Park as a Green Wedge to prevent physical and visual coalescence between the proposed Hayley Green Masterplan and the SA9/CS5 allocations (Area 3).
 - Protect open land to east of Hayley Green (Lambrook School and woodland to south) to maintain separation and prevent potential coalescence with Winkfield Row to east. Increase protection of this by extending the existing local gap to south of the B3034 northwards along Cricketers Lane.
- Retain strategic buffer of open space to south of the three areas illustrated in 1077 Fig 1 to maintain physical separation with expansion of Bracknell under SA9 (to a minimum field depth of 1 field) .
- Maintain existing open rural character to north of the three settlements to retain rural setting of northern aspect. Restrict non-linear growth which would change existing settlement pattern.

- Where possible new development within neighbourhood plan area to retain a framework of existing mature vegetation. Development proposals in accordance with the WNP should be accompanied by landscape and visual impact assessments which demonstrate that full account has been taken of existing landscape features in order to integrate the development into the receiving landscape.

5.0 Conclusions

5.01 This report examines the landscape planning policy background associated with land to the north of Bracknell with reference to a high-level landscape assessment of the three settlements at Hayley Green, Newell Green and Warfield Street.

5.02 The local plan envisages significant development to the north of Bracknell whilst recognising the importance of maintaining the character of local settlements in this area.

5.03 The northward expansion of Bracknell would place the settlements of Newell Green, Warfield Street and Hayley Green under severe pressure from development requiring planning policies designed to protect and enhance their existing character.

5.04 A way of ensuring that these settlements remain spatially separated both from each other and from adjacent urban growth would be through the designation of defined local gaps providing green corridors/wedges between settlements while bringing forward proposals accommodating need for growth in the most suitable locations.

5.05 The emerging neighbourhood plan identifies these potential development pressures and proposes local gap and green infrastructure policies together with the controlled and targeted accommodation of new development at Hayley Green, both of which are consistent with national and local plan policies and the local planning authority landscape character assessments for land to the north of Bracknell.

End. 1077 Doc 1 Issue 1 12.01.17