

## **Affordable Housing Position Statement**

### **Clarification of the application of the Core Strategy Planning Policy CP05 with reference to the Written Ministerial Statement (November 2014) and NPPG guidance (paragraphs 21 – 23) regarding site size thresholds for affordable housing contributions**

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) acknowledge that national planning policy and guidance as set out in the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) of November 2014 and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG, paragraphs 21 – 23) with respect to affordable housing contributions is a significant material consideration which should be taken into account in decision taking.

Following the Court of Appeal decision (11 May 2016) regarding these matters, WBC note that provisions of national policy are not mandatory and that local circumstances may justify an appropriate exception to the approach outlined in national policy and guidance. In applying CP05 of the Core Strategy, WBC consider there are specific and genuine local circumstances that justify an exception to national policy and guidance as set out in the WMS (November 2014) and NPPG (paragraphs 21 – 23). This is specifically in terms of the NPPG regarding site size thresholds for affordable housing contributions. WBC is continuing to implement policy CP05 due to the exceptional need for affordable housing within the borough – this has been further highlighted in the 2016 Berkshire Housing Market Assessment, which shows a need of 441 affordable homes (net) per annum.

As the Council continues to experience acute affordable housing need and on this basis, the Core Strategy Policy CP5 threshold of 5 dwellings carries considerable weight.