Item No.	Application No. and Parish	Statutory Target Date	Proposal, Location, Applicant
(1)	26/00555/REG3 Hungerford Parish	14th May 2026	Proposed change of use from Class C2 (Residential Institution) to Class C1 (Hotel/Hostel) to provide supported temporary accommodation with onsite management and security measures. Construction of new Air source heat pump compound and cycle store. Relocation of bin store. Former Old Peoples Home, Chestnut Walk, Hungerford West Berkshire Council

[1] Extension of time agreed with applicant until 17th September 2026.

The application can be viewed on the Council's website at the following link:
"copy link to documents online"
https://publicaccess.westberks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=TBHOP4RDH6J00

Recommendation Summary:	The Development Control Manager be authorised to grant conditional permission.
Ward Member(s):	Councillor Benneyworth Councillor Vickers Councillor Gaines
Reason for Committee Determination:	The applicant is the Council and in addition more than 10 objections received
Committee Site Visit:	9th July 2026

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Lauren Hill
Job Title:	Senior Planning Officer
Tel No:	01635 519111
Email:	Lauren.Hill1@westberks.gov.uk

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is for the Committee to consider the proposed development against the policies of the development plan and the relevant material considerations, and to make a decision as to whether to approve or refuse the application.

1.2 The applicant and owner of the land is West Berkshire District Council and as such the application is made under the remit of Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992. These regulations control how local planning authorities determine applications made by the same Council.

1.3 Permission is sought for the change of use of a vacant elderly care home (C2) to a hostel to support people who are homeless (C1) with associated works as per the description. The site is known as Chestnut Walk and is located within the settlement boundary of Hungerford.

1.4 The proposal involves the conversion and refurbishment of the existing Old People's Home to provide temporary accommodation for local residents experiencing homelessness. Residents could include single people, couples and some families with children. The development would enable households, particularly those from the Western part of West Berkshire, to remain closer to their employment, schools, support networks, and communities.

1.5 The development would comprise 12 self-contained bedrooms with the ability to vary the internal accommodation in the future to allow for additional family units if required. A maximum of 16 residents would be accommodated.

1.6 There would be some non-residing day staff employed on the site to assist with day-to-day operations. They would also support the residents with

- Tenancy sustainment support
- Welfare and safeguarding checks
- Assistance with employment and general life skills
- and guidance to help residents obtain suitable long-term housing.

1.7 A site visit by Western Area Planning Committee was previously held on 09.07.2026. As a result of this site meeting additional public consultation was undertaken by West Berkshire Council and the Planning application deferred to a later committee date.

1.8 Following the committee site visit, the Council has been engaging closely with Thames Valley Police. Additional information has been provided detailing security-related arrangements for the consideration.

2. Planning History

2.1 The table below outlines the relevant planning history of the application site.

Application	Proposal	Decision / Date

21/01868/FULD	Demolition of Home at Chestnut Walk and erection of 8 dwellings.	Resolved to be approved but no decision issued. Will be disposed of under the DMPO of 2015.
25/02514/PREAPP	Pre application enquiry for change of use of the Old Persons Home to a C1 use.	Closed - December 2025.

2.2 It is noted that no formal decision notice was issued with 21/01868/FULD. This is because the required Section 106 agreement was not finalised between the Council and Sovereign Housing. No extant permission lies on the site, other than the present C2 use.

3. Legal and Procedural Matters

3.1 **Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)**: Given the nature, scale and location of this development, it is not considered to fall within the description of any development listed in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. As such, EIA screening is not required.

3.2 **Publicity**: Publicity has been undertaken in accordance with Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Site notice[s] were displayed on the site on the 2nd of April this year, with a deadline for representations of the 23rd April. Notification letters were sent to 28 neighbours on the 25th of March 2026.

3.3 **Local Financial Considerations**: Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that a local planning authority must have regard to a local finance consideration as far as it is material. Whether or not a 'local finance consideration' is material to a particular decision will depend on whether it could help to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It would not be appropriate to make a decision based on the potential for the development to raise money for a local authority or other government body. The table below identified the relevant local financial considerations for this proposal. It is necessary to note that whilst not a land use planning matter, if the application is approved the implementation of the application would mean cost savings to the Council since fewer homeless people will be housed in bed and breakfast accommodation.

Consideration	**Applicable to proposal**	**Material to decision**	**Refer to paragraph(s)**
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	No	No	3.4.
New Homes Bonus	No	No	3.5
Affordable Housing	Yes	Yes	N/A
Public Open Space or Play Areas	No	No	N/A

Developer Contributions (S106)	No	No	N/A
Job Creation	No	No	N/A

3.4 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a levy charged on most new development within an authority area. The money is used to pay for new infrastructure, supporting the development of an area by funding the provision, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure. CIL will be used to fund roads and other transport facilities, schools and other educational facilities, flood defences, medical facilities, open spaces, and sports and recreational areas. Subject to the application of any applicable exemptions, CIL will be charged on residential (Use Classes C3 and C4) and retail (former Use Classes A1 – A5) development at a rate per square metre (based on Gross Internal Area) on new development of more than 100 square metres of gross internal area (including extensions) or when a new dwelling is created (even if it is less than 100 square metres). CIL liability, and the application of any exemptions, will be formally confirmed by the CIL Charging Authority under separate cover following any grant of planning permission. More information is available at https://www.westberks.gov.uk/community-infrastructure-levy

3.5 **New Homes Bonus (NHB)**: New Homes Bonus payments recognise the efforts made by authorities to bring residential development forward. NHB money will be material to the planning application when it is reinvested in the local areas in which the developments generating the money are to be located, or when it is used for specific projects or infrastructure items which are likely to affect the operation or impacts of those developments. NHB is not considered to be a relevant material consideration in this instance, but can be noted for information.

3.6 **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)**: In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The Council must have due regard to the need to achieve the following objectives:

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

3.7 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—

(a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

(b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

(c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

3.8 The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage, the duty is to have regard to and remove or minimise disadvantage. In considering the merits of this planning application, due regard has been given to these objectives. It is necessary to note that the application if approved would assist in delivering additional accommodation for the homeless, so improving overall equality.

3.9 **Human Rights Act**: The development has been assessed against the provisions of the Human Rights Act, including Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of property), Article 6 (Right to a fair trial) and Article 8 (Right to respect for private and family life and home) of the Act itself. The consideration of the application in accordance with the Council procedures will ensure that views of all those interested are taken into account. All comments from interested parties have been considered and reported in summary in this report, with full text available via the Council's website.

3.10 It is It is acknowledged that there are certain properties where they may be some impact (this can be mitigated by conditions – if relevant) However, any interference with the right to a private and family life and home arising from the scheme as a result of impact on residential amenity is considered necessary in a democratic society in the interests of the social well-being of the district and wider area and is proportionate given the overall benefits of the scheme in terms of the provision of more homeless accommodation.

3.11 Any interference with property rights is in the public interest and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 regime for controlling the development of land. This recommendation is based on the consideration of the proposal against adopted Development Plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third party. It is noted that some of the objections relate to a reduction in local property values-this is not a planning matter and cannot be treated as material to consideration of this application.

3.12 **Listed building setting**: Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special regard must be had to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 16(2) has the same requirement for proposals for listed building consent. There are no listed buildings in the site vicinity.

3.13 **Conservation areas**: Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. There are no conservation areas in the vicinity.

3.14 **National Landscapes (AONB)**: Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 (as amended) provides a general duty for public bodies: "Any relevant authority exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to effect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty in England must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty)." AONBs have been rebranded to be known as National Landscapes, although their legal AONB status continues. All of the application site lies in this designation.

4. Consultation

Statutory and non-statutory consultation

4.1 The table below summarises the consultation responses received during the consideration of the application. The full responses may be viewed with the application documents on the Council's website, using the link at the start of this report.

Hungerford Town Council	Objection -appended to the report as **Appendix 1** is the objection as it covers many points which the Committee should take into account. In summary, these relate to: - Conflict with the HNDP's housing priorities on housing mix, enhancing the character of the area and how it functions. - A high-density hostel of predominantly younger single people conflicts with the established residential nature of Chestnut Walk. - It is questions how the proposed scheme would assist community cohesion. - The occupants will likely be from West Berkshire as a whole not only Hungerford. - The development is not good quality design. - The internal layout is problematic in design terms. - It is uncertain how the development would be managed. - Amenity concerns (incl. noise, loitering, smoking) - Safety concerns - Lack of energy efficiency measures. - Insufficient parking - Staffing and management concerns.
WBC Highways:	No objection. - There is a low likelihood of car ownership amongst residents and staff levels are also relatively low. - The likely car demand would be minimum and is unlikely to be greater than the previous use. - The development would not worsen the local parking pressure. - The proposed parking and associated highway impact is acceptable.

Thames Valley Police	Objection raised on the following grounds (summarised): - Relationship between the family units and the main accommodation. The family accommodation should be kept separate and self-contained. Layout amendment proposed – the Family Unit 2 would be more appropriately positioned at the eastern end of the building. - Access controls (insufficient information). A single main entrance to the main accommodation is proposed. The number of doorsets would make access difficult to control. A single main access should be used. Access controls relating to visitors, post and deliveries must be considered. - Details regarding compartmentation of units (linked to access controls) to ensure that residents only have access to areas/rooms they need to, recognising that offenders have the potential to be external and internal to the development. - Boundary treatment and landscaping – there should be clear definition between public and private space with defensible hedging and landscaping. Secure boundary treatment should be provided to prevent easy access to private spaces or more vulnerable spaces of the building. The relationship with the adjacent car parking area is not clear. The parking area will need to be secure. - Management and maintenance of communal spaces – details to be provided to ensure communal spaces and managed and maintained. - Bin and cycle storage. Details regarding secure storage. - Specification of windows and doors. Details of appropriate standards of security for windows and doors are required. - CCTV – insufficient information. A meeting was held with Thames Valley Police on 27.08.2026 in order to address their concerns. The Council is in the process of engaging with Thames Valley Police, results of which will be provided in the Update Report.
WBC Ecology	No objection subject to conditions.
WBC Environmental Health	No objection subject to conditions.
WBC Adult Social Care	No objection.
WBC Waste Management	No objection.

LLFA/WBC (Drainage)	No comment to make.

Public representations

4.2 Representations have been received from 23 contributors, 1 of which is impartial and 21 object.

4.3 The full responses may be viewed with the application documents on the Council's website, using the link at the start of this report. In summary, the following issues/points have been raised:

Objections

- The hostel is not needed in this area.
- The proposal is in a quiet residential area in proximity to family homes, schools the recreation ground, skate park and football club.
- Alternative sites in Thatcham and Newbury would be better due to proximity to support and emergency services.
- Fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- There are vulnerable residents in the surrounding area.
- Concerns regarding who will be accommodated (e.g. victims of domestic abuse).
- Property values would be diminished.
- Poor external appearance.
- Overall rise in noise and disturbance
- Concerns regarding security measures and management.
- Over-intensification of the site
- Rise in local parking and traffic pressures and general highways safety.
- Value for money.
- Visual harm to the NWD National Landscape
- Increased impact on local infrastructure and facilities.
- Thames Valley Police have concerns
- Residents would prefer affordable housing, social housing or the previously proposed residential development.
- Concern regarding boundary treatments.
- Safeguarding concerns
- Heat pump placement.
- Environmental impacts have not been considered.
- Council's ownership of the footpath behind the development is disputed.

Impartial

- The development would support homeless people; however, this is a temporary solution and affordable housing, and social housing provision is a far bigger issue.

5. Planning Policy

5.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The following policies of the statutory development plan are relevant to the consideration of this application.

Development Plan Document	**Relevant Policies**

West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041	**Strategic Policies** • Policy SP1 The Spatial Strategy • Policy SP2 North Wessex Downs AONB • Policy SP3 Settlement Hierarchy • Policy SP5 Responding to Climate Change • Policy SP6 Flood Risk • Policy SP7 Design Quality • Policy SP8 Landscape Character • Policy SP11 Biodiversity and Geodiversity • Policy SP19 Transport **Development Management Policies** • Policy DM3 Health and Wellbeing • Policy DM5 Environmental Nuisance and Pollution Control • Policy DM6 Water Quality • Policy DM7 Water Resources and Waste Water • Policy DM8 Air Quality • Policy DM19 Specialised Housing • Policy DM30 Residential Amenity • Policy DM44 Parking • Policy DM45 Travel Planning
Hungerford NDP (2025)	Policy HUNG1: Housing Mix Policy HUNG2: Design and Character Policy HUNG9: Wellbeing and Safety Through Design

5.2 The following material considerations are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- Quality Design SPD (2006)
- National Design Guide.
- Hungerford Neighbourhood Plan (2024)

6. Appraisal

Principle of development

6.1 Policy SP1 (Spatial Strategy) is the overarching spatial strategy policy for West Berkshire. It aims to deliver the spatial vision and strategic objectives for the district over the plan period and inform the preparation of neighbourhood plans (NDPs). The strategy directs development to areas of lower environmental value, optimises the use of previously developed land, and optimises density to make the best use of land while conserving the distinctive character and identity of the built, historic and natural environment. The proposal considered here makes use of previously developed land within the settlement boundary of Hungerford. The site is of low environmental value and the building is vacant. The building according to the applicants is no longer fit for purpose without substantial upgrades.

6.2 Policy SP2 states that in the North Wessex Downs (NWD) National Landscape (formally known as AONB) development will allow for appropriate and sustainable growth that conserves and enhances its special landscape qualities. Development will be required to respond positively to the local context, conserving and enhancing local distinctiveness, sense of place and the setting of the National Landscape. The proposed development is not considered to have a negative visual impact on the National Landscape as the site sits firmly within the established settlement boundary of Hungerford.

6.3 Policy SP3 (Settlement Hierarchy) states that urban areas will be the prime focus for housing and economic development, offering development potential through, the regeneration and change in the existing built-up area. The proposed development would upgrade an existing building within the town of Hungerford and would therefore comply with SP3 in this regard.

6.4 Policy DM19 states that the provision of new specialist forms of housing designed to meet the needs of those with identified support or care will be supported. The policy seeks to support housing where it meets a proven locally identified need. The development should be appropriately located, appropriate in terms of design, layout, and accessibility of facilities, services and public transport. The proposed development would be subject to other policies in the Plan being satisfied also.

6.5 This application effectively involves a windfall site for housing (albeit not use class C3) in one of the district's settlements. In addition, in terms of overall housing need for the homeless it is well located in the West of the District, given existing provision in Walnut Close (Brownsfield Road, Thatchum).

6.6 There is a demand for additional accommodation for the homeless across the district. At the time of writing, there are 148 families currently in temporary accommodation. The Council has a legal responsibility to house all those in need seeking such accommodation. The site is very well located within reasonable walking distance of Hungerford centre with all its facilities and transport connections as required by DM19.

6.7 The principle of development is therefore acceptable and accords with the relevant development plan policies.

Design, Character and Appearance

6.8 Policy SP7 (Design Quality) states that new development will be required to strengthen a sense of place through high quality locally distinctive design and place shaping. This will enable healthy place making, creating places that are better for people, taking opportunities available for conserving and enhancing the character, appearance and quality of an area and the way it functions. Proposals must respond positively to the National Design Guide.

6.9 Policy HUNG2 (Design and Character) states that development should demonstrate high-quality design and layout which represents the local character of Hungerford Parish. Development should integrate with and enhance the form of its existing surroundings.

6.10 At present, the building appears vacant and boarded up with unwelcoming warning signs deterring people from entering due to the harmful presence of asbestos. There are areas of overgrown vegetation fronting Chestnut Walk at the site's entrance, and graffiti and some fly tipping in some areas at the rear.

6.11 Upgrading the building would improve the streetscene and bring the building back into use. The overgrown vegetation at the front of the site would be cleared or pruned where

necessary to restore the building's appearance. The closed-boarded windows would be opened to create a more welcoming appearance which would improve the streetscene.

6.12 The overall visual impact of the development and its physical relationship to the surrounding buildings would remain, but the quality of the building would improve through the refurbishment.

6.13 There would be no impact on the NWD National Landscape. This is due to the site's location within the established settlement boundary of Hungerford meaning it would be read in accordance with the surrounding built form.

Safety and Design

6.14 Policy HUNG9 (Wellbeing and Safety through Design) states that development should be designed to maximise the wellbeing of its residents, visitors and users. Development proposals must demonstrate, through their design, how they will minimise the opportunities for crime to occur.

6.15 The Council has worked closely with Thames Valley Police to ensure that the proposed future users of the building and those surrounding the site are protected from crime.

6.16 From a Housing Management Service perspective, all prospective residents would be subject to a comprehensive suitability assessment before any placement is made, ensuring that accommodation is only offered to households whose needs and circumstances are appropriate for this form of temporary supported accommodation. The accommodation is intended primarily for local households with a connection to West Berkshire, including families, couples and single people, and would provide a more local housing option for residents of Hungerford and surrounding communities who might otherwise be placed elsewhere in the district.

6.17 The proposal would improve the Council's ability to respond flexibly to changing housing demands and future service delivery arrangements, while helping residents remain closer to their support networks, schools, employment and community connections. Occupancy would be actively managed, with residents required to comply with occupancy agreements and house rules.

6.18 Robust management, safeguarding and risk assessment procedures would be in place, including ongoing monitoring, welfare checks and regular reviews. The Council would work closely with Thames Valley Police and other partner agencies to ensure risks are effectively managed, with experienced on-site staff responsible for resident welfare, behaviour management and site security. Any resident who failed to comply with the requirements of their placement or whose behaviour presented a risk to others may be required to leave in accordance with established procedures and statutory requirements.

6.19 The facility would initially operate with a 24-hour on-site staff presence. During daytime hours, Housing Service staff would provide housing management, resident support, welfare monitoring and tenancy-related services, while outside these hours a member of staff or contracted security personnel will remain on site to provide supervisory oversight. The individual on duty during silent hours would monitor access to the building, respond to incidents, oversee activity within the accommodation, ensure compliance with house rules and act as an immediate point of contact where issues arise.

6.20 Shared facilities, such as the communal kitchen, would be managed through controlled opening and closing times. The Council considers the provision of round-the-clock on-site supervision an important measure to support the successful establishment and effective management of the accommodation, although the staffing arrangements may

be reviewed in the future, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, should the site demonstrate a sustained record of positive outcomes and effective operation.

6.21 The accommodation would benefit from continuous supervision and security oversight, with either Housing Service staff or contracted security personnel present on site at all times during the initial operational period. This arrangement, supported by CCTV monitoring and established management procedures, will enable incidents to be identified and addressed promptly, assist with the effective management of the site, and provide reassurance for both residents and the wider community. CCTV would be installed at building access and exit points to support site security, resident safety and incident investigation, in accordance with data protection requirements. In addition, the family accommodation units will be self-contained with their own secure, lockable access, removing the need to use shared facilities elsewhere on the site and providing an enhanced level of safety and security for resident families and children

6.22 The footpath to the rear of the site is owned and managed by West Berkshire Council and is already subject to existing maintenance and management arrangements. While acknowledging concerns raised about the area, the Council has committed to working closely with Thames Valley Police and other stakeholders to monitor the situation and address any issues that may arise. The operation of the site will be kept under review, and additional management measures will be considered where there is evidence that further action is necessary.

6.23 Any patterns of anti-social behaviour arising from the proposed development could be reported to the Council to address.

6.24 At the time of writing, the Council is awaiting a new comment from Thames Valley Police. Based on their response, various conditions could be imposed by Members. Such could include the exact location of the CCTV cameras and particular boundary treatments to satisfy their security concerns. This matter and a list of conditions will be addressed in the Update Report.

Amenity

6.25 Policy DM30 states that all development will be required to provide and/or maintain a high standard of amenity for existing and future users of land and buildings. Proposals will be supported where there is no unacceptable harm in terms of loss of daylight/sunlight, overlooking and loss of privacy, development that results in an undue sense of enclosure, overbearing impact, or loss of outlook, noise, dust, fumes and odours.

<u>Onsite amenity</u>

6.26 Various common spaces are proposed within the building where residents would be able to relax outside the confines of their bedrooms. The internal areas where the residents would live would be maintained to create a pleasant environment. Each bedroom would have a window allowing natural light into the rooms.

6.27 It is noted that there is little onsite outdoor amenity space but Hungerford Common and Hungerford Town Recreation Ground all lie in close proximity to the site which could serve residents' needs.

<u>Neighbouring amenity</u>

6.28 The level of on-site activity would increase as the site is currently vacant and has been for some time, however, the number of people frequenting the site would likely be less than if the site was brought back into its existing lawful use as a care home.

6.29 Its fall-back use as a Care Home would involve a larger on-site workforce operating across multiple shifts throughout the day and night, together with regular visits from health professionals (e.g. doctors, nurses, physiotherapists), service providers (e.g. catering), family members and other visitors.

6.30 Privacy would not be negatively impacted upon considering the fallback position of the existing lawful use.

6.31 There would be no overbearing or overshadowing impact as the building is existing.

6.32 The Environmental Health officer has not raised any objections apart from noise issues from the Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP), which has been relocated following neighbourhood objections related to visual impact, noise and disturbance concerns.

6.33 The proposal complies with Policies DM5, DM30 and the NPPF.

Highways

6.34 The existing 3 car parking spaces on site (one disabled) would remain with no additional spaces proposed on site for staff or visitors or residents.

6.35 The Housing Service would require at least 2 dedicated parking spaces for regular staff use. A further 2 parking spaces located on the northern side of the building opposite the garages would be reserved for visitors, contractors and ad hoc staff visits. A secure bike store is proposed.

6.36 The Highways Team does not anticipate that the development would worsen the local parking pressures, and it is not anticipated that the development would create a large parking demand.

6.37 The proposal complies with Policy DM44 and the NPPF.

Environment and sustainability

6.38 A sustainability statement has been submitted with this application. It demonstrates that climate change considerations have been incorporated within the development's design where possible. These include measures relating to energy efficiency, water resource management, flood risk and surface water management, ecology and biodiversity considerations, waste and pollution management, and materials selection and sustainable construction methods.

6.39 Policy DM4 states that residential refurbishment of development of 10 or more units will meet BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment 2014 (or future equivalent) Excellent as a minimum. Policy DM4 does not apply to this development as the units are not self-contained dwellings.

6.40 The development complies with Policy SP5 and DM4,

Ecology

6.41 The Ecology Team does not object to the proposed development subject to conditions.

6.42 The development complies with Policy SP11 and the NPPF.

Flooding

6.43 The development is located in Flood Zone 1 and there is no identified risk of surface or ground water flooding.

6.44 The LLFA does not object to the development.

Water Efficiency

6.45 Policy DM7 requires development to minimise water use by incorporating appropriate water efficiency and water recycling measures. It further requires new residential development, including replacement dwellings, to meet the Building Regulations optional higher water efficiency standard.

6.46 A sustainability statement has provided details of water resource management. This document could be conditioned.

6.47 The development complies with Policy DM7.

Health Impacts

6.48 The development is not a major development in terms of the DMPO's definition and given its modest number of dwellings is not considered to have a significant impact on health and wellbeing of the local population by the case officer. A health impact assessment is therefore not required in accordance with DM3. Any impacts arising from the proposed development will likely be resolved through the payment of community infrastructure levy (CIL).

Other Matters

6.49 Considerations of property value impact are not a material planning matter.

6.50 The fear of anti-social behaviour and on site /off site security issues relating to potential crime and drug use are capable of being material planning matters which the Committee can consider. For such fears to be given weight, case law states that they must be reasonably based on evidence and not be speculative, subjective, or motivated by prejudice. This concern is a matter for the decision maker to consider.

6.51 Whether the scheme is good value for the Council is not a planning matter, but a matter for the Council as a whole. The delivery of the scheme would remove the financial burden on the Council for relying on third party accommodation that is not always suitable, available and / or cost-efficient, particularly where larger families are concerned.

6.52 The Council confirms that they are in ownership of the public footpath at the rear of the proposed development. The ownership certificates submitted with the application are correct and the application is therefore valid. This footpath is not listed as a public right of way or an adopted estate path. Nevertheless, the Council do not intend to change the existing access arrangement that would affect the adjacent properties.

7. Planning Balance and Conclusion

7.1 Policy S4 ("Principle of development within settlements") of the NPPF states that development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of

doing so would be substantially outweighed by adverse effects, when assessed against national decision-making policies in the NPPF.

7.2 Policy L2 ("Making effective use of land") of the NPPF states that substantial weight should be given to the benefits where a development proposal would involve remediating derelict land, would make better use of vacant and underutilised buildings.

7.3 The delivery of the site would add much-needed accommodation for homeless residents in West Berkshire, particularly those in western parts of the district, including those in Hungerford. The development is within a sustainable location and makes use of previously developed land, and an unutilised building. The visual impact of the development would be improved through refurbishment and external maintenance which would improve the streetscene. While the activity level on the site would increase by virtue of the building's being currently vacant, should the site be again used as a care home, such would could bring even higher levels of activity. Matters of security, safety and safeguarding of the neighbouring residents and the development's future residents would be controlled with sufficient measures.

7.4 Officers do not believe that any potential negatives of this development would substantially outweigh the recognised benefits of the scheme, and that as such, the proposed is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

8. Full Recommendation

8.1 To delegate to the Development Manager to **GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION** subject to the conditions listed below.

Conditions

1	**Commencement of development** The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission. Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
2	**Approved plans** The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed below: - Location and block plan by Thames Valley Surveying dated 13.03.2026. - Floor Plan by Thames Valley Surveying, Revision A, dated 06.07.2026. - Revised Elevations by Thames Valley Surveying, Revision A, dated 06.07.2026. - Planning Statement by West Berkshire Council dated 27.02.2026. - Design and Access Statement by Thames Valley Surveying dated 03.03.2026. - Acoustic Report: "Planning Compliance Report" by KP Acoustics, reference no. 32578.PCR.01 - Baseline Habitat Condition Assessment by Arbtech dated 18.08.2026 - BNG Assessment Report by Arbtech dated 18.08.2026. - BNG Metric received 03.09.2026. - Sustainability Statement by Blew Burton Ltd dated 07.09.2026.

	- Supporting document: "Housing Service Management and Occupancy Arrangements for Chestnut Walk" received 07.09.2026. - Tree Survey Report by Venners Arboriculture, ref: 4140/AIA/SV, dated June 2026. Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.
3	**Materials as Specified** The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall be as specified on the plans or the application forms. Where stated that materials shall match the existing, those materials shall match those on the existing development in colour, size and texture. Reason: To ensure that the external materials respect the character and appearance of the area. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies SP2, SP7 and SP8 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041 and Supplementary Planning Document Quality Design (June 2006).
4	**Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan in accordance with Biodiversity Gain Plan** The development shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP), prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The HMMP shall be prepared to accompany the Biodiversity Gain Plan, and shall be submitted for approval alongside or after the submission the BGP. (NOTE: In accordance with Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, this planning permission is subject to the condition ("the biodiversity gain condition") that the development may not be begun unless (a) a biodiversity gain plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and (b) the planning authority has approved the plan. This is deemed to be applied by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and is not replicated on this decision notice. Full details are set out in the informative below.) The HMMP shall include: (1) a non-technical summary; (2) the roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the HMMP; (3) (3) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan (4) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of development; and (5) the monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority, The details provided in relation to point (5) shall ensure that, as a minimum, monitoring takes place in 2 years, 5 years,10 years,15 years, 20 years, 25 years, 30 years following completion of the development. For the purposes of this condition, completion of development shall be taken as the 'completion of the 'change of use from Class C2 (Residential Institution) to Class C1 (Hotel/Hostel) to provide supported temporary accommodation with onsite management and security measures. Construction of new Air source heat pump compound and cycle store. Relocation of bin store'.

	No occupation shall take place until: (6) the habitat creation and enhancement works set out in the approved HMMP have been completed; and (7) a completion report, evidencing the completed habitat enhancements, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Notice in writing shall be given to the Council when the: (8) HMMP has been implemented; and (9) habitat creation and enhancement works as set out in the HMMP have been completed. The created and/or enhanced habitat specified in the approved HMMP shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved HMMP. Monitoring reports shall be submitted to local planning authority in writing in accordance with the methodology and frequency specified in the approved HMMP. Where monitoring identifies the required habitat condition is not being maintained in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan, the submission to the Local Planning Authority shall include any necessary remedial measures, and thereafter any such measures shall be carried out within a timescale agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Supplemental reports may be required pursuant to this condition where necessary. Reason: To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. A pre-commencement condition is required because the habitat and management arrangements need to be determined before existing habitats are affected.
5	**Plant noise** The rating level of noise emitted from all fixed plant and machinery associated with the development shall not exceed 5 dB(A) below the existing background sound level (LA90,T) when measured or calculated at 1 metre from the façade of the nearest noise-sensitive premises. The assessment and rating of noise shall be undertaken in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019. Reason: To protect the occupiers of nearby residential properties from noise disturbance in compliance with Policies DM5 and DM30 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review.
6	**Air Source Heat Pump:** The Air Source Heat Pump shall not be operated until the plant equipment and mitigation measures have been installed in full accordance with the mitigation measures detailed within Sections 6.1 and 6.2 of the KP Acoustics Planning Compliance Report Ref. 32578.PCR.01 dated 11 August 2026. Thereafter the ASHP shall be operated in accordance with these details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The mitigation measures shall include, but not be limited to: - a fully enclosed acoustic enclosure incorporating a roof/weather hood; - acoustic performance achieving the minimum insertion losses specified in Table 6.2 of the approved report;

	- a surrounding imperforate acoustic barrier of not less than 2 metres in height and a minimum surface mass of 10kg/m² enclosing the installation on all sides; - anti-vibration mounts and associated vibration isolation measures; - retention and maintenance of all acoustic mitigation measures for the lifetime of the plant installation. Reason: To safeguard the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers and to ensure the development achieves the noise limits relied upon within the approved acoustic assessment. This condition is imposed in accordance with Policy DM5 and DM30 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review.
7	**Maximum water consumption** The development hereby approved shall meet the Building Regulations optional higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day, using the 'Fittings Approach' as set out in table 2.2 of the Building Regulations part G2. No dwelling hereby permitted shall be occupied until this standard has been achieved for that dwelling. This standard shall be complied with for that dwelling and retained in perpetuity thereafter. Reason: To ensure development is designed to be water efficient and reduce water consumption in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy DM7 of the West Berkshire Local Plan 2023-2041.
8	**Boundary Treatments and Landscaping** The development shall not be occupied until details of boundary treatments and landscaping have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Reason: To ensure that the landscaping and boundary treatments provide additional measures of security in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy DM30 of the West Berkshire Local Plan 2023-2041.
9	**Access Control** The development shall not be occupied until access control details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Reason: To ensure safe access and security measures are in place in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy DM3 and DM30 of the West Berkshire Local Plan 2023-2041.
10	**Cycle storage** The development shall not be occupied until details of the cycle parking/storage have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the facilities shall be maintained and kept available for that purpose at all times. Reason: To ensure the adequate provision of cycle and motorcycle parking facilities and to ensure secure bin storage. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies SP19 and DM44 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041, the Quality Design SPD, and the Council's Cycle and Motorcycle Advice and Standards for New Development (November 2014).

11	**Bin Storage** The development shall not be occupied until details of the bin storage safety mechanisms have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the facilities shall be maintained and kept available for that purpose at all times. Reason: To ensure that there is adequate refuse and recycling storage facilities within the site, to ensure safe and adequate collection in the interests of highway safety and local amenity. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies SP19, DM5 and DM30 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041, and the Quality Design SPD (Part 1, Section 2.13).
12	**Window and door specification** The development shall not be occupied until specification of windows and have been submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Reason: To ensure the on-site and neighbouring amenity is protected in accordance with Policy DM30 and the NPPF.
13	**CCTV** The development shall not be occupied until details of the proposed CCTV locations, camera specifications, coverage areas and management arrangements have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Reason: To ensure safe access and security measures are in place in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy DM3 and DM30 of the West Berkshire Local Plan 2023-2041.

Informatives

1	**Proactive** This decision has been made in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development having regard to Development Plan policies and available guidance to secure high-quality appropriate development. In this application whilst there has been a need to balance conflicting considerations, the local planning authority has worked proactively with the applicant to secure and accept what is considered to be a development which improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.