

Boyer

# South Wokingham SDL Extension

Environmental Statement Addendum Volume 3:  
Non-Technical Summary

REPORT CONTROL

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## APPENDICES

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This is the Non-Technical Summary ('NTS') of the Environmental Statement Addendum (ESA), submitted on behalf of Lightwood Strategic ("Lightwood") and Nicholas King Homes ("NKH") (together, "the Developers"). The ESA is an update to the Original Environment Statement (ES) which was submitted in support of three planning applications. Two separate planning applications for a residential led mixed use development on 'Land to East of Easthampstead Road' and 'West of Old Wokingham Road', also referred to as the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SDL) Extension ('the Site'). A third application relating to small part of a vehicular access corridor is also under consideration by Wokingham Borough Council (WBC). The Application Reference numbers are 241933, 242279 and 242051.

1.2 The ESA as per the Original ES relates to all three applications, which are considered together as the EIA Project.

1.3 For the purposes of the ESA (not the applications), the description of development has been amended as follows:

*"A mixed-use development of up to 1,030 homes, community facilities including neighbourhood centre, (Use classes F and/or E of up to 0.4ha), a one-form entry primary school (if required) (Use Class F), public open space, play areas, allotments and associated infrastructure and landscaping of approx. 7ha; and a full application for the proposed Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and access".*

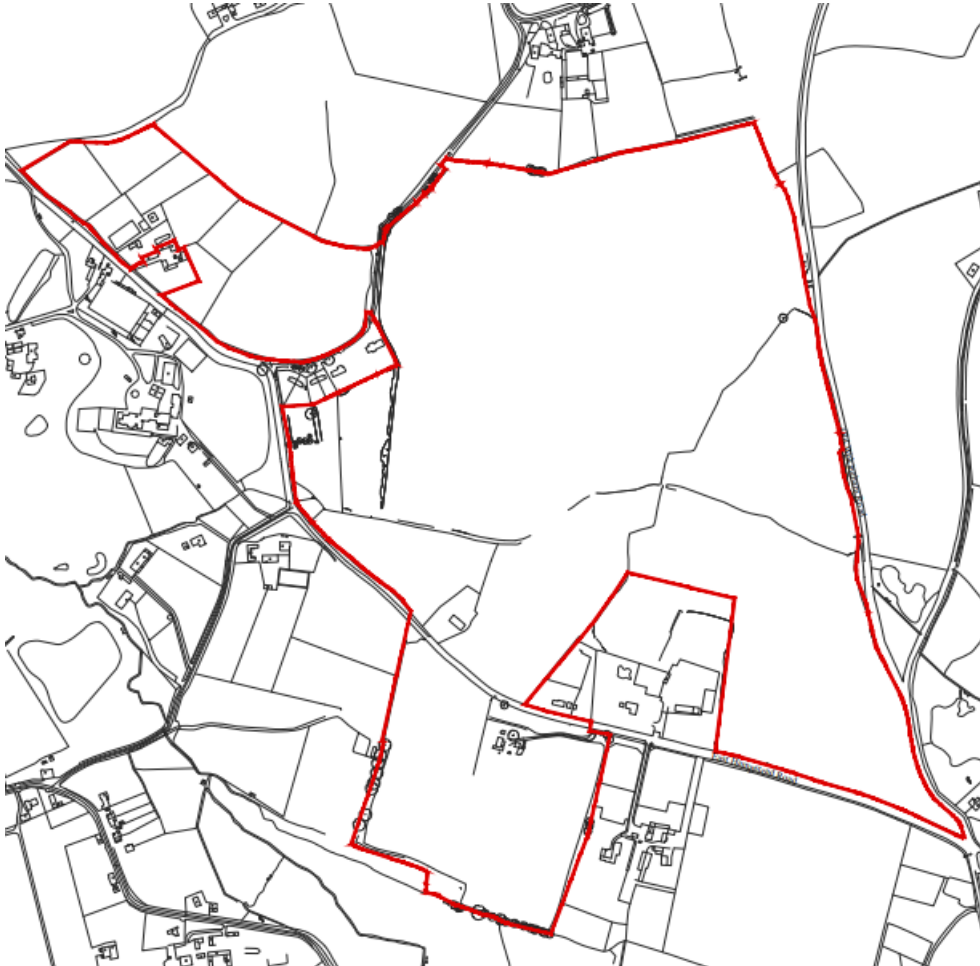
1.4 As indicated above, the Proposed Development will come forward via the following three separate planning applications (changes in bold):

- Application A: Hybrid application comprising an outline application with all matters reserved except means of access for a mixed use, residential-led development (up to 850 dwellings) including a neighbourhood centre (**Use Classes E**), **a one-form entry primary school (if required) (Use Class F)** public open space, play areas, allotments, drainage and other infrastructure, landscaping and demolition of existing buildings on the site; and a full application for the proposed Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) with associated car parking and landscaping;
- Application B: An Outline Planning Application for up to Up to 180 market and affordable homes, and associated infrastructure, including open space, play space, landscaping SuDs and green infrastructure. All matters reserved except the main access into the site at Pearces Farm by Nicholas King Homes; and
- Application C: A full planning application to provide a vehicular crossing of Byway 30 to allow access for two parcels of land comprising the South Wokingham SDL Extension, and active travel connections to the byway to the north from Application A.

1.5 The Proposed Development Site lies within the administrative boundary of Wokingham Borough Council ('WBC') and extends to approximately 64ha at 'the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SDL) Extension' ('the Site'). The Site is irregular in shape

and is shown at Technical Appendix 1.1 of Volume 2 of the Original ES. An extract of the Location Plan is provided at **Figure 1.1** below.

**Figure 1.1 Site Location Plan**



- 1.6 Following discussions with Wokingham Borough Council (WBC), Parish Councils, statutory consultees and local residents during the determination period, amendments have been made to the proposals, namely:

**Application A – Priors Farm**

- Removal of two areas from the red line boundary along Old Wokingham Road, totalling 0.02ha (2,000sqm), to exclude land within the administrative area of Bracknell Forest Council. One area is either side of G53 (the copse on Old Wokingham Road), and the other is a sliver of land next to the proposed allotments and hedgerow.
- Relocation of the proposed roundabout to the south, with corresponding adjustments to the alignment of the primary route and street network.
- Development edge designed to allow retention of the TPO copse (G53) and provide a 15-metre buffer along Old Wokingham Road and the new roundabout.

- Adjustment of the development edge to accommodate an active travel path, with the Veteran status of T73 under assessment.
- Widening of the central park at the northeast and northwest corners to soften the transition to the Byway.
- Increase of the buffer to the Byway and introduction of a swale from Byway 30 to the Emm Brook tributary, with a 3m active travel route abutting the highway, based on hydrological modelling.
- Introduction of an active travel path in public open space and continuation of the swale from the byway.
- Adjustment of the development edge to allow the SANG to flare out towards Easthampstead Road and to widen the SANG/SANG Link.
- Amendment of the street pattern to accommodate blue infrastructure and tree planting running north-south in both the eastern and western quarters of the development.
- Ongoing assessment of the Veteran status of T102 within Byway 30, which may result in further adjustment to the development edge.
- Inclusion of a Primary School with a potential location proposed on the Land Use Parameter Plan (Ref. SK02.7.2G).
- Updates to the internal arrangements and details of the SANG provision.

#### **Application B – Pearces Farm**

- Minor amendments to development blocks;
  - Amendments to Access junction arrangements;
  - Change in alignment of spur road and streets;
  - Minor amendment to green infrastructure areas;
  - Minor amendments to suds basins.
- 1.7 The Parameter Plans have been updated since the Original ES to reflect changes made to the application following consultation responses.
- 1.8 The proposed Illustrative Masterplans, illustrating one way in which the Development Parameters could be built out, have not been updated as part of this ESA, as the changes do not necessitate any changes. However, illustrative Masterplans for the separate application areas have been reviewed and are shown at **Figure 1.2** and **Figure 1.3** below or in **Technical Appendix 3.4 in Volume 2 of the ESA** and **Technical Appendix 3.5 in Volume 2 of the ESA**.
- 1.9 An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) update of the amendments has been undertaken. This ESA is an addendum to the Original ES and has therefore been prepared to assess the likely significant environmental effects arising from the proposed amendments.

This document is referred to as the Environmental Statement Addendum (ESA) and sets the changes from the Original ES. The ESA should be read alongside the Original ES.

**Figure 1.2** *Illustrative Masterplan (Priors Farm)*



**Figure 1.3** *Illustrative Masterplan (Pearces Farm)*



### **What is an Environmental Impact Statement?**

- 1.10 An Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') is a means of drawing together, in a systematic way, an assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of a project. This helps to ensure that the importance of these effects, and the scope for reducing them, are properly understood by the public and the Local Planning Authority, before a decision is taken on a planning application.
- 1.11 The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) sets out the procedure for identifying those projects which should be subject to an EIA. An EIA is only required where a project is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

### **Screening**

- 1.12 As it was accepted that the Proposed Development, constitutes EIA development by virtue of its scale, no formal Screening Opinion was requested.

### **Scoping**

- 1.13 No Scoping Opinion has been sought as the ESA purely seeks to provide updated information and assessment.
- 1.14 As part of the ESA, a number of chapters have been updated to reflect the Proposed Development changes. These amendments reflect ongoing discussions with WBC since the submission of the applications and ES in 2024.

### **The Environmental Statement**

- 1.15 The Non-technical summary provides the overall findings of the ESA for the Proposed Development in a non-technical fashion, using plain English wherever possible.
- 1.16 The ESA should be read alongside the Original ES. The ESA updates the overall findings of the EIA for the Proposed Development, and is structured as per the Original ES for ease of comparison and comprises the following:
- Volume 1 – ESA Main Report
  - Volume 2 – ESA Technical Appendices; and
  - Volume 3 – ESA Non-Technical Summary
- 1.17 The ESA was prepared and co-ordinated by Boyer. Specialist consultants were commissioned to undertake the technical assessments required for the EIA and to write the corresponding ESA chapter. Not all chapters have been required to be updated, following an assessment of significance.
- 1.18 For the following technical topics, the relevant consultant provided confirmation of, or updates to, the baseline environment, reviewed the previous assessments and conclusions

and provided any required updates or amendments and set out a summary of environmental effects:

- Chapter 6 - Socio-Economics
- Chapter 7 - Transport and Access;
- Chapter 8 - Air Quality;
- Chapter 9 - Hydrology and Flood Risk;
- Chapter 10 - Biodiversity;
- Chapter 11 - Landscape and Visual;
- Chapter 12 - Archaeology and Heritage;
- Chapter 13 - Noise; and
- Chapter 14 - Ground Conditions.

- 1.19 An additional Chapter has been produced: Climate Change Technical Chapter (Chapter 15) and is included in the ESA, following a request by WBC's Sustainability Officer. There are no further additional Technical Chapters compared to the Original ES.

### **Further Information**

- 1.20 Further information about the EIA is contained in the full ES which can be viewed online at: <https://planning.wokingham.gov.uk/FastWebPL/detail.asp?AltRef=241933&ApplicationNumber=241933&AddressPrefix=&Postcode=&KeywordSearch=&Submit=Search>
- 1.21 The ESA is available to view online at WBC website and direct from Boyer. Copies of the NTS are available free of charge or copies of the ES (Main Text and Technical Appendices) can be purchased from Boyer and are available either in hard copy at a cost of £150 or on a Memory Stick for £10. To obtain a copy of the ESA NTS or ESA, please contact Boyer South at [boyeradmin@boyerplanning.co.uk](mailto:boyeradmin@boyerplanning.co.uk). Please note that a charge will also be made to cover the cost of postage.

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The Site comprises approximately 64ha of land at the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SDL) Extension (please refer to the plan at **Figure 1.1** and **Technical Appendix 1.1 of Volume 2 the ESA**). The Site boundary has marginally changed on the eastern boundary, with the site area being reduced by 0.02ha in size from that assessed in the Original ES.
- 2.2 The Site is predominantly in agricultural and equine use but also includes a number of properties in residential or commercial use. The Site is situated entirely within the administrative boundary of WBC. The application boundary has been amended as reflected in this ESA and no longer includes land within Bracknell Forest administrative area on the eastern boundary of the site.
- 2.3 West and south boundaries of the Site are predominantly defined by Easthampstead Road, however an area of land for SANG is proposed to the south of this road. The eastern boundary of the site sits back from the Old Wokingham Road, to the north of the Site is Holme Geen Lane, although an area of land is located around Pearce's Farmhouse north of the byway. The Site is generally level, and a watercourse runs through the Site. Well established tree belts define the Site's boundaries, and within the Site, fields are defined by hedgerow and ditches. There are a number of Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) which bisect or are adjacent to the Site.

### Surrounding Location

- 2.4 The Site is currently situated within a semi-rural context, with its northernmost extent being located approximately 500m to the south of the current built edge of Wokingham. However, the Site is within an area of planned change and its context and character will evolve significantly, as the existing SDL is built out as an urban extension to the town.
- 2.5 With the existing SDL, new highways infrastructure is being brought forward, including the new South Wokingham Distributor Road, and connections to the west of Wokingham Town Centre.
- 2.6 The Site lies 900m west of the Jennett's Park Development, separated by the Peacock Meadow SANG. Easthampstead Park, and the Downshire Golf Course. Crowthorne lies approximately 1 km south of the Site, separated by agricultural land, wooded areas, and various commercial and leisure uses. To the immediate west and southwest lies the White Horse public house and the Holme Grange School. Further west lies other commercial uses and equine / agricultural land.

### 3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 This section describes the nature and purpose of the proposed development as well as the phasing of the development.

#### Nature of the Proposed Development

- 3.2 The unchanged description of development is as follows:

*“A mixed-use development of up to 1,030 homes, community facilities including neighbourhood centre, (Use classes F and/or E of up to 0.4ha) public open space, play areas, allotments and associated infrastructure and landscaping of approx. 7ha; and a full application for the proposed Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and access”.*

- 3.3 The three applications submitted seek approval based on a series of Parameter Plans and Written Parameters relating to the South Wokingham SDL as contained in the Original ES and this ESA.

#### Proposed Development

- 3.4 As indicated above, the EIA has been undertaken based upon Development Parameters comprising Parameter Plans and Written Text. The amended Development Parameter Plans are included in **Technical Appendix 3.1 of Volume 2 of the ESA**. These Parameter Plans include:

- Land Use Parameter Plan (SK02.7D)
- Access and Movement Parameter Plan (SK02.5.1B)
- Building Heights Parameter Plan (SK02.6D)

- 3.5 The amended Illustrative Masterplan (**Technical Appendix 3.2 in Volume 2 of the ESA**) shows how the Site could be delivered in line with the Development Parameters, but it is not a fixed scheme to allow for flexibility at the detailed design stage.

- 3.6 A summary of the different land use elements of the Proposed Development is provided below:

**Table 3.1 Summary of Land Use Components**

| Land Use             | Use Class and Quantum (Original ES Assessment)         | Use Class and Quantum (ESA Assessment)                 |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Housing              | Up to 1,030 dwellings (Use Class C3) (29.08ha)         | Up to 1,030 dwellings (Use Class C3) (29.08ha)         |
| Neighbourhood Centre | Up to 0.4ha (Use Class E/F)                            | Up to 0.4ha (Use Class E/F)                            |
| Education            | -                                                      | Land for 1FE primary school (1ha)                      |
| Green Infrastructure | Open Space including attenuation basins, amenity green | Open Space including attenuation basins, amenity green |

| Land Use             | Use Class and Quantum (Original ES Assessment)                                                                                                                             | Use Class and Quantum (ESA Assessment)                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                      | space, equipped play areas, allotments (12.61ha)                                                                                                                           | space, equipped play areas, allotments (13.06ha)                                                                                                                           |
| SANG                 | 21.20ha                                                                                                                                                                    | 21.17ha                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Means of Access      | The site will be served by 3x access points demarcated on the Access and Movement Parameter Plans, with an additional safeguarded access provided to the neighbouring site | The site will be served by 3x access points demarcated on the Access and Movement Parameter Plans, with an additional safeguarded access provided to the neighbouring site |
| Other Infrastructure | Vehicular crossing of Byway 30 to allow for access for the two residential parcels.                                                                                        | Vehicular crossing of Byway 30 to allow for access for the two residential parcels.                                                                                        |

### Phasing of the Development

- 3.7 The indicative construction programme, which has formed the assessment of the ESA assumes that development would commence in late 2027, over a period of 10 years and completed in 2037. The construction programme assumes around 100 homes are completed each year. This has been pushed back since the Original ES.
- 3.8 The Planning Application is supported by an indicative Phasing Plan contained in Technical Appendix 5.1 of Volume 2 of the Original ES, which proposes the phasing of the Site's delivery. This has been prepared in discussions with the technical consultants and remains as the Original ES.
- 3.9 A future full CEMP (or series of CEMP's) will also include appropriate construction hours (to be agreed with WBC) and the implementation of Site hoarding, where necessary and justified, to mitigate noise and visual impacts from the construction.

## 4. SUMMARY OF TECHNICAL CHAPTERS

### Methodology

- 4.1 The ESA comprises a series of chapters considering the positive and negative effects of the amendments to the Proposed Development upon particular aspects of the environment including socio-economics, transport and access, air quality, hydrology and flood risk, biodiversity, climate change, landscape and visual, archaeology and heritage, noise and ground conditions. The ESA Chapters report the results of the EIA as a result of the amendments to the Proposed Development, setting out the impacts and the significance of effect the Proposed Development would have on the environment.
- 4.2 The ESA Chapters should be read alongside the Original ES Chapters.
- 4.3 The significance of these effects can be identified for all impacts as a result of the Proposed Development as being negligible, minor, moderate or major. Typically, a significance of effect of moderate or greater is considered 'significant' in EIA terms and will normally trigger the need for mitigation if that effect is adverse.
- 4.4 This section of the NTS sets out the main findings in respect of each topic area in terms of the predicted impacts and significance of effect as a result of the amendments to the Proposed Development, mitigation measures proposed to avoid, reduce or remedy the significant negative environmental effects and any remaining residual effects.
- 4.5 A summary of mitigation and residual effects is provided in **Chapter 17 of Volume 1 of the ESA** (Main Text).

### Socio-Economics – Chapter 6

- 4.6 The prevailing socio-economic conditions for the Site and its locality have been reviewed and the potential effects of the Proposed Development on those baseline conditions are then examined. The assessment takes in to account any mitigation measures to prevent, reduce, or off-set any potential negative effects.
- 4.7 The Socio-Economics Chapter (in the Original ES and ESA) assesses the existing situation in the local area for the following topics: Population, Housing, Education, Healthcare, Emergency Services, Recreation / Community Facilities and Economy. It then considers the impact of the Proposed Development upon existing services, taking into account the funding and infrastructure provided as part of the scheme.

### Baseline Conditions

- 4.8 An assessment of the baseline socio-economic conditions demonstrated that there is good provision of local services including primary and secondary schools with capacity, GP practices with capacity, local shops, community facilities and open space.

### Assessment of Effects

- 4.9 The Proposed Development will involve a construction period, which will have both beneficial effects in terms of construction work and local economy spin offs, and negative effects in

terms of amenity impacts for nearby residents or residents who occupy the Site during the construction period. These negative effects, such as road traffic, noise and visual impacts will be temporary for the duration of construction, local in nature and are deemed to be **temporary minor adverse**. the effects will be managed and minimised through an appropriate Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) or similar and are not considered to be significant.

- 4.10 Once the development is complete and operational, it will provide homes for approximately 2,678 people. The Proposed Development will be phased, avoiding the risk of existing services and facilities suddenly becoming overwhelmed and once complete, the development will provide new community infrastructure.
- 4.11 The Proposed Development will provide up to 1,030 new homes of a range of types, sizes and tenures including a policy compliant provision of affordable housing. An increase in the housing stock will be beneficial and in line with the emerging WBC Local Plan site allocation.
- 4.12 There are a number of primary school extensions planned in WBC, allowing for a surplus of primary school places. In addition, there is an existing surplus of secondary school places. If required, land for a one form entry primary school will be provided for on the Priors Farm site, to be delivered by WBC or other body as part of the update to the proposals, otherwise S106 contributions can be secured in relation to education to mitigate any effects. The amount of early years and further education need generated by the Proposed Development is considered to be minimal comparative with nearby provision. Overall, the effect on education is assessed as being **moderate beneficial**.
- 4.13 The GP provision within 3 miles of the Site has substantial capacity that could accommodate the additional population resulting from the development. That said, there will inevitably be some impact on the capacity of GPs within the locality, and if necessary that impact can be mitigated through financial contribution towards local health service infrastructure where justified, particularly given other developments in the area. A development of this scale is not expected to have a significant effect on other local facilities such as dentists, pharmacies or result in increased demand at hospitals and emergency services. Given existing capacity and the ability to mitigate via financial contributions, there will be a **negligible** effect on healthcare.
- 4.14 In relation to open space and recreation, the Proposed Development incorporates on-site open space, play areas and allotments. On the basis that new open space has been proposed, there is considered to be **minor beneficial effect** on open space and recreation.
- 4.15 Regarding community facilities, the increase in population will have a beneficial effect on the vitality of existing local community services and retail offer, as well as when combined with the other proposed developments and strategic sites in South Wokingham. The effect has been assessed as **negligible to minor beneficial** to the community facilities over the long-term.
- 4.16 Given the employment associated with the construction phase, the indirect creation of jobs associated with residential development of this scale, increased resident expenditure, and direct financial benefits to the local authority in terms of Community Infrastructure Levy,

Section 106 planning obligations/financial contributions and Council Tax, the Proposed Development will have a **moderate beneficial** effect on the economy.

### Mitigation

- 4.17 The Proposed Development includes inherent mitigation measures, as set out above, such as the delivery of housing to meet an identified need, land for a primary school if required and the incorporation of valuable open space and green infrastructure. The CIL payment and S106 obligations will also provide necessary mitigation towards infrastructure.
- 4.18 Additionally, it is intended that the applicants and landowners will enter into a planning obligation under Section 106 with WBC. These payments will be made to invest in a range of other local infrastructure and thus ameliorate the effects of the development.

### Residual Effects

- 4.19 Following mitigation, some residual effects from road traffic, noise and visual impacts arising in the construction period may remain. These effects are not significant in EIA terms. Operational effects are all assessed as **minor to moderate beneficial** or **negligible**.

### Cumulative Effects

- 4.20 The effects of the proposed development have been assessed cumulatively with other development proposals in proximity to the Site, particularly in terms of effects on social infrastructure such as GPs and schools. Given the existing capacity of local schools and GP practices, plus the potential for S106/CIL contributions, there are considered to be no **significant cumulative effects**.

### Summary

- 4.21 Based on the socio-economic features identified in the impact assessment, it is concluded that the Proposed Development will provide much needed homes and construction job opportunities, bring longer term economic benefits to the local economy, provide onsite open space provision and a potential school site, as well as CIL/S106 payments as required. It is therefore considered, to have either **negligible or minor – moderate beneficial effects** in terms of socio-economics.

## Transport and Access – Chapter 7

- 4.22 The Transport ES and ESA Chapter evaluates the potential for adverse effects of the Proposed Development in terms of transport and highways, during both the construction and operation phases of the Proposed Development. Transport and Highways within this Chapter is defined as the risk of adverse effect from additional traffic creating undue severance of communities, road safety, fear and intimidation of road users as well as additional delays to pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle users.
- 4.23 The study area for the assessment was established as part of the scoping exercise undertaken with Wokingham Borough Council. This encompassed the road corridors in particular of Old Wokingham Road, Easthampstead Road, as well as Heathlands Road and Redlake Lane which route off that road. It also included the Waterloo Road and Peacock

Lane corridors and infrastructure being delivered as part of the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR). Finally, it includes for Holme Green Lane and Byway 30 which bisect the site.

- 4.24 Studies were undertaken, using a combination of site visits, desktop study and detailed topographical surveys and mapping. Revised traffic flow information has been obtained in agreement with Wokingham Borough Council from the latest Wokingham Strategic Transport Model (WSTM4).
- 4.25 The study was completed referring to the relevant national and local planning policy.
- 4.26 The study used the following methodology; consultation with the relevant statutory and non statutory bodies, a desk study to establish the baseline conditions and establish the sensitivity of the receptors, evaluation of the potential effects of the Proposed Development, Evaluation of the significance of these effects through the magnitude and significance matrix, identification of mitigation measures and identification of residual effects.
- 4.27 Key receptors for the study were identified as the corridor of Easthampstead Road, Heathlands Road, Old Wokingham Road and Waterloo Road.
- 4.28 The baseline condition of the site was established using traffic survey data from the WSTM4 model as well as accident data obtained from Wokingham Borough Council, and existing publicly available information relating to public transport routes, walking and cycling networks and facilities and services presently operational in the vicinity of the site.
- 4.29 The baseline conditions established that whilst the site by itself is somewhat detached from existing transport services and facilities, the significant infrastructure being delivered as part of the South Wokingham SDL and associated SWDR will enhance the provision available to future residents.
- 4.30 Inherent mitigation measures have been incorporated into the design. These include access points onto the Old Wokingham Road and Easthampstead Road corridors, which complements a point closure on the Easthampstead Road corridor. Furthermore, provision for a crossing of Byway 30 and pedestrian links in association with that are included for as well as the potential for future public transport services to route through the site.
- 4.31 The development should be built in accordance with the Transport Assessment mitigation measures and the CEMP should be implemented during the construction phase. The implementation of the site access points, enhancements to pedestrian and cycle infrastructure as well as off site highways mitigation should be undertaken during the operational phase.
- 4.32 During construction, the nature of HGV trips associated with the construction activities is such that it has the potential to create a **minor adverse effect** in terms of pedestrian amenity along the surrounding network. The analysis has also identified a potential for **minor adverse effects** to driver delay during the construction phase. The introduction of the CEMP and measures such as managing the arrivals of HGV's to and from the site will help to mitigate this impact which is however short and temporary in nature.
- 4.33 During the operational phase traffic increases would generally have **negligible transport related effects** when appraised in accordance with the IEA guidance. A **minor and**

**moderate adverse effect** has been identified at certain locations of Easthampstead Road, however these should be viewed in the context of a proposed point closure of the route which creates a permanent major benefit.

- 4.34 A financial contribution will be provided towards Wokingham Borough Council's 'My Journey Wokingham' initiative which addresses Travel Planning measures within the Borough and aims to promote a range of initiatives and measures that will act to encourage sustainable travel. As a result, the actual vehicular trip generation of the Development during the operational phase being lower than that allowed for in the trip generation rates that have been used to undertake this assessment. Notwithstanding this **positive effect**, the residual transport related effects associated with the development considered to be **negligible**.

### Air Quality – Chapter 8

- 4.35 The assessment undertaken within the ES and ESA Chapter has considered the potential for air quality impacts associated with the demolition and construction works, alongside the operation of the complete and fully occupied Proposed Development. The key considerations of this assessment have been the demolition and construction dust and particulate matter emissions, vehicle emissions from demolition and construction traffic, and vehicle emissions associated with the complete and operational Proposed Development.
- 4.36 The assessment has considered the baseline year (2024), and the year of anticipated first occupation of any of the new homes (2028).

### Demolition and Construction

- 4.37 Whilst the demolition and construction works will give rise to a risk of dust impacts without mitigation (including on human health receptors), mitigation measures will be put in place to ensure that there are **no significant effects**. These measures will be written into a Dust Management Plan, to be included within the Construction Environmental Management Plan. These measures include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Planning the site layout so that machinery and dust-causing activities are located away from sensitive receptors, as far as practicable;
  - Erecting solid screens or barriers around dusty activities or the site boundary that are at least as high as any stockpiles on site;
  - Fully enclosing site or specific operations where there is a high potential for dust production and the site is active for an extensive period;
  - Avoiding the use of diesel- or petrol-powered generators and use mains electricity or battery-powered equipment where practicable;
  - Regularly using a water-assisted dust sweeper on the access and local roads, as necessary, to remove any material tracked out of the site; and
  - Ensuring vehicles entering and leaving the site are covered to prevent the escape of materials during transport.

- 4.38 The assessment has shown that there will be no significant impact on local roadside air quality as a result of construction traffic emissions.

#### **Completed Development**

- 4.39 Despite the adoption of a worst-case, conservative approach, the assessment has demonstrated that road traffic emissions associated with the complete and operational Proposed Development would have a **negligible** impact on local sensitive receptors, and the overall air quality **effect would be not significant**.
- 4.40 Additionally, the assessment has shown that future residents and users of the Proposed Development would experience acceptable air quality, with pollutant concentrations well below the air quality objectives.

#### **Hydrology and Flood Risk – Chapter 9**

- 4.41 The Hydrology and Flood Risk ES and ESA Chapter assesses the likelihood of significant environmental effects arising from the construction and operation phases of the Proposed Development relating to hydrology, flood risk and drainage. Hydrology and flood risk within this Chapter is defined as the risk of flooding from fluvial, pluvial and reservoir sources and from surface water drainage.
- 4.42 The study area for this assessment is 500m from the Site boundary. It is considered that all potential significant effects will occur within this buffer, and it is unlikely for any significant effects to occur outside of this area.
- 4.43 There are a number of watercourses within the study area including the Ordinary Watercourse, Ordinary Watercourse tributary and secondary Ordinary Watercourse Tributary which are located within the Site boundary. The Emm Brook is located along the southern boundary of the Site.
- 4.44 A desk-based assessment was carried out using publicly available information. This study was completed referring to the relevant national and local planning policy.
- 4.45 This study used the following methodology: a desk based study to establish the baseline conditions and establish the sensitivity of the receptors, evaluation of the potential effects of the Proposed Development, evaluation of the significance of these effects through the magnitude and significance matrix, identification of mitigation measures and the identification of any residual effects.
- 4.46 Key receptors for the study were identified as the Ordinary Watercourses, the Emm Brook, London Clay Formation, Site workers and residents and visitors to the Site and downstream of the Site.
- 4.47 The baseline conditions for the Site were established using the EA flood risk data and a detailed flood modelling study. The data indicates that the majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 1 'Low' risk of fluvial flooding. The areas adjacent to the Ordinary Watercourse and Emm Brook are located within Flood Zones 2 'Medium' risk and Flood Zone 3 'High' risk of fluvial flooding.

- 4.48 The majority of the Site has a 'Very Low' risk of surface water flooding. The areas adjacent to the Ordinary Watercourses and Emm Brook have a 'Low', 'Medium' and 'High' risk of surface water flooding.
- 4.49 The Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) susceptibility to groundwater flooding mapping and groundwater emergency, depth to groundwater mapping indicates that there is a medium risk of groundwater flooding across the majority of the Site. There is a higher risk of groundwater flooding adjacent to the Ordinary Watercourses.
- 4.50 The Site is located outside of the reservoir flood extents. The risk of flooding from reservoirs is therefore considered to be low.
- 4.51 The Site is primarily a greenfield site. It consists of agricultural fields which are lined by trees and shrubs.
- 4.52 Embedded mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Proposed Development design. The detailed modelling study has been used to inform the design of various features for managing overland flow and floodplain areas as well as for the proposed crossings of the watercourses. Further mitigation measures include a sequential approach to the master planning process, SuDS incorporated into the Site layout and finished floor levels set a minimum of 300mm above finished ground levels adjacent to the fluvial flood extents and 150mm above the finished ground levels in parcels away from the fluvial floodplain.
- 4.53 The development should be built in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (FRA) mitigation measures and the CEMP should be implemented during the construction phase. The maintenance strategy for the surface water drainage strategy should be carried out during the operation phase.
- 4.54 During construction and operation, the impermeable area of the Site will increase. This may have an impact on the pluvial, fluvial and surface water drainage receptors. The implementation of the surface water drainage strategy, maintenance regime and CEMP will ensure that the effects of the Proposed Development are **negligible**.
- 4.55 The assessment has found that with the mitigation measures implemented as detailed in the FRA and CEMP, the residual effects are **negligible**.
- 4.56 All developments should adhere to the same principles as outlined in the NPPF with regards to reducing flood risk and limiting surface water runoff. It is considered that the cumulative impacts associated with the Proposed Development and committed developments within the study area with respect to fluvial and pluvial flooding, reservoirs and surface water drainage is **negligible**.

### **Biodiversity – Chapter 10**

- 4.57 Chapter 10 of this ESA Chapter assesses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development in terms of Biodiversity and provides minor updates to the Non-Technical Summary wording associated with Chapter 10 of the Original ES.

- 4.58 The ESA sets out additional ecological survey work and habitat reassessment were undertaken during 2025 and 2026 to review the validity of the original ecological baseline and assess whether any material ecological changes had occurred since completion of the Original ES. The updated assessment confirmed that the majority of habitats and ecological conclusions remain broadly consistent with the original assessment, although refinements were identified relating to great crested newt, barbastelle bat and breeding skylark.
- 4.59 The Site covers three linked applications for the proposed development and are located in South Wokingham. The site falls within the 5km buffer zone for Thames Basin Heath SPA.
- 4.60 The Site has various ancient woodlands within the zone of influence around the site. Local Wildlife Sites are found within the zone of influence of the site. Mitigation proposed to protect the above surrounding receptors includes an onsite SANG which will allow residents to access an alternative location for recreational activities.
- 4.61 The Site comprises of large grassland fields with boundary hedgerows. There is a tributary of Emm Brook running east to west across the Site which is intersected by an ephemeral wet ditch which runs north to south. There is a parcel of cropland in the south and several small parcels of woodland and mixed scrub scattered across the Site. There are two ponds located in the north-west of the Site. Important habitats will be retained within the proposals such as Emm Brook, hedgerows and woodland parcels. The proposals will see the loss of some onsite habitats, retention and enhancement of important onsite habitats and creation of new habitat types.
- 4.62 Updated ecological surveys and analysis identified continued use of the Site and wider landscape by commuting and foraging bats, including barbastelle bat associated with hedgerow, woodland edge and watercourse corridors. Updated survey work also identified suitable habitat for breeding skylark within open grassland and arable areas of the Site. Whilst no confirmed great crested newt breeding ponds were identified within the application site, the wider SDL landscape contains suitable connected habitat and therefore a precautionary approach has been adopted in relation to potential dispersal use of terrestrial habitats within the Site.
- 4.63 Potential cumulative impacts on Thames Basin Heaths Special Area of Conservation have been identified due to increased residential pressure. Development will need to present suitable mitigation options and SANG are set out as required for developments within the zone of influence. Future development on the sites identified have specific ecology impacts related to them which will be identified and mitigated for as appropriate as part of the determination of each individual planning application. Whilst there will be a cumulative effect on ecological features overall, all the developments assessed will implement site-specific mitigation measures to reduce impacts as required so that the cumulative impact is reduced/minimised as much as possible.
- 4.64 Mitigation measures incorporated within the proposed development include retention and enhancement of green infrastructure corridors, woodland edges, hedgerows and riparian habitats to maintain ecological connectivity across the wider landscape. A sensitive lighting strategy will be implemented to retain dark commuting corridors for bats. Precautionary construction measures will also be implemented for great crested newt, together with

breeding bird protection measures and long-term management of suitable open habitat within green infrastructure and SANG areas.

- 4.65 Subject to the implementation of mitigation measures, residual ecological effects associated with barbastelle bat, great crested newt and skylark are assessed as **negligible to minor adverse** and not significant in EIA terms. **No additional significant ecological effects** beyond those identified within the Original ES are anticipated.

### Landscape and Visual – Chapter 11

- 4.66 This ES and ESA Chapter highlights that the Proposed Development will have direct effects on existing landscape resources including trees and hedgerows. Given the change in land use from agriculture/grazing to residential, the Proposed Development will have unavoidable significant effects on the landscape character of the Site, but will not significantly alter the character of the wider surrounding landscape, due to the discrete geographical area over which effects will be experienced.
- 4.67 More important than the presence of what amounts to unavoidable significant landscape character effects is the retention of existing hedgerows, trees and woodland copses along the and throughout the site, and the provision of new public open space and planting (particularly along the southern site extent), which will help considerably in integrating the Proposed Development into the urban-rural context.
- 4.68 The relatively well-contained nature of the residual effects are driven, largely through the strategic planting incorporated at points around the perimeter and throughout the site, to ensure that effects are predominantly limited to within localised areas comprising the Application Site and its immediate context. Whilst there would be **significant adverse effects** on the Application Site and its immediate context, the effects reduce quickly with distance so that the overall effects on landscape character types are **not significant**. Over time, these effects will further reduce such that the development would become an accepted part of the southern edge of Wokingham.
- 4.69 Based on the assessed viewpoints, the overall visibility of the development is relatively well-contained in many directions, due to the strategic planting incorporated surrounding, and through the site, in addition to the contribution that woodland and urban form make to general intervisibility within the study area. The urban area of Wokingham to the north limits the distribution of effects dramatically to a narrow zone at the urban edge.
- 4.70 The visual effects predicted to arise as a result of the introduction of the Proposed Development follow a similar pattern to effects upon landscape character, in that significant effects are likely to occur only within and in very close proximity to the Proposed Development; the magnitude of change to views decreases rapidly with distance from the Application Site, partly due to screening, and partly due to the masterplan layout, which is designed to respect close range and more distant views. Therefore, the receptors most likely to experience a potential significant effect at Year 15 following completion would be the roads and PRoW within and in close proximity to the Site.
- 4.71 The Proposed Development will be visible from the edges of the existing settlement, but there is likely to be limited, or no, visibility from within the wider urban area of the settlement

and from other nearby settlements and isolated residences to the south, east or west. Furthermore, the parameter plans indicate that building heights have been designed to be sensitive to the most proximate, and sensitive, visual receptors.

- 4.72 From a landscape and visual perspective, the Application Site is suitable for the Proposed Development, at the scale and form indicated on the Parameter Plans and 'wider' illustrative masterplan. The Proposed Development with 'embedded' mitigation measures will have a limited effect on views from the surrounding areas, as it would be well-integrated, through a combination of tree belts and other screening features, and where visible, perceived in the context of the existing suburban areas of Wokingham. Over the longer term, it would represent a well-designed and sensitive extension to the wider settlement

### Archaeology and Heritage – Chapter 12

- 4.73 This ES and ESA Chapter assesses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development in terms of Archaeology and Heritage.
- 4.74 The Original ES Chapter is supported by two Archaeological and Heritage Assessment reports, one for the NKH site (Appendix 12.1 of Volume 2 of the Original ES) and one for the Lightwood site (Appendix 12.2 of Volume 2 of the Original ES). Both reports combine to provide the baseline for the South Wokingham SDL Extension in relation to current local and national guidance.
- 4.75 The assessment established that the South Wokingham SDL Extension contains no designated heritage assets. It does contribute a limited amount to the importance of four surrounding listed buildings, however, the assessment has identified that the Proposed Development only has the capacity to effect three listed buildings within Pearce's Farm (Grade II Listed).
- 4.76 The assessment has identified that the Proposed Development will result in a long-term, permanent, **minor/moderate adverse effect** to the Pearce's Farmhouse at the Operational Phase, which is considered insignificant in EIA terms.
- 4.77 The assessment identified that any buried archaeological remains within the South Wokingham SDL Extension would be affected by the Proposed Development during the Construction Phase, via direct, physical impacts from associated groundworks. Such impacts would result in a **long-term, permanent, adverse moderate effect**. It is considered that this would be suitably mitigated through an appropriate scheme of archaeological work which would reduce the residual effect to **negligible**, which is insignificant in EIA terms.

### Noise – Chapter 13

- 4.78 This Chapter assesses the impact of the Development on Noise. In particular, it considers the potential effects of construction noise and changes in road traffic noise levels on existing receptors as well as existing and proposed sources of noise upon the proposed and existing receptors.
- 4.79 The Original ES and ESA Chapter describes the methods used to assess the impacts, the baseline conditions currently existing at the Site and surroundings, the potential direct and

indirect impacts of the changes in road traffic levels, the mitigation measures required to prevent, reduce, or offset the impacts and the residual effects.

- 4.80 In order to determine baseline noise levels at existing and proposed receptors, a Baseline Noise Survey has been carried out around the Site. The Baseline Noise Survey consisted of road traffic noise surveys for the roads surrounding the Site, a rail survey and a commercial noise survey. In addition, a background survey has been undertaken at a location representative of the nearest proposed receptors.
- 4.81 If a CEMP is followed and adhered to and best practicable means are followed, there should be a **short-term negligible to minor adverse effect** at local level during the construction phase, at existing and any proposed receptors due to construction noise. **The effects are not considered significant.** Additionally, there is predicted to be a **negligible effect** at all receptors at the local level due to construction generated traffic.
- 4.82 Without appropriate Site design, it is considered that a long-term minor to moderate adverse impact at the local level would be experienced in the garden areas of the proposed dwellings. However, with lowest practicable levels achieved, the effects would range between **negligible and minor adverse** with a good acoustic design.
- 4.83 For garden areas close to the roads a **negligible long-term impact** at a local level can be achieved through suitable Site layout and if necessary acoustic barriers (fencing). Within internal habitable rooms, a **negligible effect** at the local level can be achieved through the use of glazing and alternative ventilation, where required.
- 4.84 This assessment has set M&E plant noise emission limits based on the existing measured background noise level and the adopted criteria given in BS4142:2014 for any proposed fixed plant items, associated with the proposed commercial area.
- 4.85 This Chapter has shown that the rated level of noise from the existing commercial unit falls below the typical background sound level (the criteria noise level).

#### Ground Conditions – Chapter 14

- 4.86 The Lightwood study area comprises Land at South Wokingham, Old Wokingham Road, Wokingham, RG40 3BQ and the Nicholas King Homes (NKH) study area comprises land at Pearce's Farm, Easthampstead Road, Wokingham, RG40 3BN. The total area of the Site is approximately 64ha.
- 4.87 To determine the baseline conditions for the Site for this ES and ESA Chapter, available information pertaining to the type of geology, soils and groundwater on the site has been reviewed. With both Desk Top Studies indicating potential sources within the CSM models however it is likely that the potential impact will be localised and not site wide.
- 4.88 Currently with the limited Site data there is a potential for contaminated soils and groundwater to be present within the underlying soils/water, that require further investigation ahead of the construction works.

- 4.89 It is anticipated that the effects of the development during the construction phase would be **moderate to minor**. However, effects would largely be controlled through the mitigation measures proposed.
- 4.90 The impact of the development during the operation phase is that the end user of the Site is changing, from agricultural use to a residential end use, and therefore the receptor is considered as the future users of the Site.
- 4.91 Therefore, the current risk is considered to be major due to the potential onsite contamination.
- 4.92 The impacts affecting the Site will remain as **minor - major** given that further investigation has been recommended across the Site to determine if contamination is present and therefore if remedial measures are required on-site. It should be noted that if remedial measures were required, and are adopted in line with guidance, the residual effects of the development would be reduced to **negligible**. However, the risk cannot be completely removed from any Site.
- 4.93 As with the development of any Site, residual impacts may still be present but the associated risks will be reduced to **negligible** by undertaking a Phase 2 Site investigation, and following the good working practices outlined above

## Climate Change – Chapter 15

- 4.94 This ESA Chapter has been prepared to address the consultee response from the Council's Sustainability Officer, who requested the inclusion of a Climate Change Chapter within the ESA, as this was not included within the Original ES.

### Baseline

- 4.95 The baseline data assessed included: the Site context and existing land use; the current climate conditions; greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption; transport and air quality; ecology; water and flood risk; and agriculture and carbon sequestration.

### Impact Assessment and Significance of Effect

- 4.96 The relevant ISEP (formally IEMA) Guidance that was followed for the climate change assessment set out that the effect is determined based on probability and consequence. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that the impacts of climate change are challenging to assess, and many effects are outside the Applicant's control. As such, professional judgement has been used to determine the assessment findings.
- 4.97 Throughout the Proposed Development's Construction Phase, energy consumption and Carbon Emissions are likely to increase. As the Construction Phase is temporary, the effect on Carbon Emissions and energy consumption is considered **negligible**. The development will be constructed and operated in accordance with good practice reduction measures and comply with up-to-date policy, overall significance of effects during the Operational Phase is deemed to be **minor adverse**,

- 4.98 The Air Quality effects are considered **negligible** for both the construction and operational phases of the development.
- 4.99 In terms of Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure, the Proposed Development is considered to result in a **moderate adverse** effect during the construction phase, however with mitigation the overall effect is deemed **negligible**. Likewise, the development is considered to result in a **minor adverse** effect on Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure during the operational phase, but with mitigation the overall effect is deemed **negligible to minor beneficial**.
- 4.100 During construction, the Hydrology and Flood Risk effect is considered **negligible**. During the Operational Phase, the effect is also considered **negligible**.
- 4.101 The development is considered to have a **minor adverse** effect on Agriculture and Soils, during both the construction and operational phase, even with mitigation.
- 4.102 In terms of Utilities and Waste, the Proposed Development is considered to have a **minor adverse** effect during the construction phase, and a **negligible to minor adverse** effect during the operational phase of the development.

#### **Proposed Mitigation**

- 4.103 The impacts of climate change are complex, so adaptive management is needed to mitigate negative effects. Measures such as the incorporation of sustainable drainage solutions and sustainable construction methods will help to manage these effects.
- 4.104 The Proposed Development will be constructed and operated in accordance with good practice reduction measures and comply with up-to-date policy. During the Construction Phase, the mitigation will include the use of efficient plant and machinery, appropriate Site management practices, dust suppression where necessary, and the optimisation of construction logistics to reduce unnecessary transport movements. In addition, construction and waste management measures will assist in minimising resource use and waste arisings during the construction period.
- 4.105 During the Operational Phase, the mitigation measures will include energy efficiency measures in line with current Building Regulations, sustainable drainage, green infrastructure, biodiversity enhancement, and the promotion of sustainable transport options including pedestrian and cycle connectivity.

#### **Residual Effects**

- 4.106 The proposed mitigation will result in **negligible** residual effects for Air Quality and Hydrology and Flood Risk for both the construction and operational phases of the development. There is also a predicted **minor adverse** residual effect on Carbon Emissions and Energy Consumption, and Agriculture and Soils during both the construction and operational phases.
- 4.107 It is considered that the proposed mitigation will result in **minor adverse** residual effects for Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure and Utilities and Waste for the construction phase. Following construction and when the development is operational, it is considered that the development will have a **negligible to minor adverse** effect on both Utilities and Waste,

whilst having a **negligible to minor beneficial** effect on Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure.

- 4.108 In the context of wider Borough emissions and the temporary nature of construction activities, the overall residual construction phase effect is considered to be **minor adverse** and **not significant**.

#### **Summary**

- 4.109 The Proposed Development will not lead to any significant adverse effects on climate change. While the scheme will inevitably result in some greenhouse gas emissions during construction and operation, those effects are limited by embedded design measures and policy compliance. Inherent mitigation measures will be incorporated, which means that the residual effects on climate change are considered not significant.

#### **Cumulative Effects Assessment**

- 4.110 The Proposed Development and other identified development schemes in the local area have the potential to give rise to cumulative effects. Using the methodology set out in the Original ES, the impacts of the project that have been taken into account cumulatively with other projects taking place within the identified zone of influence.
- 4.111 The Original ES existing sites have been updated and there are no new sites to be considered in the ESA in relation to cumulative effects assessment, based on the criteria in the Original ES.
- 4.112 A summary of the main findings from cumulative (additive) effects and combined (synergist) effects assessments are set out below.
- 4.113 The ESA has found no significant negative in-combination/combined effects – i.e. no significant effects resulting from the combined action of different environmental topic specific impacts upon a single resource/receptor.
- 4.114 Overall, it is evident from this assessment that the Proposed Development can proceed independently without any unacceptable combined or cumulative impacts on the local or wider environment.

## 5. SUMMARY AND RESIDUAL EFFECTS

- 5.1 The assessment of the potential environmental impacts of the amendments to the Proposed Development has concluded that it can proceed without causing unacceptable significant effects on either local or wider environments.
- 5.2 Through appropriate mitigation measures identified in the Original ES and the ESA, the effects of the Proposed Development will be minimised.
- 5.3 In many instances the assessment has identified residual beneficial effects as a result of the Proposed Development, including:
- Creation of jobs during construction phase (**minor beneficial**);
  - Provision of on-Site facilities for the local population (**moderate beneficial**);
  - Benefits to the local economy, through increased spending from the new population and from employment generation during both the construction and operation period of the Proposed Development (**minor beneficial**);
  - Increase in housing provision in the area and to meet the Borough housing need (**major –moderate beneficial**);
  - Beneficial effect from provision of land for Primary School (if required) (**moderate beneficial**);
  - Beneficial effects in terms of open space provision, play areas, and community allotments provision (**minor beneficial**);
  - Benefits to the community retail offering through increased spending in Wokingham (**minor beneficial**);
  - Increased support of local community centres and halls from new residents of the Proposed Development (**minor beneficial**);
  - Closure of point of access on Easthampstead Road (**major beneficial**); and
  - Further attenuating and restricting surface water runoff into nearby watercourses and improving the water quality from appropriate SuDS design (**minor beneficial**).
- 5.4 The ESA has also identified a number of residual adverse effects, including:
- Temporary minor adverse effects on driver delay due to construction traffic at junctions on Easthampstead Road and Old Wokingham Road (**minor adverse**);
  - Effects on biodiversity features including Emm Brook tributary, ditch and hedgerow (**minor adverse**);
  - Effects on biodiversity features including bats and birds (moderate adverse) and reptiles (**minor adverse**);
  - Temporary effects during the construction phase on landscape character and fabric (**major/moderate/minor adverse**);

- Effects during the operational phase on landscape character and fabric (**moderate/minor adverse**);
- Effects on the setting of some listed buildings in the vicinity of the Site (**minor/moderate adverse**);
- Temporary effects on noise from construction (**negligible/minor adverse**);
- Effects from traffic noise on the proposed development (**negligible/minor adverse**);
- Permanent effects of construction on the soil and geology, groundwater quality and surface water quality (**negligible/minor adverse**); and
- Potential for permanent risk of contaminated soils, inhalation of vapours and controlled waters (**minor adverse**).

5.5 The remaining residual effects of the Proposed Development have been assessed as **negligible** including:

- Effects on Construction Workers from Potential Contamination within the underlying soils/groundwater;
- Noise from existing Road Traffic on Proposed Residential;
- Increased flood risk associated with temporary works within the fluvial and surface water flood zones;
- Emissions from traffic generated by the development on existing sensitive human receptors;
- Pedestrian severance, amenity, driver delay, safety, NMU delay and fear & intimidation at Easthampstead Road; and
- Impacts on educational facilities in relation to early years, secondary and post-16 provision.

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