



**Technical Research for Wooburn &  
Bourne End Parish Council in respect  
of their Neighbourhood Plan:  
Matter 3: Proposed policy relating to  
the development brief for Hollands  
Farm Development**

**On Behalf of:**

**Wooburn & Bourne End Parish Council**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Wooburn and Bourne End Parish Council have commissioned West Waddy to undertake some technical research into matters raised by Buckinghamshire Council and Catesby Estates in their comments on the 'Wooburn and Bourne End Neighbourhood Development Plan: Local Consultation Draft – 31 March 2020.'
- 1.2 The matters addressed relate to:
- Matter 1: Local Infrastructure;
  - Matter 2: Local Green Space;
  - Matter 3: Proposed policy relating to the development brief for Hollands Farm Development; and
  - Matter 4: Proposed Policy WBE/HH1 – preserving the character of Hawks Hill and Harvest Hill;
- 1.3 The analysis relating to each of these matters is contained in a separate report. This report relates to Matter 3: Proposed policy relating to the development brief for Hollands Farm Development.
- 1.4 In order to take these matters forward it is strongly recommended that members of the Parish Council meet with Buckinghamshire Council and Catesby Estates to discuss their representations and how the Parish are proposing to address them.



## 2 MATTER 3: PROPOSED POLICY RELATING TO THE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF FOR HOLLANDS FARM DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 **Wooburn & Bourne End Parish Council comment:** Please could you review the wording of the proposed policy for Hollands Farm development for its intent and either advise if it is sufficient or advise amended wording to meet its objective.

### **Policy for Hollands Farm development:**

- 2.2 *'Wooburn and Bourne End Parish Council expects that when the Development Brief established for the Hollands Farm development is adopted, that planning applications relating to this development will adhere to the objectives, spirit and intent of the Development Brief. In particular (although not limited to) adherence to the sections of the development framework covering: urban design, access and movement, green and blue infrastructure, and flood risk. These aspirations should be considered as conditional such that any planning applications which fail to meet these aspirations must be rejected.'*
- 2.3 *Objective: 'ensure that the development brief is adhered to and any planning application which does not comply fully with the intent and principles of the development brief will be rejected.'*
- 2.4 **Scope of Work:** To advise on the appropriateness of this policy.
- 2.5 **Response on Matter 3:**
- 2.6 The draft Wooburn & Bourne End Neighbourhood Development Plan 2013 to 2033 (April 2020) contained policy WBE/HF1 on Development Brief for Hollands Farm, which stated that:
- 2.7 *'This Neighbourhood Development Plan requires that should Hollands Farm be released from greenbelt that a Development Brief is produced in consultation with local stakeholders, including the Parish Council that will take account of the additional Policies set out below.'*
- 2.8 In response to this policy Buckinghamshire Council stated that: *'This is not a policy and cannot be required in any case.'*



- 2.9 Catesby Estates commented: *'There is no formal policy requirement in Policy BE2 for a Development Brief for the Hollands Farm site however, Catesby are working with the parish council and local authority to develop this SPD. This policy should be deleted.'*
- 2.10 West Waddy in their previous advice to the Parish in response to these comments stated: *'Paragraph 5.4.19 of the adopted Wycombe Local Plan is explicit that "a development brief will be prepared for the site [Hollands Farm] to address these issues in more detail." The issues are described in paragraph 5.4.19 as: "There are a number of issues and constraints that will need to be carefully taken into account in the development of this site. These include the proximity of the Hedsor Road and Riversdale Conservation Area, nearby heritage assets, an area of fluvial flood risk in the south west corner of the site, and some surface and groundwater flood risk. Any development will need to be carefully integrated with and connected to the village and the traffic impact arising from the development addressed."*
- 2.11 *It therefore accords with the strategic policies of the Local Plan for the Neighbourhood Plan to make reference to the need for a Design Brief.*
- 2.12 *It also fully accords with the NPPF which states in paragraph 124 that: "Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process."*
- 2.13 *Paragraph 125 of the NPPF states that: "Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development."*
- 2.14 *To achieve good design paragraph 126 encourages the use of design guides and design codes. The glossary to the NPPF states that a Design Code is: "A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area." A Design Code is therefore essentially the same thing as a Design Brief.*



- 2.15 *It is therefore appropriate and consistent with national and adopted local policies for the NP to make reference to the need for a Development Brief/Design Code and to specify the key things that will need to be addressed, potentially providing further guidance than that contained in the Local Plan, providing it does not conflict with the Local Plan policy requirements for the development site.'*
- 2.16 This remains our advice. Indeed, it is clearly not inappropriate for a Neighbourhood Plan to contain a policy relating to a strategic site as the Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan contains a policy relating to the redevelopment of the Oxford Brookes Wheatley Campus along lines similar to Wooburn & Bourne End Parish Council's proposed wording, making clear that they will support proposals for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site for residential purposes where they conform with the development principles set out in the policy SPOBU – WHE25. In your case it is probably not necessary to set out the principles themselves as these are to be set out in the Development Brief.
- 2.17 With regard to the wording the Parish Council have drafted this essentially requires development proposals for Hollands Farm to comply with the Development Brief. In this respect, the Wycombe Local Plan states in paragraph 5.1.13 with regard to the reserve sites that: *'Once produced the briefs will be adopted by the Council and development proposals will need to be in accordance with the Development Brief.'*
- 2.18 However, this statement does not apply to the Hollands Farm site, as it is not a reserve site. As, however, paragraph 5.4.19 contains a commitment to producing a development brief for the Hollands Farm site, the Council presumably intend that subsequent development proposals will need to be in accordance with the brief. The proposed policy therefore fills the gap created by what was presumably an unintentional omission from the Local Plan.
- 2.19 A Neighbourhood Plan is required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan. The Planning Practice Guidance states that when considering whether a policy is in general conformity with a strategic policy a qualifying body, independent examiner, or local planning authority, should consider a number of factors, one of which is: *'whether the draft neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal provides an additional level of detail and/or a distinct local approach to that set out in the strategic policy without undermining that policy.'*



- 2.20 Requiring that development complies with the Development Brief in our view provides that additional level of detail without undermining the Hollands Farm policy BE2. This is especially important as Figure 38 Hollands Farm – Illustrative Layout in the Local Plan states that: *‘Please note this plan is indicative only drawn for the purposes of assessing development capacity.’*
- 2.21 With regard to the specific wording that has been drafted we consider this to be appropriate considering that the Parish Council is not the local planning authority and is setting out its aspirations which it wants Buckinghamshire Council to follow in determining applications for the Hollands Farm site.

### **3 Conclusion on Matter 3**

- 3.1 The proposed emerging policy relating to the brief for Hollands Farm is considered robust and the wording appropriate considering that the Parish Council is not the local planning authority and is setting out its aspirations which it wants Buckinghamshire Council to follow in determining applications for the Hollands Farm site.

