



Shinfield Park, Shinfield

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

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1 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 This Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report accompanies a request to, Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) as the Local Planning Authority to adopt an EIA Screening Opinion in respect of the proposed redevelopment of Shinfield Park into an employment/industrial hub (the 'Proposed Development') at Shinfield Park, Shinfield Road, Reading, RG2 9FW (the 'Site').
- 1.1.2 Wrenbridge (FRELD Reading) LLP (the 'Applicant') intends to submit a full planning application to Wokingham Borough Council for the Proposed Development. The Screening Report has been prepared on behalf of the Applicant, by Stantec UK Ltd (Stantec) who are qualified assessors through the EIA Quality Mark run by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA).
- 1.1.3 This report reflects the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the 'EIA Regulations'). In accordance with Regulation 6(1) of the EIA Regulations. It contains:
- A plan sufficient to identify the land (**Appendix A**)
 - A description of the development, including in particular
 - a description of the physical characteristics of the development and, where relevant, of demolition works (**Section 2.2**); and
 - a description of the location of the development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected (**Section 2.1**).
 - A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development (**Table 2**);
 - Where information is available, a description of likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on the environment resulting from
 - the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water, and biodiversity (**Table 2**).
 - Other information or representations relating to features of the Proposed Development and measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment (**Table 2** and **Section 2.3**).

1.2 Requirement for EIA

- 1.2.1 In order to determine whether the Proposed Development is 'EIA development', regard must be had to the relevant EIA Regulations and supporting Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (May 2020) ¹.
- 1.2.2 EIA development is defined by the EIA Regulations as development:

"Likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location".

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/environmental-impact-assessment>

1.2.3 EIA development falls into two Schedules of the EIA Regulations. EIA is mandatory for developments listed within Schedule 1. Schedule 2 developments require EIA if they would lead to likely significant effects on the environment.

1.2.4 In deciding whether a Schedule 2 development is EIA development, Regulation 5(4) states:

“Where a relevant planning authority ... has to decide under these Regulations whether Schedule 2 development is EIA development, the relevant planning authority ... must take into account in making that decision -

a) Any information provided by the applicant;

b) The results of any relevant EU environmental assessment which are reasonably available to relevant planning authority...; and

c) Such of the selection criteria set out in Schedule 3 as are relevant to the development.”

1.2.5 To allow WBC to determine the need for an EIA in this case, this Report provides a description of the Site and Proposed Development, a review of the EIA Screening Criteria set-out in the EIA Regulations and the PPG; and a completed EIA Screening Checklist. A Site Location Plan is provided in **Appendix A**.

2 Site and Proposed Development

2.1 The Site and its Context

- 2.1.1 The Site, known as Shinfield Park, is located in Reading and is approximately 5.5 hectares in size. It is located within the administrative boundary of WBC, close to the boundary with Reading Borough Council to the north. The Site is locally known as “Shire Hall” and was originally built as the County Hall for Berkshire County Council.
- 2.1.2 The Site currently contains a 23,730 m² geometric-shaped office building that extends up to four storeys, with additional basement parking. Until recently, there was also a 3,219 m² detached three-storey modular office building on the Site, which had a long-term temporary planning permission but has since been removed so is not included within the baseline conditions of the Site. The office buildings are served by extensive parking facilities, with the existing provision accommodating 1,520 spaces.
- 2.1.3 The Site is situated near the B3270 (Lower Earley Way) and is accessed via Whitley Wood Way to the south. It also includes internal access roads, surface level car parking, and several established trees. The surrounding environment includes ancient woodland, such as Nores Hill Wood to the north, and local wildlife sites.

2.2 The Proposed Development

- 2.2.1 The Proposed Development involves the redevelopment of the site for employment/industrial purposes, specifically for flexible use classes E(g)(ii)-(iii)/B2/B8. The development aims to provide modern employment/industrial units that cater to a range of potential end users, ensuring flexibility to meet market demands. The proposal includes the construction of new buildings, designed to accommodate various employment/industrial activities, along with associated servicing areas, parking, landscaping, and other necessary infrastructure.
- 2.2.2 The site, currently featuring office buildings, will undergo significant transformation. The existing office buildings will be replaced with new employment/industrial units. The proposed layout will be designed to incorporate a 15-metre buffer from the boundary of the ancient woodland, ensuring minimal impact on the surrounding natural environment, alongside landscape buffers to the residential area to the north ensuring minimal impact on residential amenity.
- 2.2.3 Overall, the Proposed Development at Shinfield Park aims to create a modern, flexible employment/industrial hub that meets the needs of various businesses while respecting the site's environmental and community context. The project will contribute to the local economy by providing additional employment/industrial floorspace and generating job opportunities, aligning with the strategic objectives of Wokingham Borough Council.

2.3 Mitigation

- 2.3.1 The Applicant is dedicated to implementing a scheme that maximises environmental benefits while minimising adverse local impacts. Mitigation and enhancement measures will be applied to all receptors in accordance with relevant legislation and policy. The mitigation and enhancement measures addressing any potential adverse environmental effects will be controlled by standard planning conditions and/or standard, reliable, proven and well understood mitigation measures.
- 2.3.2 The Proposed Development will consider the scale and proximity of new buildings to existing residential areas to minimise any potential negative impacts on residents. This includes designing buildings that are appropriately scaled and positioned to avoid overshadowing or overlooking neighbouring properties. Measures will be implemented to address potential environmental impacts such as noise, fumes, highway safety, visual impact, and lighting, and may involve sound barriers, implementing traffic management plans, and designing lighting systems that minimise light pollution.

- 2.3.3 An LVIA will be conducted to evaluate the visual impact of the new buildings on the surrounding landscape. This assessment will ensure that the development respects the existing landscape and the backdrop provided by Nore's Hill Local Wildlife Site. The Proposed Development will adopt a landscape-sensitive approach, incorporating sustainable drainage measures and well-placed landscape features to soften the visual impact of the new buildings. This approach will include planting native species and creating green spaces to enhance the site's aesthetic and ecological value.
- 2.3.4 An Ecological Appraisal will be conducted to assess the potential impact on protected species and priority habitats. This appraisal will inform the design and implementation of mitigation measures to protect local wildlife and demonstrate how it will achieve a mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain. This may involve creating new habitats, enhancing existing ones, and implementing measures to support local biodiversity. A 15-metre buffer from the boundary of the ancient woodland will be incorporated into the development. The development will include compensation planting to address the loss of trees. This will help maintain the site's ecological value and provide green spaces for the local community.
- 2.3.5 The Site is located within Flood Zone 1, indicating a low risk of flooding. The development will be designed so that it does not increase flood risk or vulnerability. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) will be incorporated to manage surface water runoff and reduce the risk of surface water flooding. These measures may include permeable paving, swales, and retention ponds and will be confirmed within a detailed Drainage Strategy which will accompany the planning application
- 2.3.6 Further assessments will be conducted to determine the need for interventions to the highway network. If justified, these interventions will be secured via a Section 106 Agreement. Parking provision will be in line with the Borough's standards, ensuring adequate parking for employees and visitors. The development will also consider the accessibility of the site by alternative modes of transport, such as public transport, cycling, and walking.
- 2.3.7 New buildings will be designed to include the use of energy efficient materials and technologies to reduce the development's environmental footprint. A BREEAM Pre-Assessment will accompany the planning application to demonstrate the development's commitment to sustainability and achieving high environmental standards.
- 2.3.8 Although there are no specific heritage designations within the site itself, the development will consider the setting of nearby heritage assets so as not to adversely impact the visual or historical context of these assets.
- 2.3.9 Further information on the proposed mitigation and enhancement measures are set out within the EIA Screening checklist set out in **Table 2**.
- 2.3.10 It should be noted that the planning application for the redevelopment of Shinfield Park will be supported by several environmental assessments so that potential impacts are thoroughly evaluated and mitigated. These assessments include:
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment;
 - Ecological Impact Assessment;
 - Air Quality Assessment;
 - Noise Assessment;
 - Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy;
 - Land Contamination Assessment;
 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment;

- Biodiversity Net Gain Report and Metric;
- Utilities Assessment; and
- Lighting Strategy.
- Framework Construction Environmental Management Plan

3 Screening Assessment

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 In determining whether the Proposed Development constitutes EIA development, consideration should be had to the following:

- Is the Proposed Development of a type listed in Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations?
- If not, is it listed in Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations?
- Is the site located within a sensitive area as defined by the EIA Regulations?
- Does the Proposed Development meet any of the relevant thresholds and criteria set out in Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations? and/or
- Would the Proposed Development lead to likely significant effects on the environment?

3.1.2 These points are explored further in this section with reference to the EIA Regulations and the Government's PPG.

3.2 Schedule 1 Projects

3.2.1 EIA is mandatory for projects listed in Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations. Schedule 1 developments are typically large-scale projects for which significant effects would be expected, for example, new airports and power stations. The Proposed Development is not of a type listed in Schedule 1.

3.3 Schedule 2 Projects

3.3.1 EIA is discretionary for projects listed in Schedule 2. If the development proposed is of a type listed in Schedule 2 then it may be classified as EIA development depending on the location of the development (that is, if it is within a sensitive area) and/or whether it meets any of the relevant exclusion thresholds or criteria in Column 2 of Schedule 2. The Site itself is not a sensitive area as defined by Regulation 2(1) of the EIA Regulations.

3.3.2 The Proposed Development could be considered to fall under Schedule 2 10 (a):

- Schedule 2 section 10(a): industrial estate development projects; and

3.3.3 As the Site is approximately 5.5 ha in size, the Proposed Development exceeds the 5 ha area exclusion threshold set out in Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations. Accordingly, the Proposed Development is Schedule II development that requires screening, and this Screening request has been prepared to determine whether the Proposed Development would be likely to result in significant environmental effects and therefore require a statutory EIA.

3.3.4 To achieve this, Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations needs to be considered, as set out below.

3.4 Schedule 3 Criteria

3.4.1 Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations sets out selection criteria which relate to specific matters including the characteristics of the development, the location of the development and the characteristics of the potential impacts. These factors should be taken into account as part of the screening process and are set out below for reference:

Characteristics:

- The size and design of the whole development;
- The cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development;
- The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;
- The production of waste;
- Pollution and nuisances;
- The risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge; and
- The risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).

Location:

- The existing and approved land use;
- The relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground; and
- The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:
 - Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;
 - Coastal zones and the marine environment;
 - Mountain and forest areas;
 - Nature reserves and parks;
 - European sites and other areas classified or protected under national legislation;
 - Areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in EU legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered there is such a failure;
 - Densely populated areas; and
 - Landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

Potential Impact:

- The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- The nature of the impact;
- The transboundary nature of the impact;
- The intensity and complexity of the impact;
- The probability of the impact;
- The expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
- The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development; and
- The possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

3.5 Consideration of Cumulative Effects

- 3.5.1 Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations requires consideration of a Proposed Development cumulatively with other existing and / or approved development. Further guidance on the consideration of cumulative effects in the EIA screening process is set out in the PPG:

“...each application (or request for a screening opinion) should be considered on its own merits. There are occasions where other existing or approved development may be relevant in determining significant effects are likely as a consequence of a proposed development. The local planning authorities should always have regard to the possible cumulative effects arising from any existing or approved development.”

- 3.5.2 Future land use plans around Shinfield Park include the South of the M4 Strategic Development Location (SDL), which aims to deliver a sustainable mixed-use development by 2026, featuring around 2,500 dwellings, employment and retail facilities, and green infrastructure. The potential for significant cumulative effects has been considered in this EIA screening.

3.6 National Planning Practice Guidance

- 3.6.1 The PPG provides guidance to help to determine whether significant effects from a development proposal are likely. In general, the more environmentally sensitive the location, the lower the threshold will be at which significant effects are likely.
- 3.6.2 **Table 1** sets out the indicative thresholds in Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations together with the PPG indicative thresholds and key issues to be considered in determining whether a development of this type is likely to be EIA development, as identified in Paragraph 58 of Section 4 (EIA) of the PPG. The Site itself is not a sensitive area as defined by the EIA Regulations, but at 5.5ha will exceed the thresholds in Schedule 2. However, it is below the key indicative thresholds in the PPG (and the PPG stated ‘key issues’ of physical scale of such developments, potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise have been considered).

Table 1 Planning Practice Guidance Indicative Screening Criteria²

Development type	Schedule 2 criteria and thresholds	PPG Indicative Thresholds	PPG Key issues to consider
10(a) industrial estate development projects	(i) the area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectares	Site area of the new development is more than 20 hectares.	Potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise.

3.7 Screening Assessment

- 3.7.1 **Table 2** overleaf provides a review of all the above criteria and requirements and specifically addresses the development proposed at the Site. The matrix is taken from the EIA screening checklist in the PPG (i.e. as referred to from Paragraph 18 of Section 4 (EIA) of the PPG ³).

² <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a75aa4440f0b67f59fcea7e/eia-thresholds-table.pdf>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-impact-assessment-screening-checklist>

Table 2 Planning Practice Guidance EIA Screening Matrix for Shinfield Park, Reading

Part 1 - Question	Part 2 - Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		Part 3 - Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or N/A)
1. Natural Resources			
1.1 Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the topography of the area?	Y	The demolition, construction, and operation of the Project will involve actions that cause physical changes in the topography of the area. During construction, earthworks will be necessary to prepare the site, which may include grading, excavation, and the installation of erosion control measures such as silt fences and sediment basins. The operation phase will maintain these changes, with the addition of built structures and infrastructure altering the natural landform.	N Erosion control measures such as silt fences, sediment basins, and vegetation cover will prevent soil erosion during and after construction. Revegetation of disturbed areas will help stabilise the soil and enhance the landscape. Incorporating sustainable design principles will minimise earthworks and maintain natural landforms where possible. With mitigation measures in place, likely significant environmental effects are not anticipated.
1.2 Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground such as land, soil, water, materials / minerals or energy which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Y	During the demolition and construction phase, the Project will disturb land and soil through excavation and grading but as it is a brownfield Site this will be relatively low. The construction will also require materials such as concrete, steel, and aggregates, which are non-renewable. Additionally, construction activities will consume water for purposes like dust suppression and concrete mixing. Energy consumption will be from non-renewable sources like diesel and electricity to power construction machinery and equipment. Once operational, the new buildings will continue to require energy for heating, cooling, lighting, and other functions, potentially relying on non-renewable energy sources. There will also be ongoing water use for building operations, landscaping, and maintenance.	N While the Project will use some non-renewable resources during construction, it includes measures to minimise their use and promote sustainability. The project will incorporate sustainable design principles to minimise earthworks and maintain natural landforms, and revegetation with native vegetation will help stabilise the soil and enhance the landscape. During operation, the project is designed to achieve BREEAM Excellent and EPC A ratings as a minimum, ensuring high standards of environmental performance. These measures will mean there is effective resource management and minimise adverse impacts on the environment. Therefore, significant negative effects are not likely, as the project is designed to promote sustainability and mitigate potential environmental impacts through careful planning and best practices
1.3 Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project, e.g. forestry,	Y	The area around the project site contains several important, high-quality, or scarce resources that could be affected by the Proposed Development. The site is in close proximity to ancient woodland to the north, which is listed on the Priority Habitat Inventory as Deciduous Woodland and includes areas of	N Relevant mitigations for the Proposed Development include establishing buffer zones from the Site boundary to protect significant trees, safeguard ancient woodland, and provide water quality protection and flood management for the River Loddon and its floodplain.

Part 1 - Question	Part 2 - Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		Part 3 - Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or N/A)
agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?		Woodpasture and Parkland BAP Priority Habitat. There is also an area of Priority Woodland Habitat to the south-west. The Site also contains existing ponds in the southwest, which are remnants of previous landscaping. These resources are locally important, and the project will need to consider measures to mitigate any potential adverse effects to these areas.	With mitigation measures in place, likely significant environmental effects are not anticipated.
2. Waste			
2.1 Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Y	Materials from the demolition of the hardstanding, such as concrete, bricks, metal, and glass, while waste will be generated from construction activities, including packaging materials and off-cuts. During construction, waste will be generated from activities such as site clearance, excavation, and building works. This includes materials like soil, concrete, bricks, and packaging. During the operational phase, the facility will produce waste from daily activities, including office waste, maintenance waste, and potentially small volumes of hazardous waste, depending on the operations conducted. Additionally, the development will generate solid wastes typical of commercial developments, such as general and recyclable waste.	N During demolition and construction, a waste management plan will be implemented to address waste generation, segregation, storage, and disposal. This plan will prioritise the recycling and reuse of materials such as concrete, metals, and timber to significantly reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills. Specialised procedures will be in place to handle any small volumes of hazardous waste, ensuring it is properly identified, stored, and disposed of in accordance with stringent regulatory requirements. During the operational phase, a waste management plan will focus on minimising waste generation from day-to-day activities and promoting sustainable practices, such as reducing single-use materials and implementing recycling programs for employees and visitors. Proper systems will be established to segregate recyclable, organic, and non-recyclable waste at the source, ensuring efficient disposal and reducing the environmental footprint of operations. The waste management plans during both the demolition/construction and operational phases are designed to significantly reduce waste and promote sustainability. These efforts aim to significantly lower the amount of waste sent to

Part 1 - Question	Part 2 - Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		Part 3 - Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or N/A)	
				landfills and reduce the overall environmental footprint, thereby leaving significant effects arising from construction and operation waste unlikely.
3. Pollution and Nuisances				
3.1 Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Y	During construction, there is a potential for dust emissions from activities such as demolition, earthworks, construction, and the tracking out of materials by vehicles. These emissions can occur due to the movement and handling of soil, demolition debris, construction materials, and the operation of machinery. Dust generation can be exacerbated by dry and windy conditions, which may allow fine particles to become airborne, potentially impacting air quality in the surrounding area. Located to the north of Wokingham Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), emissions of pollutants such as nitrogen oxides (NOx) and particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) from construction and operational vehicles and from the operation of equipment powered by fossil fuels may contribute to elevated pollution concentrations recorded in this area. These emissions are typically localised but can contribute to temporary reductions in air quality if not managed effectively. The Proposed Development is expected to generate fewer Light Duty Vehicle (LDV) trips compared to the existing office development, with a reduction at this stage forecast to be 209 LDV trips daily. However, there is expected to be a forecast increase at this stage of 114 daily Heavy Duty Vehicle (HDV) movements as a result of the Project. Overall, there is expected to be an overall reduction of 95 daily traffic trips compared to the existing use and this change will be considered within an Air Quality Assessment.	N	Details such as dust suppression, including the use of water-assisted dust sweeps and regular damping down of surfaces, alongside site and vehicle management that implements regular site inspections and wheel washing systems will be included within the Air Quality Assessment submitted within the planning application. Given the increase in HDV trips associated with the proposed industrial estate compared to the existing office development, emissions from road traffic will be assessed in an Air Quality Assessment which will be submitted with the planning application to identify effects and any appropriate mitigation measures. In addition, a Travel Plan will be submitted with the planning application which will set out measures such as vehicle routing and the promotion of sustainable transport modes rather than single occupancy vehicle movements. As mitigation measures will be implemented via an FCEMP during demolition/construction and there is an overall reduction in operational vehicle trips, significant effects on air quality associated with the Proposed Development are not expected.

Part 1 - Question	Part 2 - Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		Part 3 - Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or N/A)	
		The Proposed Development is primarily for employment land use which is not expected to release hazardous substances or toxic emissions to air. There is not anticipated to be a requirement to store large volumes of hazardous materials. Any such materials required to be used as part of the employment floorspace would be stored and handled in accordance with relevant legislation.		
3.2 Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Y	The Proposed Development is likely to cause some noise, vibration and light during the demolition and construction phase due to the use of heavy machinery and construction activities. This could affect nearby residential areas north of the Site to the west of Shinfield Road. During the operational phase, the project may generate noise and light, particularly from vehicle movements, car parking and yards on the site and vehicles on the surrounding road network. Operational vibration impacts are not expected due to low levels of operational vibration and the distances to the nearest vibration sensitive receptors.	N	An FCEMP will be prepared and implemented by the construction contractors. Best practicable means noise, vibration and light mitigation techniques to minimise the generation of noise, vibration and light will be applied to all construction activities so significant effects are not expected. A noise impact assessment will be undertaken to inform the design of the scheme. Mitigation measures will be implemented to reduce noise impacts from vehicle movement and activities on the site if deemed to be necessary. Offsite adverse noise impacts from traffic movements are not expected to be significant and will be assessed as part of the noise impact assessment. Operational lighting will be designed to the minimum standard for health and safety so light is provided only where and when it is needed. Any obtrusive light will be limited to levels established by the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Guidance. With mitigation measures in place, likely significant environmental effects are not anticipated.
3.3 Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Y	Sources of contamination identified in the Geoenvironmental and Geotechnical Assessment include made ground from previous development and fill material, which may contain metals, PAH, TPH, asbestos, and ground gas.	N	Based on Geoenvironmental and Geotechnical Assessments, the project is not expected to lead to significant contamination risks with mitigation in place. Mitigation measures include using engineered hardstanding and clean capping to prevent soil contact, confirming appropriate water supply pipework with the local water company, and assessing materials for off-site disposal according to WM3 guidelines.

Part 1 - Question	Part 2 - Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		Part 3 - Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or N/A)	
		Additionally, a diesel storage tank and electrical transformers on site has potential to release TPH and polychlorinated biphenyls, respectively. Active pathways for these contaminants include dermal contact or ingestion with soil and groundwater, contact with buried services, and migration of ground gas into buildings. The site is underlain by a secondary aquifer, making groundwater moderately sensitive to contamination, and nearby surface water features, such as ponds, may be in hydraulic continuity with the groundwater.		A materials management plan will be required for reused or imported materials. Ground improvement techniques will mitigate settlement risks and prevent contamination migration. Any groundwater encountered on site is expected to be perched water and will be managed through localised pumping and pre-treatment if necessary. Relic foundations and subterranean structures will be removed and backfilled to prevent contamination pathways, which address potential contaminants like metals PAH, TPH, asbestos, and ground gas, ensuring protection of human health and the environment. The Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) strategy outlined in the Hydrology Note will manage surface water using lined permeable paving, rain gardens, bio-retention areas, filter strips, and below-ground tanks to minimise the impact on runoff quantity and quality. These measures are designed to reduce the risk of contamination of land or water from pollutants. Infiltration is not possible as part of the surface water drainage strategy due to the cohesive nature of the site soils. Further groundwater monitoring will be conducted to clarify the groundwater regime at the site. Overall, the project is not expected to lead to significant risks of contamination, provided the proposed strategies are effectively implemented and managed.
3.4 Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	Y	The Project lies to the north of the Wokingham AQMA.	N	An Air Quality Assessment will be undertaken to assess existing pollution levels, and identify sensitive receptors. It will also detail air quality management measures that will mitigate against impacts of air pollution. With the implementation of an Air Quality Assessment and stringent air quality management measures, air quality impacts on the AQMAs can be effectively mitigated so likely significant environmental effects are not anticipated.

Part 1 - Question	Part 2 - Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		Part 3 - Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or N/A)	
4. Population and Human Health				
4.1 Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?	N	The Proposed Development will not be registered as Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Site under the regulations and therefore is not at risk of major accidents during demolition, construction or operation.	N	N/A
4.2 Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)	Y	During the construction phase, activities can release dust, fumes, and particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) into the air, which can cause respiratory issues and other health problems for nearby residents and workers. There is also a risk of pollutants, such as oils, chemicals, and construction debris, contaminating local water sources through surface runoff and accidental spills. In the operational phase, ongoing activities may contribute to air pollution through emissions from vehicles and equipment, affecting air quality and posing health risks to the local population. Additionally, operational activities could lead to accidental releases of pollutants into water sources, impacting both groundwater and surface water quality.	N	Dust control measures, such as using water sprays, dust suppressants, and covering materials, will be employed to reduce dust emissions during construction Water management measures, including silt fences, sediment traps, and proper storage of hazardous materials, will prevent surface runoff and spills. Proper disposal and management of waste materials will also be crucial to prevent contamination. Additionally, ensuring that all workers are trained in health and safety practices and equipped with personal protective equipment (PPE) will help protect their health and safety. The implementation of dust control measures, water management strategies, proper waste disposal, and health and safety practices will mitigate risks to population and human health, and so likely significant environmental effects are not anticipated.
5. Water Resources				
5.1 Are there any water resources including surface waters, e.g. rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or underground waters on or around the location which	N	The Site is in Flood Zone 1, indicating a low risk of flooding from rivers or sea. There is a low susceptibility to surface water flooding, which needs to be managed to prevent any adverse impacts on site and surrounding areas.	N	So that these water resources are not adversely affected, the following mitigation measures, will be implemented: Erosion and sediment control: during demolition and construction, measures such as silt fences and sediment traps used to prevent sediment from entering the ponds.

Part 1 - Question	Part 2 - Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		Part 3 - Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or N/A)
could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?		The Hydrology Note identifies water resources that could be affected by the Project. These include surface waters and groundwater. The Site discharges water offsite via two existing outfalls: one to the south into an ordinary watercourse and one to the east into ponds owned by West Berkshire District Council. The site investigation also indicates that groundwater is perched within the surface made ground and sporadically within the shallow weathered layers of the London Clay formation.	Sustainable drainage systems: during operation, sustainable drainage systems will help manage surface water runoff and reduce the risk of flooding. This includes features such as permeable pavement, swales, and retention basins. Infiltration is not possible as part of the surface water drainage strategy due to the cohesive nature of the site soils. Hydrology of Ancient Woodland: The topography of the site generally falls from north to south, away from the ancient woodland, reducing the likelihood of significant impacts on groundwater that could adversely affect the woodland. Land drainage will be placed at the bottom of graded landscaped areas to intercept potential groundwater movements. With the mitigation strategies above in place, significant adverse effects on water resources are not expected. Further groundwater monitoring will be conducted to ensure the effectiveness of these measures.
6. Biodiversity (Species and Habitats)			
6.1 Are there any protected areas which are designated or classified for their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, or any non-designated/non-classified areas which are important or sensitive for reasons of their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, located on or around the location and which could be affected by the project? (e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water-bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, undesignated nature reserves or parks.	Y	Several protected and sensitive areas around the project site that could be affected. These include designated areas such as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) like Shinfield Park, Nores Hill LWS adjacent to the south-west of the site, The Grove LWS located south-east of the site separated by the B3270 and Pearmans Copse LWS and Local Nature Reserve (LNR), which is located 300m east of the site. No Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are present within 2 km of the site. The only international designated site for nature conservation is the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA), the nearest component of which lies over 6 km from the site. At these distances, no adverse effects as a result of the Project are anticipated.	N An Ecological Appraisal (including bat and GCN surveys) alongside a Biodiversity Net Gain Report and Metric will detail appropriate mitigation measures, to manage and mitigate impacts on ecology and biodiversity. The implementation of buffer zones, protective fencing, habitat management, and regular monitoring are key strategies to protect the ecological value of the site during the development project. Overall, subject to the implementation of appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures, no important ecological features are likely to be significantly affected by the Proposed Development.

Part 1 - Question	Part 2 - Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		Part 3 - Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or N/A)	
(Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local)).		Habitats of note include ancient woodland bordering the site to the northwest and additional areas to the north and east, as well as Priority Habitat Inventory areas of Deciduous Woodland and Woodpasture and Parkland BAP Priority Habitat surrounding the site. In addition, a veteran Oak tree has been identified on the western site boundary.		
6.2 Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?	Y	Habitats within and adjacent to the site have potential to support protected and notable fauna including roosting bats, great crested newt, dormouse, hedgehog, reptiles and nesting birds. Vegetation clearance, demolition works and general disturbance from construction activities could affect protected species should they be present at time of works. A suite of surveys is underway to determine the presence/likely absence of protected species at the site. To date, survey work has confirmed the likely absence of great crested newt, reptiles and roosting bats from the site.	N	Construction activities should ideally be scheduled outside the breeding season for birds to minimise disturbance. Safeguards will also be implemented during clearance works to minimise potential impacts on dormouse, reptiles and hedgehog. The implementation and adherence to the FCEMP will help ensure the safeguarding of biodiversity. The opportunity exists to create new habitat on-site and provide faunal enhancement features, which will provide additional biodiversity benefits including new foraging, shelter, roosting and nesting opportunities. Subject to implementation of appropriate avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures, significant effects on protected species are assessed unlikely.
7. Landscape and Visual				
7.1 Are there any areas or features on or around the location which are protected for their landscape and scenic value, and/or any non-designated/non-classified areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project? Where designated indicate level of designation	Y	The River Loddon Valued Landscape, located 1 km east of the Site, is designated at the local level for its scenic and ecological value. The designation also forms part of draft Policy SS13 Loddon Valley Garden Village of the Wokingham Proposed Submission Plan, suggesting that new development within the context of the Valued Landscape should not be considered by definition to be inappropriate. Protected open spaces and nature reserves around the Site include several areas of local designations.	N	The designated landscape areas do not overlap the Site at any point and as such the development will have no direct impact on them. However, the Site forms part of the setting of these designated landscape areas and in some cases is immediately adjacent. As such, the Proposed Development has the potential to result in indirect effects on their character. In order to limit and mitigate these indirect effects, landscape buffer zones detailed will be implemented to help preserve their scenic and ecological value. Retaining significant trees and vegetation will maintain the natural landscape, while implementing replanting schemes with native species will

Part 1 - Question	Part 2 - Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		Part 3 - Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or N/A)
(international, national, regional or local).		Nores Hill woodland surrounding the western edge of the Site is a Local Wildlife Site containing mixed deciduous woodland, areas of which are classified as Ancient, and recreational footpaths. There are views into the Site from the edges of this area, but the woodland itself restricts any open and all but the most close-range views. The wildlife designation continues to the south of the Site between the B3270 and the M4 and to the north-east at Pearman's Copse, but has no visual connection with the Site. A Special Character Area is designated around St Mary's Church on Church Lane in Shinfield, 700m south of the Site. The centre of Arborfield, approximately 4km to the south-east, contains a high concentration of listed buildings and is designated as a Conservation Area. There is no intervisibility with the Site from either of these locations, nor with other listed buildings of interest in the area. PRoW SHIN16, 17,18 and 20 traverse an undulating area of farmland between Three Mile Cross, Spencer's Wood and Shinfield. From elevated sections of these paths there are views across the M4 to Reading in which parts of the existing development on the Site are visible above the surrounding trees. A cricket pitch on the edge of Shinfield at Brookers Hill shares a similar elevation and view towards the woodland surrounding the Site.	respect and maintain the woodland character of the area post-construction. These measures aim to minimise the impact on both designated and non-designated areas of high landscape and scenic value during and after the Proposed Development. By carefully implementing and managing these strategies, the Proposed Development can minimise its impact on both designated and non-designated areas of high landscape and scenic value. However, the success of these measures will depend on their thorough and consistent application throughout the development process. Overall, it is predominantly local landscape features and character areas that are most likely to be affected by the Proposed Development, and there is good potential for effective mitigation to be implemented in order to limit adverse effects.
7.2 Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people? (If so, from where, what direction, and what distance?)	Y	High degrees of visibility of development on the Site are experienced from the B3270 road/cycle way for a distance of 400 m between the Site and the Old Shinfield Road Roundabout, for 100 m along Whitley Wood Lane and for a length of 300 m along PRoW SHIN10 following the northern edge of the Site. In the near distance (up to 100 m), parts of the Proposed Development within the Site will be visible	N Whilst there are likely to be effects on a few of these receptors, the majority are expected to experience effects that are not significant, due to several mitigation measures that have been incorporated into the design and planning of the Proposed Development. During construction, strict environmental management practices will be implemented to minimise dust, noise, and water pollution, including measures like dust suppression,

Part 1 - Question	Part 2 - Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)	Part 3 - Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or N/A)
	to users of Shinfield Park Nores Hill LWS including PRow SHIN10, users of the cycle route that passes the eastern site boundary, users of the B3270 and Whitley Wood Lane, and residents of properties on Pascal Crescent, Cirrus Drive, and Greenwich Road. In the medium distance (100-500m), there is potential for parts of Proposed Development on the Site to be visible to users of PRow SHIN8, SHIN8A, and SHIN9, users of the cycle route at the western end of Cutbush Lane in Shinfield, and residents of properties within this range. The rear of properties to the north of Brookers Hill at Shinfield have the most convenient vantage point in this direction although there is likely little to no visibility of the development except for glimpses of the roofline in winter conditions. In the long distance (over 500m), only the tallest parts of the existing Proposed Development are visible to users of PRow SHIN3, SHIN4, SHIN5, and SHIN6 within the River Loddon valued landscape area, users of PRow SHIN23 and SHIN24 within the Spencer's Wood Southern Ridge valued landscape area, and residents of Little Lea Cottage (Grade II listed) 1.3km to the west of the Site. Long distance panoramic views toward the Site are available from PRow SHIN16, SHIN17, SHIN18 and SHIN20 to the south-west, with the tallest parts of the existing built form within the Site visible as a landmark above the woodland canopy. Whilst views of the Proposed Development will be available to people in other locations as well, those set out above are intended to be scoped in to the assessment, since they are likely to experience a greater magnitude of change, and/or are considered to be of higher sensitivity than other receptors. This gives them the potential to experience significant effects.	noise barriers, and proper waste management. Visual screening techniques, such as planting, will help to reduce the visibility of the Proposed Development from key viewpoints, particularly from nearby residential areas and public rights of way. The measures implemented for the operational phase include a comprehensive landscape strategy that integrates green infrastructure, such as tree planting and green spaces, to enhance the visual appeal and blend the Proposed Development into the surrounding environment. Existing mature trees and vegetation, particularly along the northern boundary, will be retained and protected, maintaining the scenic quality and providing a natural screen that reduces visual impacts. The design of the buildings will be sensitive to the local context, with careful consideration of scale, massing, and materials to ensure they complement the surrounding landscape and townscape. Buffer zones will be established around sensitive areas, such as the Local Wildlife Site and ancient woodland, to protect these valuable habitats from potential adverse effects. Overall, it is predominantly local visual receptor that are most likely to be affected by the Proposed Development, and there is potential for effective mitigation to be implemented in order to limit adverse effects, so overall significant adverse effects are unlikely.

Part 1 - Question	Part 2 - Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		Part 3 - Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or N/A)	
8. Cultural Heritage / Archaeology				
8.1 Are there any areas or features which are protected for their cultural heritage or archaeological value, or any non-designated classified areas and/or features of cultural heritage or archaeological importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project (including potential impacts on setting, and views to, from and within)? Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	Y	A Grade II Listed lodge to Meteorological Office is located approximately 215 m northeast of the site, and has historical associations with the RAF. The Shire Hall building, while of some historic and communal interest, does not meet the criteria for identification as a designated or non-designated heritage asset. Nores Hill Wood, ancient woodland located to the north-west of the site has been disturbed by past activities, with any remains being of low to negligible heritage significance.	N	The redevelopment would not harm the heritage significance of the Grade II Listed lodge due to the lack of intervisibility, the severed historical association and retention of its heritage interests and setting. The demolition of Shire Hall is not considered a heritage concern as it does not meet the criteria for heritage designation. Due to extensive disturbance by past activities, including agricultural use, RAF camp construction, and the development of Shire Hall, the potential for archaeological remains and paleoenvironmental deposits to be present within the Site is considered very low. Any deposits, features or stray or residual artefacts would have been significantly compromised and are considered to be of at most low heritage significance. With mitigation measures in place, likely significant environmental effects are not anticipated.
9. Transport and Access				
9.1 Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project? 9.2 Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental	Y	There is an existing footpath (SHIN10) running through and adjacent to the site. This footpath provides a route from Whitley Wood Lane to Railton Close, and will be retained and remain unaffected by the Proposed Development. Additionally, there are shared footway/cycleways connecting the site with the wider area, including residential areas to the northeast and south, which provide good pedestrian links to residential areas in all directions.	N	Consideration will be given to potential enhancements to the PRoW to encourage use and benefit existing users. Effects on transport routes are not expected to be significant or likely to cause major issues, generating fewer trips than the existing office development could generate, with good existing bus, pedestrian and cycle links. Additionally, the existing office use will share its peak usage with the surrounding highway network, whereas the types of occupier the Proposed Development will attract typically generate fewer network peak hour trips due to differing shift patterns; this is particularly true of any businesses operating 24/7.

Part 1 - Question	Part 2 - Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		Part 3 - Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or N/A)	
problems, which could be affected by the project?		The site is well located for access to the M4 J11 via the B3270, which could be susceptible to congestion, particularly during peak hours. There was an internal bus stop with a limited service on one of the park and ride routes (603), but this service has been amended and no longer serves the site. Another bus stop on Shinfield Road provides more frequent services, which could be impacted by increased traffic from the development.		Effects on public access routes are not expected to be significant. Instead, the Proposed Development may potentially enhance these routes. The Project is designed to minimise its impact on the surrounding transport network, and promote sustainable travel. With mitigation measures in place, likely significant environmental effects are not anticipated.
10. Land Use				
10.1 Are there existing land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project? E.g. housing, densely populated areas, industry / commerce, farm/agricultural holdings, forestry, tourism, mining, quarrying, facilities relating to health, education, places of worship, leisure /sports / recreation.	Y	The residential areas in close proximity to the Site include Pascal Crescent, Cirrus Drive, Greenwich Road, and Grebe Court.	N	Establishing landscape buffer zones with native vegetation and retaining significant trees will help screen the Proposed Development. Replanting schemes with native species will restore the visual context post-construction. Building designs will blend with the local context, and physical screening structures will block views of the construction site. Best practices during construction will minimise disturbances through noise, air and light, and monitoring will ensure the effectiveness of these measures.
10.2 Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Y	Future land use plans around Shinfield Park include the South of the M4 Strategic Development Location (SDL), which aims to deliver a sustainable mixed-use development by 2026, featuring around 2,500 dwellings, employment and retail facilities, and green infrastructure. As the connection to this proposed future land use is severed by the M4 corridor, there are not expected to be any affects from the Proposed Development.	N	N/A

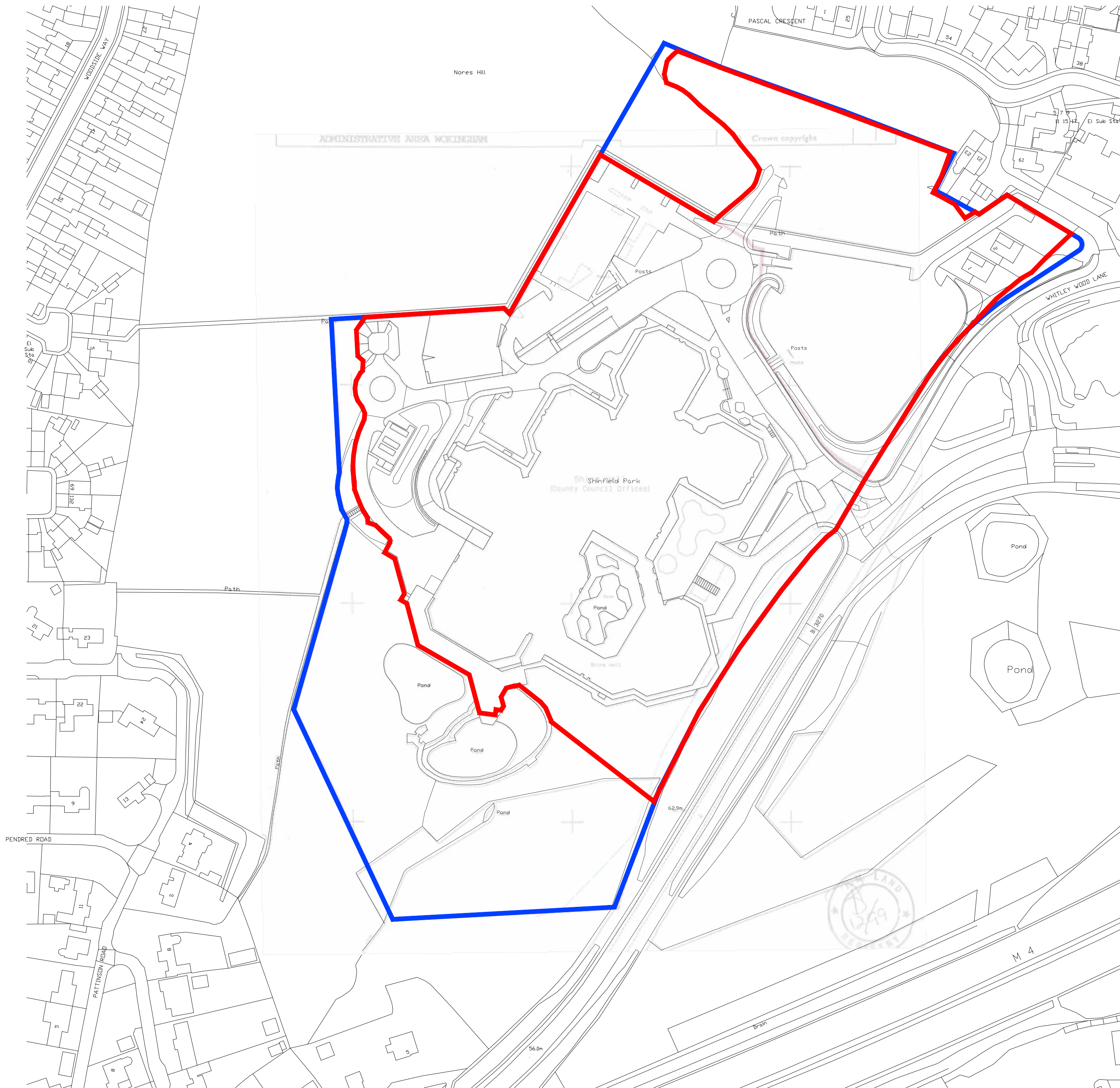
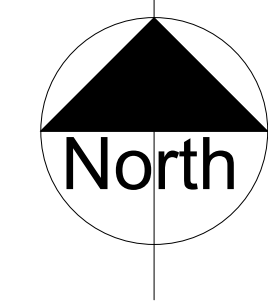
Part 1 - Question	Part 2 - Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		Part 3 - Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or N/A)	
11. Land Stability and Climate				
11.1 Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	N	Ground investigations indicate no high risk of earthquakes, alongside no evidence of significant subsidence issues onsite. The site slopes from north to south, but its topography and geological conditions not indicating a high risk of landslides. The Site is within Flood Zone 1, with limited susceptibility to surface water flooding and remaining unaffected by extreme climatic conditions.	N	The Site is considered to be relatively stable and not prone to significant environmental problems related to geological or climatic conditions. Regular monitoring of ground conditions will detect any early signs of subsidence or instability, and include periodic geotechnical surveys and inspections. The development will be designed taking into consideration ground conditions to further reduce the risk of any ground stability issues. Measures will be in place to manage surface water runoff, including the design and implementation of sustainable drainage systems which include allowing for the effects of climate change. To prevent erosion, use of silt fences, sediment traps, and stabilising exposed soil areas with vegetation or other ground cover.
12. Cumulative Effects				
12.1 Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulation of impacts during the construction/operation phase?	Y	Future land use plans around Shinfield Park include the South of the M4 Strategic Development Location (SDL), which aims to deliver a sustainable mixed-use development by 2026, featuring around 2,500 dwellings, employment and retail facilities, and green infrastructure. As the connection to this proposed future land use is severed by the M4 corridor, there are not expected to be any affects from the Proposed Development.	N	N/A
Transboundary Effects				
13.1 Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects?	N	N/A	N/A	

4 Conclusion

- 4.1.1 The Proposed Development is considered to fall under the following part of the EIA Regulations:
- Schedule 2 Section 10(a): industrial estate development projects. The thresholds set out in Column 2 of the table is that:
 - The area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectares.
- 4.1.2 At 5.5 hectares, the Site falls above the indicative criteria and the third screening threshold.
- 4.1.3 The screening assessment provided has identified that the principal potential for environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development are localised and temporary impacts during demolition and construction. As set out in **Table 2**, none of these effects are considered to have the potential to be significant in the context of the EIA Regulations. All effects (significant or otherwise) would be minimised through careful site design, best practice construction measures and by implementing appropriate mitigation.
- 4.1.4 The Proposed Development is therefore not considered to constitute EIA development as defined by the EIA Regulations. We look forward to receiving your Screening Opinion within three weeks as prescribed in the EIA Regulations.

Appendix A Site Location Plan

NOTES:
Copyright Chetwoods (Birmingham) Limited. No implied licence exists.
Contractors must verify all dimensions on site before commencing any work or shop drawings. This drawing is not to be scaled. Use figured dimensions only.
Subject to statutory approvals and survey.
Building areas are liable to adjustment over the course of the design process due to the ongoing construction detailing developments.
Please note the information contained within this drawing is solely for the benefit of the employer and should not be relied upon by third parties.
The CDM hazard management procedures for the Chetwoods aspects of the design of this project are to be found on the "Chetwoods - Hazard Analysis and Design Risk Assessment" and/or drawings. The full project design teams comprehensive set of hazard management procedures are available from the Principle Designer appointed for the project.



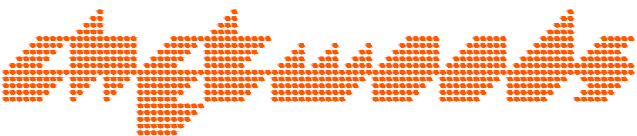
P1 PLANNING ISSUE 18/12/24 SKT

Rev	Revision Description	Date	Author/Reviewer
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PLANNING

32 Frederick Street,
Birmingham, B1 3HH

+44 (0)121 234 7500
www.chetwoods.com



Project

SHINFIELD PARK
READING

Client

WRENBRIDGE

Drawing Title

SITE LOCATION PLAN

Scale	Size	Drawn	Checked	Date
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1:1250	A1	SKT	TM	18/12/24
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Project	Originator	Zone	Level	Type	Rate	Number	Rev
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