
APPENDIX 2

Constraints and Opportunities Analysis of Brookwood Farm, Moor Lane and Randall's Field

CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES ANALYSIS

OF SITES AT

**BROOKWOOD FARM
MOOR LANE AND
RANDALL'S FIELD, WOKING**

PREPARED BY



AUGUST 2006

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Pro Vision Planning & Design has been commissioned by the Burhill Estates Co Ltd to advise on the development potential of land at Randall's Field, in the context of the emerging Woking LDF, with particular reference to the potential for residential development.
- 1.2 The current adopted Woking Borough Local Plan (1999) identifies two sites (Brookwood Farm and Moor Lane) as Safeguarded Sites for long term residential purposes on the edge of the Green Belt under Policies HSG05 and HSG06.
- 1.3 Representations have already been submitted on behalf of Burhill to the Core Strategy Preferred Options. The representations indicate that the Moor Lane and Brookwood Farm sites are not well defined, defensible sites and, if properly tested, may not comply with relevant PPG 3 urban extensions and other criteria.
- 1.4 A Constraints and Opportunities Analysis has now been prepared by Pro Vision on behalf of Burhill to assess the relative sustainability of each of the three sites and their suitability for development in the context of current guidance on the allocation of land for housing.
- 1.5 Section 2 of this report provides a brief background to each of the three sites, whilst Section 3 deals with the relevant planning policy guidance and publications which have been taken into account. Section 4 sets out the methodology used to assess the sites. Section 5 analyses each of the three sites against the criteria set out in Sections 3 and 4, and Section 6 provides a comparative analysis and summary of the findings.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Policy HSG05 states that land at Moor Lane is safeguarded for release for residential development after 1 April 2001, if it is necessary to meet the housing supply provisions of the Surrey Structure Plan or to meet any deficit in the 5 year housing land supply after this date. As part of the justification text it is acknowledged that the site is not included in the Green Belt but will be subject to Green Belt Policy.
- 2.2 The Moor Lane site is located off of the B380, Westfield Road, which connects the A320 and A247, both of which lead to the A3. The site is bounded to the north by existing housing, to the west by existing housing and common land, to the south by Moor Lane and farm buildings, and to the east by Moor Lane Farm and open land. The site is virtually flat and is currently occupied by smallholdings. The land to the east and north east is defined as lying within the Green Belt and within a floodplain. An aerial photograph of the Moor Lane site is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.4 Policy HSG06 states that "the Woking Borough Local Plan 1993 designated land at Brookwood Farm as an area beyond the existing urban area excluded from the Green Belt, to be safeguarded for possible long term development needs, but subject in the interim to Green Belt Policy, i.e. development other than for the essential requirements of agriculture, forestry and outdoor recreation will not normally be allowed."
- 2.5 Brookwood Farm is located to the west of Woking, off of the A322, Bagshot Road, which connects the M3 with the A3. The site is located to the west of existing residential development along Coresbrook Way, which at present forms the western boundary of the Borough's built up area. The land to the west of Brookwood Farm is allocated as lying in the Green Belt and as noted in Policy HSG06 any applications for development on Brookwood Farm should be subject to Green Belt policies until the site is required for residential development. Land

to the west of the site is identified as being within the Floodplain. An aerial photograph of the Brookwood Farm site is attached at Appendix 2.

- 2.6 The Randall's Field site is located in the Green Belt and at present is not allocated for any form of development in the adopted Local Plan (1999). The 1988 Deposit Version of the Local Plan excluded the site from the Green Belt and proposed an allocation for residential development to meet Structure Plan housing requirements. However the Local Plan Inspector considered that the site was not at that time required and should therefore continue to perform a Green Belt function (Inspector's Report 1988, paragraph 4.88 – CD 69).
- 2.7 The Randall's Field site is located to the south of the village of Pyrford, which is located on the eastern side of Woking, off of the B367, Upshott Lane. The site is bordered to the north, west and north east by residential development and the area to the south and east is largely open undeveloped farmland. A plan identifying the location of the Randall's Field site and an aerial photograph is attached at Appendix 3.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- 3.1 The need to develop in sustainable locations has become increasingly recognised by the government over the past decade. There is a wealth of guidance advocating the need to develop in sustainable locations and providing guidelines on how to create sustainable residential environments.
- 3.2 Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (PPG 3) – Housing, was published in 2000 and provides guidance on a range of issues relating to the provision of housing, including advice on identifying, allocating and releasing areas and sites for residential development (paragraphs 28 to 34). Paragraph 31 of PPG 3 sets out the government's criteria against which Local Planning Authorities should assess the potential and suitability of sites for residential development. The criteria are as follows:
- The **availability of previously-developed sites** and empty or under-used buildings and their suitability for housing use;
 - The **location and accessibility** of potential development sites to jobs, shops and services by modes other than the car, and the potential for improving such accessibility;
 - The **capacity of existing and potential infrastructure**, including public transport, water and sewerage, other utilities and social infrastructure (such as schools and hospitals) to absorb further development and the cost of adding further infrastructure;
 - The **ability to build communities** to support new physical and social infrastructure and to provide sufficient demand to sustain appropriate local services and facilities; and
 - The **physical and environmental constraints on development of land**, including, for example, the level of contamination, stability and flood risk, taking into account that such risk may increase as a result of climate change.

- 3.3 Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 (PPG 13) – Transport was published in March 2001 and provides guidance on how to manage travel demand as well as identifying how transport impacts on other planning policies and land uses, including housing. Paragraphs 75 to 80 are of particular importance. They deal specifically with development and the potential to encourage walking and cycling. Paragraph 75 states that “walking is the most important mode of travel at the local level and offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly under 2 km.”
- 3.4 A number of documents have been produced providing more detailed guidance on the location of residential development in relation to the accessibility of sites to services, facilities and employment. Two of the most commonly used of these documents are:-
- Guidelines for Planning for Public Transport in Developments, published by the Institution of Highways & Transportation, March 1999.
 - Sustainable Settlements, published by the University of the West of England and the Local Government Management Board, 1995.
- 3.5 Both of the aforementioned documents have been used in this analysis, therefore a brief summary of each document is provided below.
- 3.6 **Guidelines for Planning for Public Transport in Developments** was published by the Institution of Highways and Transportation in March 1999. The main objectives of the guidelines are to describe best practice in linking developments to the existing public transport system and in providing for public transport within existing and new developments. Paragraph 6.20 and Annex B of the guidance are of particular relevance to this analysis, providing guidance on the location of bus stops and railway stations, advising that the maximum walking distance to a bus stop should not exceed 400m and preferably be no more than 300m and that the maximum walking or cycling distance to railway stations should not exceed 800m. However, it is acknowledged that these distances are quoted for guidance,

and should not be followed slavishly if that would lead to complex or indirect bus routes.

- 3.7 **Sustainable Settlements** was published by the University of the West of England (UWE) and the Local Government Management Board in 1995. Chapter 5 of the document provides guidance on Land Use and Movement Patterns, providing, in part, recommended distances for which people should expect to live from certain facilities. Although the guidance only provides some possible standards it has been widely used for a number of years and is considered to form a sound basis against which to consider the sustainability of residential development.
- 3.8 Extracts from Guidelines for Planning for Public Transport in Developments and Sustainable Settlements are attached at Appendix 4.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 The methodology adopted for this analysis has been based upon the guidance detailed in Section 3. Each site has been analysed individually based upon a number of criteria as follows:-

- Accessibility to Local Services and Facilities;
- Proximity to Employment Opportunities;
- Proximity to Public Transport;
- Access; and
- Physical and Environmental Constraints.

Accessibility to Local Services and Facilities

- 4.2 The accessibility of each of the three sites to local services and facilities has been assessed against distance targets set out in 'Sustainable Settlements'. Services which are considered to be used on a frequent basis have been assessed, including doctors, dentists, primary schools, secondary schools, sixth form schools / colleges, post offices, libraries, community halls, supermarkets, local centre / shops and leisure centres.
- 4.3 In the absence of recommended distances for community halls and libraries, distances for local centre / shops and district centres, respectively, have been used, based on the assumption that these facilities are most likely to be found in these locations.
- 4.4 The accessibility of each site to areas of public open space has also been assessed, using guidance set out in the Sustainable Settlements publication. The guidance advises that residential development should be within 600 m of a children's playground and 1000 m of a playfield or park.

4.5 For consistency and to allow comparative analysis the distances cited in this analysis have been calculated using postcodes for the nearest and most central point to each site. The postcodes used are as follows:

- Moor Lane – GU22 9NU (the postcode for Westfield Way)
- Brookwood Farm – GU21 2TR (the postcode for Corresbrook Way)
- Randall's Field – GU22 8ST (the postcode for Tegg's Lane).

4.6 Using the aforementioned postcodes distances from the specified points of interest were generated using a number of websites, including www.multimap.com, www.upmystreet.com, and www.nhs.uk as well as visual observations made at each of the sites.

Proximity to Employment Opportunities

4.7 The proximity of each site to employment opportunities has been assessed based upon Industrial Areas identified in the Adopted Local Plan as the main areas generating employment opportunities. Whilst it is acknowledged that there are a significant number of employment opportunities outside of these Industrial Areas not all employment opportunities can be assessed through this analysis and therefore only the largest areas have been assessed.

Proximity to Public Transport

4.8 The accessibility of each of the three sites to public transport services has been assessed against distance targets set out in Planning for Public Transport in Developments, published by the IHT. For the purposes of this report public transport is termed as buses and trains. In addition to proximity the frequency of services and destinations served have been assessed.

Access

4.9 Access to each site has been considered in relation to the standard of existing access points and their potential to be up-graded as well as the ability to develop new points of access.

Physical and Environmental Constraints

4.10 Physical and environmental constraints have primarily been assessed against proximity to:

- The Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area;
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- Local Nature Reserves;
- Sites of Nature Conservation Importance;
- Conservation Areas;
- Areas of High Archaeological Importance;
- Escarpments and rising ground of landscape importance;
- Urban open space and common land;
- Areas liable to flood; and
- Any other constraints which are identified.

5 ANALYSIS

- 5.1 The site analyses undertaken have sought to assess the sustainability, constraints and opportunities, as well as the suitability of each site for the allocation of residential development, based upon the site allocation criteria and guidance set out in PPG 3 and PPG 13.
- 5.2 Each site is therefore analysed individually below.

Moor Lane

Accessibility to Local Services and Facilities

- 5.3 The following table summarises the accessibility of the Moor Lane site to local services and facilities and assesses the walk distances against recognised guidance, as discussed in Section 3 and 4 of this report. An area plan of the area surrounding Moor Lane is attached at Appendix 1.

Table 1: Land adjacent to Moor Lane Accessibility to local services and facilities

Service / Facility	Walk Distance (m)	Sustainable Settlements Guidance
Doctor – Dr Hendry & Partners, Holmes Close	900 m	1000 m
Dentist – Westfield Dental & Implant Centre, Westfield Road	670 m	1000 m
Primary School – Westfield Primary School, Bonsey Lane	660 m	600 m
Secondary School – The Winston	3460 m	1500 m

Churchill School		
Sixth Form College- Woking College	1280 m	5000 m
Post Office – Kingfield Post Office, Kingfield Road	980 m	800 m
Library – Woking Library, Gloucester Walk	2600 m	2000 m
Community Hall – Old Woking Community Centre, Sundridge Road	1200 m	800 m
Supermarket – Morrisons, Goldsworth Road	2290 m	2000 m
Local Centre / Shops – Ashcombe Parade	860 m	800 m
Leisure Centre – Woking Leisure Centre	2300 m	2000 m

- 5.4 Table 1 identifies that only three of the eleven services and facilities identified are located within the recommended distances as advised in the Sustainable Settlements document. These include the doctor, dentist and sixth form school / college. It is however acknowledged that the primary school and local centre are within close proximity of the recommended distances.
- 5.5 In terms of public open space Westfield Common is located to the west of the site, providing open space for the neighbouring community. A children's playground is also provided at Bonsey Lane, approximately 660 m from the site.

Proximity to Local Employment Opportunities

- 5.6 Westminster Court is located on Hipley Street, off of the High Street in Woking, approximately 2.1 km from the Moor Lane site. The area primarily functions as a business park, providing predominantly B1 business units. A further employment area is located to the east of Westminster Court on Manor Way and is known as

Manor Way Industrial Estate. In contrast to Westminster Court Manor Way Industrial Estate provides units in predominantly B2 and B8 uses.

- 5.7 In addition to Westminster Court and Manor Way Industrial Estate, there are a variety of shops and local services in the general area (see Table 1) which provide further employment opportunities.

Proximity to Public Transport

- 5.8 The nearest bus stop to the site is located within an approximately 500 m walk of the site, outside the Cricketers public house on Westfield Avenue. The stop is served by service number 34 which connects Westfield Avenue with Woking town centre as well as Guildford and Camberley at 30 minute intervals throughout the day.
- 5.9 The nearest railway station to the site is Worplesdon station, which is located 2 km from Moor Lane. The station is served by South West Trains, providing direct hourly services to Woking, London Waterloo and Guildford, as well as stations in between these destinations. More frequent services are provided during peak hours and a range of other destinations are available from Woking station.
- 5.10 With reference to guidance provided by the IHT, as discussed in Section 4 of this analysis neither the nearest bus stop nor railway station to Moor Lane are within the advised maximum walking distances, although a bus stop is only marginally beyond the recommended distance.

Access

- 5.11 The site is bounded to the north by existing housing, to the west by existing housing and urban open space, to the south by Moor Lane and farm buildings and to the east by Moor Lane Farm and open land within the Green Belt. Based upon the existing uses bounding the site, access can not be obtained to the site from the north or the west. It is also unlikely that access could be obtained from the east as this land is within the Green Belt, where there is a presumption

against inappropriate development and any access point along this boundary would require access through Moor Lane Farm.

- 5.12 There is a need for highway improvements along Moor Lane and at the junction with Westfield Avenue Moor Lane.

Physical and Environmental Constraints

Flood Risk -

- 5.13 The adopted Woking Local Plan proposals map identifies the land to the east and north east of the site, as well as the most north eastern corner of the site as lying within a flood plain. Policy NE11 of the Local Plan clearly states that "in areas at risk from flooding as shown on the proposals map new development will not normally be permitted". The supporting text at paragraph 3.60 of the Plan continues to state that "development in areas at risk from flooding reduces the capacity of the available flood plain and impedes the flow of water, thereby increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere." A map identifying the extent of the flood plain is attached at Appendix 5.

Proximity to Habitats -

- 5.14 The Moor Lane site is not the subject of any national or local designations that seek to protect habitats. The site is however within 5km of a Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area and hence migration must be considered.

Brookwood Farm

Accessibility to Local Services and Facilities

5.15 The following table summarises the accessibility of Brookwood Farm to local services and facilities and assesses the walk distances against recognised guidance, as discussed in Sections 3 and 4 of this report. An area plan of the area surrounding Brookwood Farm is attached at Appendix 7.

Table 2: Brookwood Farm's Accessibility to local services and facilities

Service/Facility	Walk Distance (m)	Sustainable Settlements Guidance
Doctor – The Health Clinic, Hermitage Road	2100 m	1000 m
Dentist – Tapsellhurst Dental Surgery, 112 High Street, Knaphill	780 m	1000 m
Primary School – Knapshill Junior School, High Street, Knaphill Brookwood Primary School, Connaught Road, Brookwood	780 m 810 m	600 m
Secondary School – The Winston Churchill School	1880 m	1500 m
Sixth Form College- Woking College	5500 m	5000 m
Post Office – Horsell Post Office, 89 High Street, Knaphill	800 m	800 m
Library – Knaphill Library, High Street, Knaphill	1150 m	2000 m
Community Hall – Brookwood Memorial Hall, Connaught Road,	1100 m	800 m

Brookwood		
Supermarket – Sainsbury's, Redding Way	290 m	2000 m
Local Centre / Shops – Knaphill village Centre	800 m	800 m
Leisure Centre – Winston Churchill School Sports Centre	1880 m	2000 m

- 5.16 Table 2 identifies that five of the eleven services and facilities identified are **not** located within the recommended distances as advised in the Sustainable Settlements document. These include the doctor's surgery, primary school, secondary school, sixth form school / college and community hall.
- 5.17 In terms of public open space the Sussex Road Recreation Ground is located approximately 900 m from the site, providing a range of recreational activities, including playing fields and children's playground.

Proximity to Local Employment Opportunities

- 5.18 The Lansbury Estate is located on Lower Guildford Road in Woking, approximately 2 km from Brookwood Farm. The Industrial area provides a range of employment opportunities in B1 (offices), B2 (Industrial) and B8 (Storage & Distribution) uses. Further employment opportunities exist at the Robin Hood Works on Robin Hood Road, Woking, which is approximately 2.6 km from Brookwood Farm and provides 8 business units for a variety of business uses.
- 5.19 In addition to the Lansbury Estate and Robin Hood Works, there are a variety of shops and local services nearby (see Table 2) which provide further employment opportunities.

Proximity to Public Transport

- 5.20 The nearest bus stop to the site is located within an approximately 250 m walk of Brookwood Farm, on Bagshot Road. The stop is served by service numbers 34 and 35, both of which connect Bagshot Road with Woking Town Centre as well as Guildford and Camberley, via different routes. Both services operate every 30 minutes, providing four buses an hour.
- 5.21 The nearest railway station to the site is Brookwood station, which is located 1 km from Brookwood Farm. The station is served by South West Trains, providing direct half hourly services to Alton and Basingstoke and quarter hourly services to Woking and London Waterloo, as well as stations in between. More frequent services are provided at peak hours.
- 5.22 With reference to guidance provided by the IHT, as discussed in Section 4 of this report both the nearest bus stop and railway station to Brookwood Farm are within the advised maximum walking distances.

Access

- 5.23 The site can only be accessed via Sparvel Road or Oak Tree Road, which lead onto Bagshot Road (A322). However, the Sparvel Road and Bagshot Road junction restricts traffic exiting onto the A322 to a left turn only. Residential development has recently been completed to the west of Sparvel Road and the road has been extended to serve this development and has been finished in a way that the road could be extended to serve development at Brookwood Farm.
- 5.24 Sparvel Road and the neighbouring roads, in particular Oak Tree Road are very narrow and are unlikely to be adequate to accommodate further significant residential development. The A322 (Bagshot Road) suffers from heavy traffic, particularly at peak times and further residential development at Brookwood Farm would only increase these levels of traffic.

5.25 Access to Brookwood Farm was considered during the preparation of the 1993 and 1999 Woking Borough Council Local Plan's as part of the overall assessment of the site and its potential for residential development. A West End / Bisley / Knaphill By Pass Southern Extension between Bisley Common and Brookwood cross roads was proposed in the 1993 adopted Local Plan. Paragraph 2.20 of the Plan stated that Brookwood Farm should not be released until the road is completed and a clear need for it was acknowledged in subsequent reviews of the Plan. However, the proposed By Pass was abandoned by Surrey County Council after the 1999 Local Plan was adopted on 27 August 1999. This leaves a significant development site access issue that is unresolved.

Physical and Environmental Constraints

Flood Risk -

5.26 The adopted Woking Local Plan proposals map identifies a small part of the western side of Brookwood Farm and part of the land beyond to the west as lying within a flood plain. Policy NE11 of the Local Plan clearly states that "in areas at risk from flooding as shown on the proposals map new development will not normally be permitted." The supporting text at paragraph 3.60 of the Plan continues to state that "development in areas at risk from flooding reduces the capacity of the available flood plain and impedes the flow of water, thereby increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere." A map identifying the extent of the flood plain is attached at Appendix 5.

Proximity to Habitats -

5.27 Brookwood Farm is not the subject of any national or local designations that seek to protect habitats. The site is however within approximately 800 m of a Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. Although under current guidance this proximity does not restrict development of the site for residential development, compensatory measures to reduce the potential impact of development on the SPA must therefore be fully considered.

Proposed Brookwood Country Park -

- 5.28 Land directly to the west and south west of Brookwood Farm is designated in the Core Strategy Preferred Options as land for a Country Park, although it is acknowledged in Policy LC3 of the preferred options document that the detailed boundary of the area will be shown in the Site Allocations DPD.

Randall's Field

Accessibility to Local Services and Facilities

5.29 The following table summarises the accessibility of the Randall's Field site to local services and facilities and assesses the walk distances against recognised guidance, as discussed in Section 3 and 4 of this report. An area plan of the area surrounding Randall's Field is attached at Appendix 8.

5.30

Table 3: Land adjacent to Randall's Field, Accessibility to local services and facilities

Service / Facility	Walk Distance (m)	Sustainable Settlements Guidance
Doctor – West Byfleet Health Centre, Madeira Road	1600 m	1000 m
Dentist – Dental Surgery, 22 Old Woking Road	1500 m	1000 m
Primary School – Pyrford CE Primary School	300 m	600 m
Secondary School – The Bishop David Brown School, Albert Drive	1700 m	1500 m
Sixth Form School / College – Fullbrook School, Selsdon Road	2250 m	5000 m
Post Office – Compupro, Cold Harbour Road	430 m	800 m
Library – West Byfleet Library, The Corner, West Byfleet	1600 m	2000 m
Community Hall – Pyrford village war memorial hall	100 m	800 m

Supermarket – Tesco, 77 Old Woking Road	1400 m	2000 m
Local Centre / Shops – Lovelace Drive	500 m	800 m
Leisure Centre – Fullbrook Sports Centre	2250	2000 m

5.31 Table 3 identifies that eight of the eleven local services and facilities identified are located within the recommended distances as advised in the sustainable settlements document. However, there may be an opportunity for a new combined doctor's / dentist surgery on the site and a wide range of leisure facilities in the local area. This leaves only the secondary school beyond the recommended distance but even then at 1700 m it is closer than at Brookwood (1880 m) and significantly closer than at Moor Lane (3460 m).

5.32 In terms of public open space, Pyrford Common Recreation Ground is located along Pyrford Common Road, approximately 1000 m from the site and provides both playfields and a children's playground. Although not a formal recreation ground the school playing field, 300 m from the site provides open space for the local community. There is also a cricket ground opposite the site, within a 200 m walk.

Proximity to Local Employment Opportunities

5.33 The Camphill Industrial Estate is located on Camphill Road, Byfleet, Woking, approximately 2.2 km from Randall's Field, providing a range of employment opportunities.

5.34 The Randall's Field site is also within close proximity to the largest concentration of industrial areas in the Borough, which include the Sheerwater Industrial Estate, Woking Business Park and Mounument Way Industrial Estate, providing a range of employment opportunities within B1, B2 and B8 uses.

- 5.35 The closest of these employment areas to Randall's Field is Monument Way Industrial Estate (East and West), which is approximately 3.5 km from the site. Sheerwater Industrial Estate and Woking Business Park are located on Albert Drive, Woking, approximately 4.0 km from the site.
- 5.36 In addition to the vast employment opportunities at the Industrial estate and business parks within close proximity of the site, there are a variety of shops and local services nearby (see Table 3) which provide further employment opportunities.

Proximity to Public Transport

- 5.37 The nearest bus stop to the site is located within an approximately 100 m walk of the Randall's Field site on Upshot Lane. The stop is served by service number 437, which provides an hourly service between Chertsey and Woking train station, via Byfleet and West Byfleet. At peak periods the service is more frequent.
- 5.38 The nearest railway station to the site is West Byfleet station, which is located 1.93 km from the site. The station is served by South West Trains, providing direct services to Alton and London Waterloo every 30 minutes and direct services to Woking every 15 minutes. More frequent services are provided at peak hours and a range of other destinations are available from Woking Station.
- 5.39 With reference to guidance provided by the IHT, as discussed in Section 4 of this report the nearest bus stop is within the advised maximum walking distances and although West Byfleet Station is further than the advised maximum walking distances buses serving the site provide regular services to the station.

Access

- 5.40 The site is accessible from Tegg's Lane, Upshot Road and Pyrford Common Road. Upshott Lane provides opportunities for potential new access points to the site and Tegg's Lane could be upgraded to accommodate further traffic.
- 5.41 Potential points of access to the site were considered at the 1988 Local Plan Inquiry. Paragraph 4.80 of the Local Plan Inspectors report acknowledged that the existing infrastructure could accommodate the proposed housing, although off-site highway works would be required, including an improvement to the junction with Pyrford Common Road and Upshott Lane.

Physical and Environmental Constraints

Flood Risk -

- 5.42 The site is not located within close proximity to a flood plain and therefore residential development on the site would not be at risk from flooding.

Proximity to Habitats -

- 5.43 The site is not the subject of any national or local designations that seek to protect habitats. The site is however within 5km of the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Areas.

Environmental Designations -

- 5.44 As previously noted the site is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt, however representations have been made to the Woking Borough Council Core Strategy Preferred Options document on behalf of Burhill Estates Co Ltd objecting to the sites allocation in the Green Belt, requesting that the Green Belt boundary be redefined to exclude the site.

6.0 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY

6.1 This report has sought to assess the relative sustainability merits of sites at Brookwood Farm, Moor Lane and Randall's Field and their suitability for development in the context of current guidance on the allocation of land for housing. The analysis has taken current national planning guidance into account and has thus sought to provide an up to date assessment of the sustainability, constraints and opportunities of each site. In Section 5 the sites were assessed against the government's criteria for considering the potential and suitability of sites for residential development as set out in PPG3. In this section the findings are summarised.

Sustainability

- 6.2 All three sites are within close proximity to a variety of services and facilities. However when assessed against recommended distances set out in the 'Sustainable Settlements' document the Randall's Field site is considered to be the most sustainable. It is within the recommended walking distance of eight of the eleven services / facilities identified. In comparison the Brookwood Farm site is located within the recommended walking distance of six out of the eleven services / facilities, including a local centre. Performing the worst out of the three sites is that of Moor Lane, which is within the recommended walking distance of only three of the eleven services / facilities, although a primary school and local centre are located within close proximity of the recommended distance.
- 6.3 Each of the sites are located within approximately 2 km of an industrial area that provides a range of employment opportunities. Randall's Field is however located within the closest proximity to the widest range of employment generating opportunities as discussed in Section 5 of this report.
- 6.4 In terms of public transport the Brookwood Farm site is within the recommended walking distance of both a bus stop and railway station, where as the Moor Lane site is beyond the recommended walking distances for both a bus stop and

railway station. The Randall's Field site is within the recommended walking distance of a bus stop, services from which connect to the nearest railway station, which is slightly beyond the recommended walking distance.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 6.5 The proposed West End / Bisley / Knaphill By Pass South Extension was abandoned by Surrey County Council after the Local Plan was adopted in 1999. This is considered to be a significant constraint on the development of Brookwood Farm, which has emerged since the site was allocated as a safeguarded site for residential development, under adopted Local Plan Policy HSG06. Without the new road and possible connections to it the current access points to the Brookwood Farm site are narrow and are unlikely to be adequate to accommodate further significant residential development. The A322 (Bagshot Road) already suffers from heavy traffic making turning onto and off of the Bagshot Road difficult. The Council needs to reassess the accessibility of the site before re-allocating it as a Safeguarded Site for residential development.
- 6.6 Parts of the Brookwood Farm and Moor Lane sites fall within defined flood plains and both sites need to be reconsidered in terms of flood risk.
- 6.7 A further constraint on development at Brookwood Farm is the location of a Thames Heath Basin Special Protection Area (within approximately 800 m). Compensatory measures to reduce the potential impact of development on the SPA must therefore be fully considered.
- 6.8 The Randall's Field site is currently within the Green Belt. However the site is bordered to the north, west and north east by residential development and its boundaries are very clearly defensible. Development of the site would round-off the existing urban area. This point was also acknowledged by the Local Plan Inspector (1993). He stated that development of the site would neither constitute nor lead to unrestricted sprawl into the countryside (paragraph 4.78).

Summary

- 6.9 In summary, we conclude that there are a number of very significant constraints on the development of the allocated Safeguarded Sites, in particular that of Brookwood Farm. The site at Randall's Field is considered to present a preferable alternative for residential or mixed use development. The site is located in a more sustainable location and is not the subject of major physical constraints. It provides an opportunity to develop a site on the edge of the existing built up area without extending the urban boundary of Woking into environmentally constrained countryside.
- 6.10 It is therefore requested that the Council:
- a) reconsider the sites allocated as 'Safeguarded Sites' through Policy GB2 of the Draft Woking Core Strategy Preferred Options (to take the Randall's Field site into account); and
 - b) enter into discussions with the owners of the Randall's Field site with a view to considering an appropriate balance of land for development and public open space. The development land could include mixed use with potential for a new health centre (doctor's and dentists) and employment development.
 - c) reconsider the Green Belt boundary around Pyrford to exclude the site at Randall's Field (which should be allocated for development within the new LDD period or should at least be given Safeguarded Site status).