

Statement of Common Ground

between

Wokingham Borough Council

and

**Nicholas King Homes and
Lightwood Strategic**

(South Wokingham
Strategic Development Location)

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

30 June 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared by Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) and the 'Landowners', collectively known as 'the Parties'. The Landowners comprise Nicholas King Homes and Lightwood Strategic. The statement sets out the matters that are agreed as well as areas of disagreement, clarification or further work regarding Policy SS12: South Wokingham Strategic Development Location of the Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2023 – 2040: Proposed Submission Plan.
- 1.2 Nicholas King Homes is an established housebuilder and has experience in delivering homes within Wokingham Borough. Lightwood Strategic are land promoters, also with experience in bringing forward land for development within Wokingham Borough.
- 1.3 Between them, the Landowners have contractual control of the land south of Waterloo Road (see Appendix A). This can be more fully described as land south of Waterloo Road, west of Old Wokingham Road and north and south of Easthampstead Road.

2. Description of the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location

- 2.1 The South Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SWSDL) was originally identified in the Core Strategy local plan (2010) as a location for sustainable, well-designed mixed use development for around 2,500 homes in the period to 2006 to 2026. Planning permission has since been granted, with the phase north of the railway line completed, including a number of key infrastructure items.
- 2.2 Policy SS12 incorporates both the development permitted under the Core Strategy local plan which has not been completed from the base date of the Proposed Submission Plan, plus the delivery of additional housing to be achieved through the identification of additional land south of Waterloo Road for an additional 1,100 dwellings, of which a minimum of 970 dwellings are expected to be completed within the plan period. Most of this additional land identified for housing is within the adopted extent of the SWSDL but was not proposed to be built on in order to deliver the housing requirement of the Core Strategy local plan. The proposed increase in area covered by the SWSDL mostly provides supporting Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and a small proportion of the additional housing.
- 2.3 An illustrative concept plan for the SWSDL for the land south of Waterloo Road is included as Figure 7 of the Proposed Submission Plan.

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 SWSDL allocation from the original Core Strategy local plan, however a small adjustment was proposed to incorporate additional land south of Gipsy Lane to achieve an additional 17 dwellings. At this stage the land south of Waterloo Road was not identified for development. At this time, the major part of the land south of Waterloo Road (Priors Farm) was not confirmed as being available for development during the new plan period.
- 3.3 In November 2021, WBC published a Revised Growth Strategy for consultation. This again proposed a continuation of the SWSDL, however further evolution was proposed to incorporate land south of Waterloo Road to achieve an additional 835 dwellings, and land west of St Anne's Drive for 54 dwellings. At this stage the area identified as land south of Waterloo Road did not extend south of Easthampstead Road, with proposed housing located north of the Emm Brook Tributary. An average density of 30dph was assumed. For completeness, Gray's Fruit Farm, which is owned by WBC, was also incorporated into the allocation for outdoor and indoor sports and community uses.
- 3.4 The Proposed Submission Plan continues to identify the SWSDL. The proposed allocation of Policy SS12 further evolves the vision of the original Core Strategy local plan. The land south of Waterloo Road has been extended to include land south of Easthampstead Road and incorporates an adjoining area of built form. A density uplift to around 35-40dph accounts for the majority of the increase in capacity to 1,100 dwellings. For completeness, following further flood risk assessment the land south of Gipsy Lane is no longer proposed for development. Planning permission has been granted for the land west of St Anne's Drive, removing the need for allocation.
- 3.5 Outline planning permission has been granted for approximately 1,800 homes in the northern part of the SWSDL. Reserved Matters has been approved for parcel R10 for 215 homes. A further Reserved Matters application has been submitted for parcel R11 for 343 homes.

4. Relevant Site Promoter Representations

- 4.1 The development of the land south of Waterloo Road has been promoted by the Landowners at the Regulation 18 and 19 stages of plan making as outlined above.

Nicholas King Homes

- 4.2 With regards to Policy SS12, the representations submitted by Nicholas King Homes confirm:
- Support for the identification of the land for development.
 - The land is available for development.
 - There is capacity for up to 180 dwellings in their land interest. An outline planning application has been submitted.
 - That Nicholas King Homes will work positively with WBC to progress planning applications to ensure the timely delivery of development and supporting infrastructure.

- That housing delivery at least equal to that set out in WBC's housing trajectory will be achieved.

4.3 In the context of support, issues of soundness were raised in respect of various aspects of Policy SS12 as set out in Appendix 3. Main modifications have been sought.

Lightwood Strategic

4.4 With regard to Policy SS12, the representation submitted by Lightwood Strategic confirmed:

- Support for the identification of the land for development.
- The land is available for development.
- There is capacity for up to 945 dwellings (850 + 95 dwellings). Two planning applications have been submitted.
- That Lightwood Strategic will work positively with WBC to progress planning applications to ensure the timely delivery of development and supporting infrastructure.
- That housing delivery at least equal to that set out in WBC's housing trajectory will be achieved.

4.5 In the context of support, issues of soundness were raised in respect of various aspects of Policy SS12 as set out in Appendix C. Main modifications have been sought.

5. Areas of Agreement

5.1 The Parties agree the following:

- a) That the evidence supporting the SWSDL Location is generally robust and proportionate to the plan-making stage of planning
- b) That the SWSDL is deliverable (i.e. able to produce completions within 5 years) and developable thereafter.
- c) Without prejudice to Section 6, that the development, place shaping and delivery principles set out in Policy SS12, as supplemented by the development guidelines set out in Appendix B of the plan provide an appropriate basis for framing development at SWSDL.
- d) That housing delivery at least equal to that set out in WBC's housing trajectory will be achieved, including first completions in 2029/2030.

6. Areas of Disagreement, Clarification or Further Work

6.1 The table in Appendix C provides a summary of the Landowners representations to the Proposed Submission Plan that seek modifications to Policy SS12 and the related Appendix C.

- 6.2 The Parties agree that the areas of disagreement are not substantial. The Landowners have promoted modifications capable of addressing the matters raised in their detailed representations to the Proposed Submission Plan which includes the below:
- Whether a 40% affordable housing requirement is justified by viability evidence. The landowners promote a 35% requirement.
 - Whether the requirement is justified for a proportion of self and custom build plots.
 - Whether the requirement to provide Gypsy and Traveller pitches within the SWSDL extension is justified. The landowners promote provision within the wider SDL.
 - Whether there is a need to reserve land for a primary school.
- 6.3 The Landowners have promoted the site's capacity to be 1,125 dwellings which accords with their submitted planning applications. This represents an increase of 25 dwellings over and above the capacity identified in Policy SS12.
- 6.4 Lightwood Strategics' planning application does not currently reserve land for a primary school. Inclusion of land for the primary school would tally with around 1,100 homes although the planning application process will assess whether a slight density uplift/housing mix adjustment might suitably enable all 1,125 dwellings.

7. Anticipated Start and Build Out Rates

- 7.1 As set out above, Nicholas King Homes is an established housebuilder and Lightwood Strategic an established land promoter. Both have experience in bringing forward land for development within Wokingham Borough.
- 7.2 Nicholas King Homes and Lightwood Strategic have both submitted planning applications relating to their land interest as set out below. The applications are currently pending determination. Included also is a planning application submitted in the name of Mr Anthony Pudner and resourced by Lightwood Strategic on account of holding an option to buy the land.

Nicholas King Homes:

- Outline planning application ref. 242279 proposes up to 180 new homes and related infrastructure.

Lightwood Strategic

- Hybrid application ref 241933 comprising Outline planning permission (with all matters of detail reserved with the exception of means of access) for up to 850 homes and related infrastructure.

Nicholas King Homes and Lightwood Strategic

- Full planning application ref 242051 for the construction of a vehicular crossing to connect their respective land interests, together with separate active travel connections.

Mr Anthony Pudner / Lightwood Strategic

- Outline planning application ref 211033 for the construction of up to 95 dwellings and associated infrastructure.

7.3 The housing trajectory in the Proposed Submission Plan projects that housing completions will occur as set out below.

Year	Delivery
2029/30	30
2030/31	50
2031/32	100
2032/33	100
2033/34	100
2034/35	100
2035/36	100
2036/37	100
2037/38	100
2038/39	100
2039/40	100
Total delivery in plan period	980

7.4 The Landowner programme for the submission and consideration of planning applications, and subsequent delivery of dwellings is set out below.

Landowner	Submission of Outline application	Grant of Outline permission	Submission of Reserved Matters application	Grant of Reserved Matters application	Start on site	First completion
Nicholas King Homes	Application submitted	February 2026	By March 2026	By September 2026	By March 2027	In 2027/28
Lightwood Strategic	Application submitted	February 2026	By June 2027	By December 2027	By June 2028	In 2028/29

7.5 Determination of the pending outline planning applications is expected to be February 2026. Both Nicholas King Homes and Lightwood Strategic consider that the planning applications could be granted permission sooner, but have reflected the timeline in the Planning Performance Agreement with WBC. Taking into account sale of the land controlled by Lightwood Strategic, and Reserved Matters submissions for both landowners, first completions from Nicholas King Homes is projected in 2027/28, with first completions from Lightwood Strategic in 2028/29. Nicholas King Homes intend to deliver their interest over 3 years.

7.6 Appendix B includes further detail of the programme for the submission and determination of planning applications and the delivery of dwellings.

7.7 Notwithstanding WBC's housing trajectory, both Nicholas King Homes and Lightwood Strategic are working towards delivery at an accelerated rate and delivering a higher quantum of dwellings. The Landowner's projection would see the whole allocation delivered within the plan period.

8. Governance Arrangements Including Future Review

8.1 The Parties agree to:

- Continue to cooperate and work collaboratively regarding the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location;
- 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 South Wokingham Strategic Development Location.

Signed for Wokingham Borough Council



Name: Trevor Saunders
Position: Service Director, Planning
Date: 30/06/2025

Signed for Lightwood Strategic



Name: Richard Walker
Position: Planning Director
Date: 30/06/2025

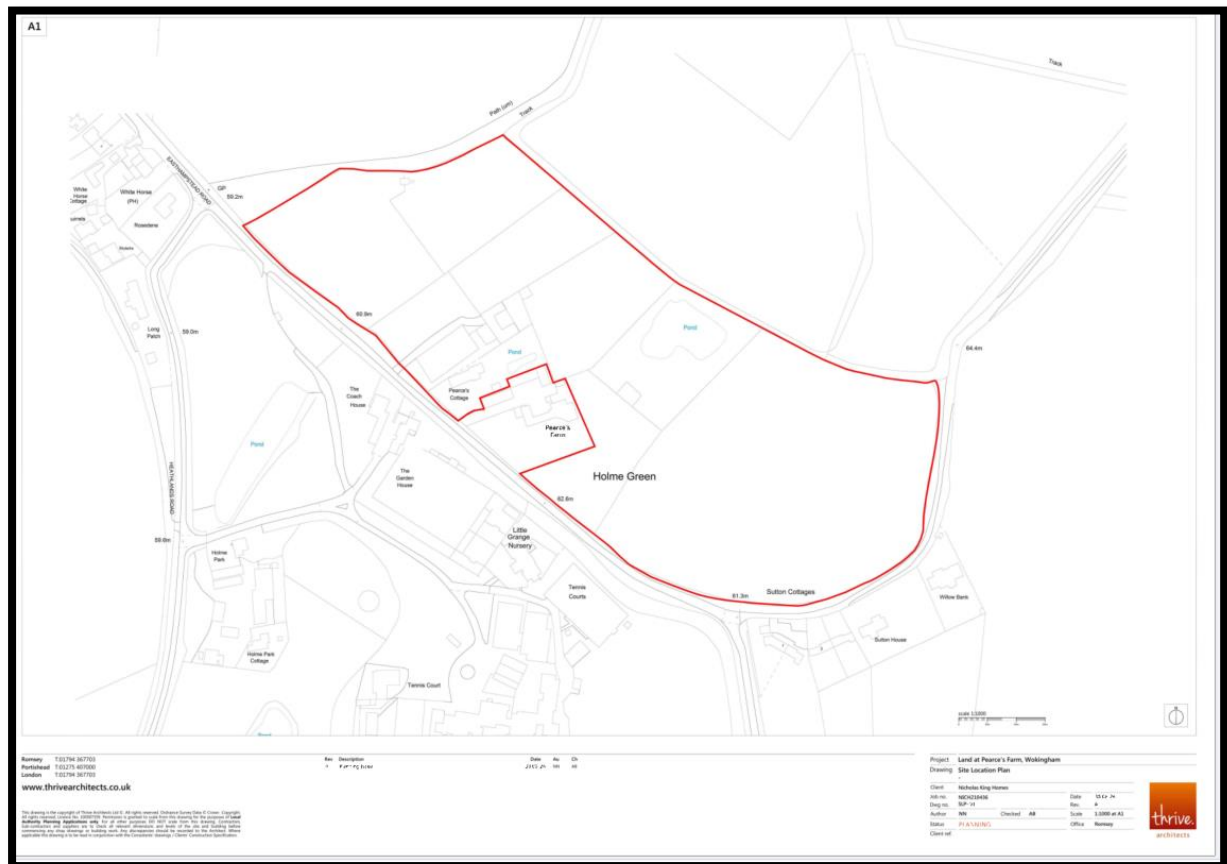
Signed for Nicholas King Homes

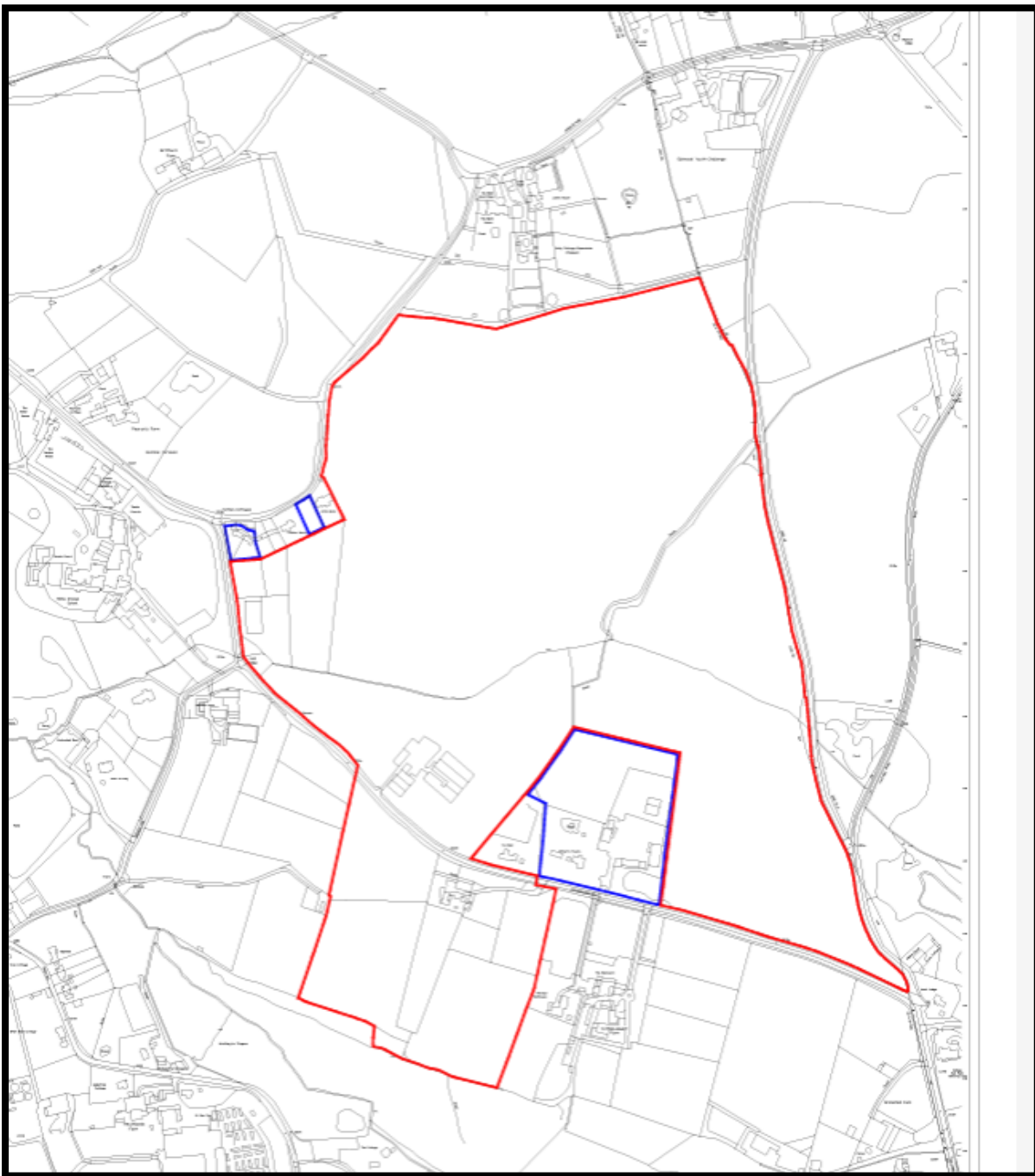


Name: Will Varrall
Position: Strategic Land Director
Date: 30/06/2025

Appendix A **Map South Wokingham Strategic Development Location:** **Land south of Waterloo Road**

Nicholas King Homes







Appendix B

Planning application programme and delivery trajectory

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.

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	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4											
Nicholas King																															
Application progress			Planning Committee	OPA granted & RM submitted		RM granted		Start on site																							
Projected completions									42				72				66				-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cumulative completion									42				114				180				-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lightwood Strategic																															
Application progress			Planning Committee	OPA granted	Land sale	Land sale			RM submitted		RM granted		Start on site																		
Projected completions													28				72				100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	45	-	
Cumulative completions													28				100				200	300	400	400	600	700	800	900	945	-	
Combined: Nicholas King Homes and Lightwood Strategic																															
Projected completions									42				100				138				100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	45		
Cumulative completions									42				142				280				380	480	580	680	780	880	980	1,080	1,125		
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 completions	0				0				0				0				30				50	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	
LPU cumulative completions	0				0				0				0				30				80	180	280	380	480	580	680	780	880	980	

Appendix C

Summary of Landowner representation requesting modifications to Policy SS12 (refer to original representation for precise wording)

Landowner	Aspect	Landowner Amendment Sought	Comment/Update
Nicholas King Homes	Affordable housing	Principle of affordable housing agreed, but that the requirement for 40% rather than 35% has not been justified.	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
	Custom / self-build	Remove the requirement for self and custom build plots to be provided on site. Alternatively, revise the policy to require custom builds rather than 'freeform' self build plots.	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
	Gypsies and Travellers	Revision to policy wording to allow the required pitches to be flexibility provided elsewhere in the SDL e.g. at Gray's Farm.	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
	Specialist accommodation	Disagree with the principle of providing specialist accommodation on site, which should be directed to town centre locations and not SDLs.	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
	Primary school	Clarification required as to whether the school is genuinely needed.	No amendment is included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
	Passivhaus	Remove the word 'passive' from part 4b) of the policy to avoid confusion Passivhaus standards are being sought.	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
	Holme Green Lane setting	Rewording requested to remove reference to 'setting' of Holme Green Lane given it is not a non/designated heritage asset.	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
	Heritage assets	Support the principle of conserving heritage assets, but amended wording proposed to provide link to concept plan.	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
	Highways improvements	Remove references to highway improvements along A321 and A329 corridors as these will be delivered by already committed relief road.	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
Lightwood Strategic	Affordable housing	Principle of affordable housing agreed, but that the requirement for 40% rather than 35% has not been justified. <i>"A target provision of 35% affordable homes in accordance with Policy H3"</i>	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
	Gypsies and Travellers	Revision to policy wording to allow the required pitches to be flexibility provided elsewhere in the SDL e.g. at Gray's Farm. Amended wording proposed to footnote 7. <i>"Delivery can be either within the SWSDL extension area, including Gray's Farm, or other suitable locations outside the SWSDL"</i>	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.

	Primary school	<p>Flexibility regarding provision of the primary school is required as understanding of need changes. Amended wording proposed.</p> <p><i>“The need for an additional 1-form entry primary school within the planned development on land south of Waterloo Road, and to allocate or reserve land accordingly, will be assessed and determined through the future planning applications”</i></p>	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
	Passivhaus	<p>Remove the word ‘passive’ from part 4b) of the policy to avoid confusion Passivhaus standards are being sought. Additional wording proposed.</p> <p><i>“For the avoidance of any uncertainty, the requirement for ‘passive design principles’ does not require the construction of buildings to the Passivhaus standard.”</i></p>	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
	Holme Green Lane setting	<p>Amended wording proposed in relation to the setting of Holme Green Lane as the current wording is unclear with heritage matters covered elsewhere. Amended wording proposed.</p> <p><i>“Incorporate measures to ensure that the residential amenities of the occupiers of existing residential properties that front onto Holme Green Lane are satisfactorily protected”</i></p>	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
	Masterplan	<p>The principle of a masterplanning approach is supported, however greater clarity needed as to how this relates to already consented development. Amended wording proposed.</p> <p><i>“The delivery of the SDL must be supported by a comprehensive masterplanning approach and packages of infrastructure to support a thriving and healthy community, including the following:”</i></p>	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.
	Concept plan	<p>Clarification required as to the extended SWSDL boundary and suggested amendment to labelling of existing settlements.</p>	Amendment sought not included within the WBC Schedule of proposed modifications.