

Response to the Consultation on the Development Plan Document Site Allocations Preferred Option

Binfield Parish Council has considered the preferred options and makes the following comments:

Binfield Parish Council is opposed to all the current proposals. Building on the proposed scale in the two main sites (Policy SA6 Amen Corner North and Policy SA7 Land at Blue Mountain) and two other minor sites (Land East of Murrell Hill Lane and South of Foxley Lane, and Land at Junction of Forest Road and Foxley Lane) is inappropriate in this part of the Borough.

The Borough Council's own Character Area Assessment acknowledges Binfield's character and its determination to preserve its uniqueness and some recommendations relevant to this consultation state:

- Small scale infill development should respect existing building lines and boundary treatments
- The open landscape either side of Binfield, together with the open character of Popeswood North, should be retained to maintain a rural setting and the distinctive character of Binfield
- Development and landscape on extant rural plots should maintain strong links with the rural setting
- Existing key views should be retained
- Retain the transitional character of Foxley Lane

The Core Strategy recognises the need for both Strategic and Local Gaps and these would be harmed by such development. CS9 States that "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..." This is supported by the Local Plan policy EN8.

Traffic volume and traffic flows are already of concern in and through Binfield. The London Road is already very busy and often has long queues; two large housing developments will severely congest the routes in Binfield including those from Bracknell accessing the A329 at the London Road junction. CS6 (1) of the Core Strategy states, "Development alone or in-combination with other proposals, will contribute to the delivery of infrastructure needed to support growth in the Borough and will mitigate adverse impacts on communities, transport and the environment." Paragraph 84 asserts that any measures would be secured before the adverse impacts are created, but if improvements are to be made using S106 contributions, this would be unlikely. The local doctors' surgery has some capacity for growth, but not enough for the housing proposed. There would need to be access at new or other surgeries, or new or expanded premises for the Binfield Surgery.

Binfield Primary School is a two form entry school and is full. Another secondary school and primary school is planned for the land at Blue Mountain site together with a football stadium for Bracknell Football Club. This site should be preserved for a local gap and for leisure purposes. The Amen Corner Supplementary Planning Document states that the development will comprise the provision of a new primary school. This should be provided on that site as a greater number of new pupils will be in that area of the parish.

With regard to the Bracknell Football Club having a stadium in Binfield, this makes no sense. Binfield already has two football clubs, Binfield Football Club and FC Bracknell, both of which provide excellent service to the community. The first team of Binfield Football Club is in the same league as Bracknell Football Club and has almost twice as many youth teams. FC Bracknell, based at Farley Wood in Binfield, also has many more youth teams. As far as football is concerned the stadium would bring no benefit. But it would bring traffic, noise and floodlights, all a nuisance to residents and if insufficient parking were provided then this would overspill onto Temple Way and be a serious problem on a main

through road. The infrastructure delivery plan makes no mention of the challenges raised by a football stadium with its associated traffic and parking plans. If a stadium is needed for Bracknell Town, it should be placed south of Bracknell in the Downshire complex. This would serve a large part of the community with football for their families and have good access via Nine Mile Ride from both Bracknell and Wokingham (it is understood that Bracknell currently shares a stadium with Wokingham FC).

It seems optimistic that a secondary school is also planned for this site. This should not be required if the housing development is elsewhere. The new Garth College has capacity for growth. The golf course should be retained for its rural nature, leisure activities and to retain the local gap. The views across from all sides, but particularly Popeswood Road and Forest Road, are highly valued by both residents and road users as they travel through Binfield.

The changes to the settlement boundary are particularly unwelcome at the western entry to the Borough. This is a rural gateway and the character would be damaged by such high density development.

Finally, should some development be needed in the Binfield area, the more southerly site, Amen Corner North, should be the one chosen. Its housing would be closer to the Amen Corner development already adopted and its children could access the planned school where the intake could be increased to a two form entry. The parking and traffic flows would still be an issue, but they might be more manageable near to the London Road.

As a supplementary point, there has been a poor history of delivery of services promised. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan already identifies a number of areas where there is a high risk of work not proceeding, including improvements to the strategic road network in association with the Blue mountain site, even though they are identified as necessary. Many promised improvements are dependent on funding by developer and history tells us that there is never enough for what is promised.