

Statement of Common Ground

between

Wokingham Borough Council

and

Crest Nicholson

(Arborfield Studios -
Arborfield Green

Strategic Development Location: Site SS11)

in relation to the
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2023-2040

15 August 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared by Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) and Crest Nicholson, collectively referred to as “the Parties”. The statement sets out the matters that are agreed regarding Policy SS11: Arborfield Green Strategic Development Location of the Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2023 – 2040: Proposed Submission Plan.
- 1.2 Crest Nicholson is an established housebuilder with over 60 years’ experience. Crest Nicholson hold the right to secure development on the land known as Arborfield Studios (see Appendix A).

2. Description of the Arborfield Green Strategic Development Location

- 2.1 The former Arborfield Garrison was originally identified in the Core Strategy local plan (2010) as a location for sustainable, well-designed mixed use development for around 3,500 homes in the period to 2006 to 2026. Planning permission has since been granted, with a number of development parcels completed or under construction, including the delivery of key infrastructure.
- 2.2 Policy SS11 incorporates both the development permitted under the Core Strategy local plan which had not been completed from the base date of the Proposed Submission Plan, plus the delivery of additional 910 dwellings to be achieved through three sources of supply:
 - 300 dwellings by optimising development density at land currently occupied by Arborfield Studios;
 - 600 dwellings on land to the northeast of Arborfield Studios (excluding any care provision), known as Barkham Square; and
 - 10 dwellings at Westwood Yard, Sheerlands Road.

3. Local Plan Context

- 3.1 WBC commenced a review of its adopted Development Plan (comprising the Core Strategy 2010 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014) through the publication of an Issues and Options Consultation Document in August 2016. Further to this, between November 2018 and February 2019, WBC published a consultation document entitled ‘Homes for the Future’ which consulted on a range of spatial options.
- 3.2 In February 2020, WBC published a Draft Local Plan for consultation. The Draft Local Plan proposed the continuation of the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location allocation from the original Core Strategy local plan.
- 3.3 In November 2021, WBC published a Revised Growth Strategy for consultation. This again proposed a continuation of the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location, however small adjustments were proposed to incorporate the additional land known as Westward Cottage, Sheerlands Road to achieve an additional 10 dwellings.

- 3.4 The Proposed Submission Plan continues to identify the site, now called the Arborfield Green Strategic Development Location. The proposed allocation of Policy SS11 further evolves the vision of the original Core Strategy local plan incorporating additional housing to be achieved through actions outlined at paragraph 2.2 above.

4. Relevant Site Promoter Representations

- 4.1 The intensification of the land currently occupied by Arborfield Studios has been promoted by Crest Nicholson at the Regulation 18 stages of plan making as outlined above.
- 4.2 Crest Nicholson in their response to the Proposed Submission Plan made no specific comments regarding the land occupied by Arborfield Studios.

5. Areas of Agreement

- 5.1 The Parties agree the following statements:
- a) That the evidence supporting the Arborfield Green Strategic Development Location is robust and proportionate to the plan-making stage of planning.
 - b) That the Arborfield Studios is deliverable (i.e. able to produce completions within 5 years) and developable thereafter.
 - c) That the development, place shaping and delivery principles set out in Proposed Submission Plan Policy SS11, as supplemented by the development guidelines set out in Appendix A of the Plan, provide an appropriate basis for framing development on the land occupied by Arborfield Studios to be further considered and evolved through the planning application process.
 - d) That housing delivery at least equal to that set out in WBC's housing trajectory will be achieved.

6. Areas of Disagreement, Clarification or Further Work

- 6.1 There are no areas of disagreement between the Parties regarding the proposed development of the land occupied by Arborfield Studios as set out in Policy SS11. The proposed development will be discussed and evolved through the planning application process.

7. Anticipated Start and Build Out Rates

- 7.1 As set out above, Crest Nicholson is an established housebuilder. Crest Nicholson is also experienced in the delivery of housing in Wokingham Borough and specifically in the Arborfield Green area.

- 7.2 Crest Nicholson have started work necessary to prepare a planning application for development of the land occupied by Arborfield Studios.
- 7.3 The housing trajectory in the Proposed Submission Plan projects that housing completions will occur as set out below.

Year	Delivery
2028/29	50
2029/30	50
2030/31	50
2031/32	50
2032/33	50
2033/34	50
Total delivery in plan period	300

- 7.4 Crest Nicholson's programme for the submission and consideration of planning applications and subsequent delivery of dwellings is set out below.

Submission of Outline application	Grant of Outline permission	Submission of Reserved Matters application	Grant of Reserved Matters application	First completion
By June 2026	By March 2027	By June 2027	By March 2028	By Sept 2028

- 7.5 Submission of an outline planning application (all matters reserved saved for access) will take place by June 2026. The determination of the application is expected in early 2027.
- 7.6 Taking into account Reserved Matters submissions by June 2027 and pre-commencement conditions over the same period, first completions are anticipated by September 2028. The intention of Crest Nicholson is to complete 50 dwellings per year on average from 1 sales outlet. Crest Nicholson consider the total capacity of the intensification to be 360 dwellings (the Proposed Submission Plan allocation is for around 300 dwellings),
- 7.7 Crest Nicholson's projected build out rate delivers slightly slower than set out in WBC's housing trajectory with the first year being 20 dwellings less. There after the build out rates are the same. The slightly slower build out rate is more than compensated by the projected faster build out on the land known as Barkham Square where Crest Nicholson also hold the right to develop.
- 7.8 Appendix B includes further detail of the programme for the submission and determination of planning applications and the delivery of dwellings.

8. Governance Arrangements Including Future Review


8.1 The Parties agree to:

- Continue to cooperate and work collaboratively regarding the Arborfield Studios;
- Review and update this Statement of Common Ground in the light of any material change in circumstance; and
- Maintain positive principles of cooperation.

9. Signatories

9.1 We confirm that the information in this Statement of Common Ground reflects the joint working and engagement undertaken to date. The Parties will continue to work together to ensure the delivery of the Arborfield Green Strategic Development Location.

Signed for Wokingham Borough Council

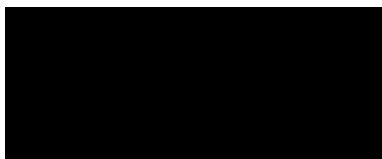


Name: Nick Irvine

Position: Service Director – Planning, Economy and Culture

Date: 19/08/2025

Signed for Crest Nicholson



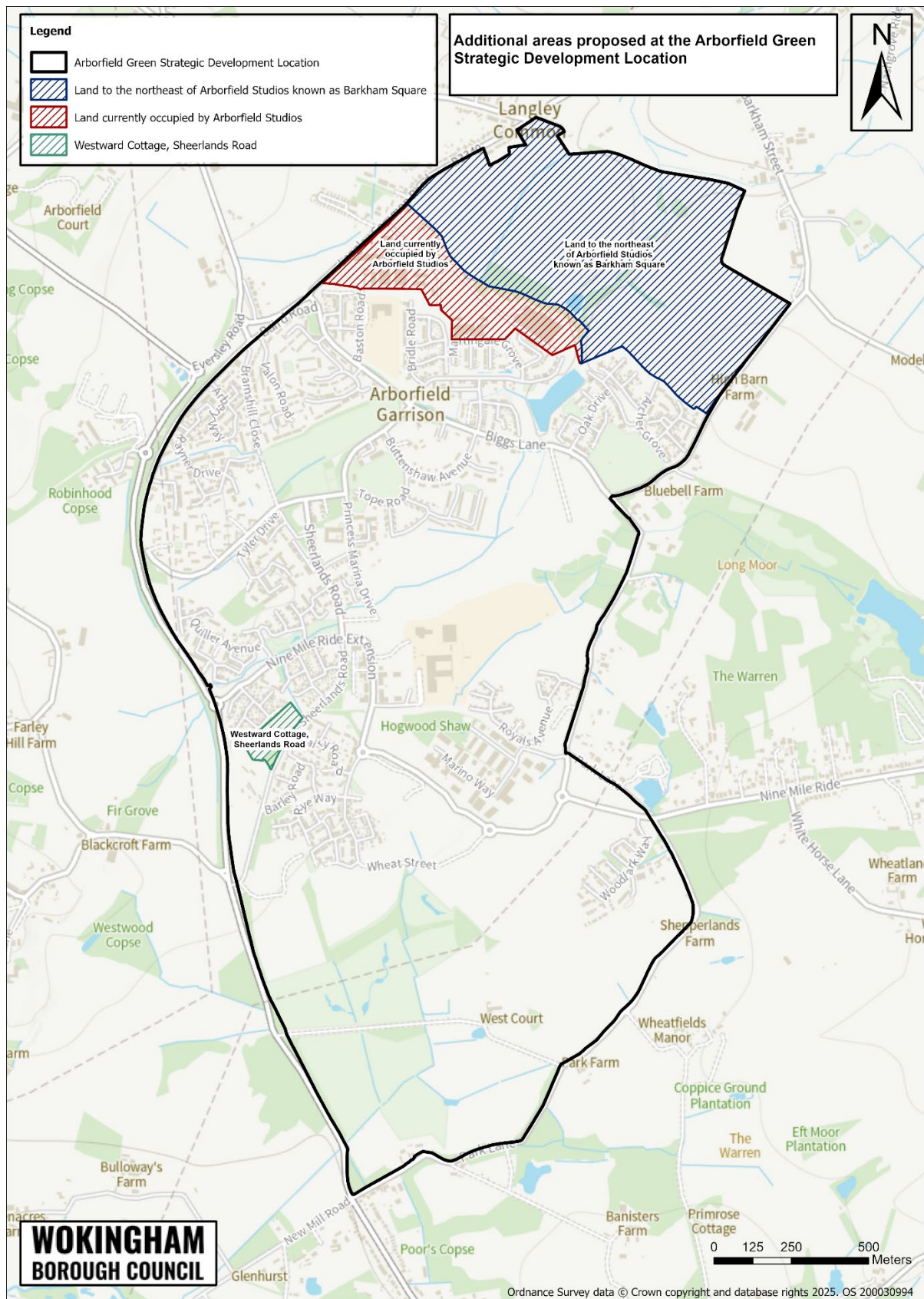
Name: Robert Church

Position: Land and Planning Director, Chiltern

Date: 15.08.25

Appendix A

Map Arborfield Green Strategic Development Location



Appendix B

Planning application programme and delivery trajectory: Land known as Barkham Square

Initialisation

PPA = Planning Performance Agreement.

PA = Pre Application.

HPA = Hybrid Planning Application.

OPA = Outline Planning Application.

RM = Reserved Matters Application.

PC = Pre-Commencement Conditions.

PP = Planning Permission.

Q1 = April-June.

Q2 = July-September.

Q3 = October-December.

Q4= January-March.

Landowner information	2025/26				2026/27				2027/28				2028/29				2029/30														
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4											
Application progress					OPA submitted			OPA granted	RM submitted			RM granted		First completions																	
Projected completions	0				0				0				30				50				50	50	50	50	50	30	-	-	-	-	
Cumulative completions	0				0				0				30				80				130	180	230	280	330	360	-	-	-	-	
Action	2025/26				2026/27				2027/28				2028/29				2029/30				2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36	2036/37	2037/38	2038/39	2039/40	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4															
LPU housing trajectory Arborfield Studios	0				0				0				50				50				50	50	50	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	
LPU cumulative completions	0				0				0				50				100				150	200	250	300	-	-	-	-	-	-	