

**SOUTH WEST MILTON KEYNES**

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCOPING REPORT**



**January 2013**

**Prepared by: Brian Flynn MA MRTPI**

**Januarys, York House, Dukes Court, 54-62 Newmarket Road, Cambridge, CB5 8DZ**

**Tel: 01223 326823 Fax: 01223 329346 email: [brian@januarys.co.uk](mailto:brian@januarys.co.uk)**



## CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION .....	1
2.	OUR APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT .....	3
3.	PROJECT DESCRIPTION .....	5
4.	SITE LOCATION AND OUTLINE OF EXISTING CONDITIONS .....	7
5.	PROPOSED SCOPE OF EIA.....	9
6.	THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT .....	27
7.	PROJECT PROGRAMME AND CLIENT TEAM .....	36

### ACCOMPANYING PLANS:

Drawing SWMK03/002/B Site Context Plan

Drawing SWMK03-003 Red Line Boundary

Drawing SWMK03/003/B Illustrative Masterplan



## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Scoping Report sets out the likely scope of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process for the proposed mixed use development at South West Milton Keynes. The site is located within the administrative boundary of Aylesbury Vale District Council, but is immediately adjacent to the Milton Keynes Council boundary.

1.2 Regulation 13 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 allows an applicant that intends to submit an EIA application to seek a 'scoping opinion' from the relevant local planning authority. The purpose of this Scoping Report is to obtain a formal opinion from Aylesbury Vale District Council on what should be included in the Environmental Statement for the planning application. It forms the basis for discussion with the relevant authorities and consultees on the scope of the Environmental Statement.

1.3 Regulation 13 requires the following information to be submitted with the scoping opinion, as follows:

- a plan sufficient to identify the land;
- a brief description of the nature and purpose of the development and of its possible effects on the environment; and
- such other information or representations as the person making the request may wish to provide or make;

1.4 This Scoping Report contains the required information and identifies the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed development so that these issues can be assessed as part of the EIA process.

- 1.5 It is worth noting at the outset that the proposed development is a significantly revised scheme to that submitted in April 2010 – AVDC Application Ref. 10/00891/AOP. The application site area is smaller and the quantum of development has been substantially reduced.
- 1.6 The 2010 application related to a mixed use sustainable urban extension for 5,311 dwellings. The application was subject to a Scoping Opinion and a full Environmental Statement was prepared for the application. This means that a substantial amount of detailed environmental information already exists for the site; in some cases this baseline evidence remains relevant with minor updating, whereas other time sensitive evidence such as ecology will need to be updated for this Environmental Statement.
- 1.7 A substantial amount of environmental information was gathered from statutory agencies when the Environmental Statement for the previous scheme was prepared and discussions were held with those same organisations e.g. Environment Agency, Highways Agency, Buckinghamshire County Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council and Milton Keynes Council. We anticipate that similar discussions will take place for this proposed development as the project progresses.
- 1.8 The proposed development is described in full in **Section 3**.
- 1.9 The context of the site is shown on Drawing SWMK03/002/B; and a site location (red line boundary) plan is provided on Drawing SWMK03-003. A draft illustrative master plan showing the proposed disposition of uses within the application site and the associated draft land use budget is provided on Drawing SWMK03/003/B.

## 2. OUR APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2.1 The EIA is part of the design process. The aim of the EIA process is to identify 'significant' environmental effects during the construction and operational phase of the development and to reduce or remove the severity of those effects through the design process. Mitigation measures could be incorporated into the proposed development to address any 'significant' environmental effects. It is also possible that development could provide positive environmental effects by including enhancement measures.

2.2 The assessment process will involve the following stages:

- i. to scope works to be assessed;
- ii. to identify assumptions and deficiencies in available data;
- iii. to identify sensitive receptors and resources;
- iv. to identify the impact of development those receptors and resources;
- v. to identify mitigation measures to address 'significant' effects; and
- vi. to identify residual significant effects following mitigation.

### **Assessment Method and Terminology**

2.3 The assessment process will use the term 'impact' to identify the change that a process will create over a specified period of time. For example, construction machinery will result in an increase in local noise levels while in use. This change is the impact of the activity. The term 'effect' will describe the outcome of the assessment of an impact upon a receptor. Following the same example, the impact of noise from the use of construction machinery would be assessed for its effect upon a receptor.

2.4 For any effect to be '**significant**' it must exceed a nationally recognised threshold. Where such norms do not exist, the experience of the assessor is used to determine the significance threshold. Effects falling below the threshold are termed 'non-significant effects.'

- 2.5 Above the threshold a simple matrix comparing the severity of the impact upon the sensitivity of the receptor will be used. The magnitude of the impact will wherever possible be based upon a measurable element but will also include factors such as duration, timing and seasonality. The sensitivity element will include the number and type of receptor.
- 2.6 The significance of the impact will be related to four terms, namely, 'Severe', 'Major', 'Moderate' and 'Low'. Individual specialisms have assessment guidelines developed by professional bodies, e.g. the Landscape Institute and IEEM. These guidelines utilise matrices for significance assessment, where appropriate these guidelines will be modified to provide the standardisation of terms used in this assessment.
- 2.7 All effects will be assessed for significance based on agreed mitigation measures being in place. Some impacts cannot be directly mitigated and therefore compensatory measures may be required to offset the predicted adverse effects. Where such measures are proposed these will be described and taken into account in the assessment of significant effects.

### 3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 The application site is located to the south west of Milton Keynes, within Aylesbury Vale District. The principle of an urban extension to the south west of Milton Keynes has emerged from a series of studies over the last twenty years and which have consistently identified the site at SWMK as a suitable and sustainable location for development.

3.2 The overarching principle of the proposed development is that it should be viewed as an extension of MK, which reflects the City's design principles and standards. The draft description of the proposed development is as follows:

*'Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for access for a mixed-use sustainable urban extension on 139 Ha of land to the south west of Milton Keynes, comprising the following:*

- *up to 1,855 mixed tenure homes (C3) on 53 Ha of land;*
- *an employment area (B1, B2 & B8) of 7 Ha;*
- *a mixed use local centre of 1.23 Ha;*
- *provision of 2.5 Ha of land to provide education facilities comprising a primary school with ancillary early years provision;*
- *ground remodelling;*
- *multi-functional green infrastructure including: parkland, sports and recreational facilities; play areas, wildlife areas, a range of strategic open spaces including new landscaping and allotments; foul and surface water drainage networks (including SUDS and lakes);*

- *associated highway infrastructure (including an extension to the V1 grid road, primary streets, residential streets, pedestrian footpaths and cycle routes); and*
- *public transport infrastructure, car and cycle parking for all uses.'*

3.3 An overall draft land use budget for SWMK is included on Drawing SWMK03/003/B.

## **4. SITE LOCATION AND OUTLINE OF EXISTING CONDITIONS**

4.1 The scheme, as shown on SWMK03/003/B, is located to the east of Whaddon Road, to the south of the A421 and to the north of the Oxford to Bletchley railway line. It is at the western edge of Far Bletchley,

4.2 The broader context for the site is provided by Milton Keynes to the north east and the Vale of Aylesbury with its dispersed settlement pattern to the south and west. Newton Longville is the closest settlement to the application site and lies approximately 0.5km to the south.

### **Current Condition**

4.3 The site is primarily agricultural land and is broadly subdivided by the Weasel Lane ridge into two segments; north and south. The site is typified by gently undulating fields of differing sizes the majority of which are delineated by hedgerows and isolated trees.

4.4 The application site contains two groups of existing farm buildings – and surrounds the existing buildings and dwelling at New Leys and Dagnall House off Weasel Lane.

4.5 Weasel Lane – an unclassified track and bridleway – crosses the site in an east to west direction. A section of the Milton Keynes Boundary Walk also crosses the eastern part of the site, in a north to south direction, which provides a link to Newton Longville.

4.6 There are a number of small ditches and isolated ponds across the site which are associated with the current agricultural use of the site.

### **Future Baseline**

4.7 As part of the overall assessment, it is important to determine likely future baseline conditions against which the impact of the proposed development will be assessed. In

- order to do this it is necessary to take account of any changes which are likely to occur in the local land use within the surrounding area.
- 4.8 Aylesbury Vale District Council is in the process of preparing a Local Plan for the area – the Vale of Aylesbury Plan. Consultation took place on the draft Vale of Aylesbury Plan between December 2011 and January 2012. The Council then decided to split the Vale of Aylesbury Plan into three parts: Strategy; Delivery (Development Management); and, Allocations. In October 2012 the Council approved a pre-submission version of the Strategy Document. It is understood that the Council is now waiting for the Government to revoke the South East Regional Strategy before formally consulting on the Strategy Document. In due course the Council will prepare and consult on the Delivery and Allocations document. It is clear that the policy context in Aylesbury Vale will change during the design and delivery phase of the project.
- 4.9 Newton Longville and its environs is not planned to change dramatically during the delivery phase of this project. However, the land to the north of SWMK, known as Tattenhoe Park has an extant and implementable planning permission and adopted development brief for a range of 1,310 mixed tenure homes, similarly there is extant planning permission for close to 2,000 dwellings at Newton Leys east of Newton Longville. As appropriate these changes will be considered as part of the assessment.
- 4.10 The agricultural land within the study area is under the control of the prospective applicants. As such, it is unlikely that the current land use will change significantly ahead of the proposed development.

## 5. PROPOSED SCOPE OF EIA

5.1 The 'significant' topics that require consideration as part of the assessment process are:

- Archaeology and Cultural Heritage;
- Agricultural Land;
- Ecology (flora and fauna);
- Landscape Character and Visual Resources;
- Hydrology and Drainage;
- Traffic, Movement and Access;
- Air Quality;
- Noise;
- Socio-Economic Issues;
- Services and Utilities; and
- Interactive and Cumulative Impacts.

5.2 For each of these topics we highlight the potential impacts, the potential resources or receptors that may be affected, potential mitigation measures and the assessment methodology.

### **Archaeology and Cultural Heritage**

#### Potential Impacts

5.3 The proposed development has the potential to affect the setting of Newton Longville.

#### Resources or Receptors

5.4 The Milton Keynes and the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Records (HER) have been studied. A geophysical survey of the site has been undertaken. This comprised a recorded magnetic susceptibility survey of the whole site followed by a c. 20% sample detailed gradiometer survey. This revealed foci of anomalies that have been

interpreted as indicating the presence of former prehistoric/Romano-British settlement/occupation and the extensive remains of former medieval ridge and furrow.

#### Design Mitigation

- 5.5 The prehistoric/Romano-British remains recorded within the site are considered to be of local significance and therefore are not a constraint on the design of the proposed development. However, the presence of these remains will be taken into account in the design of the proposed scheme.

#### Potential Significant Effects

- 5.6 It is concluded that at this stage that due to the topography of the site and previously undertaken work in this area there is the potential for remains of Prehistoric and Roman activity within the site.
- 5.7 It is considered that the potential for further as yet unrecorded remains cannot be discounted, although these finds are not likely to preclude development.
- 5.8 Newton Longville formerly the three hamlets of London End, Westbrook End and Moor End were part of the Manor of Neutone which was gifted to Walter de Gifford shortly after the Battle of Hastings.
- 5.9 During the Medieval era a great deal of building took place and indeed some of the older properties in the village are from this era of settlement expansion. Consequently, it is considered that the potential for medieval finds cannot be discounted, although these finds are not likely to preclude development.

#### Outline of Assessment Methodology

- 5.10 The information gathered from the HER and the geophysical survey data will be used to assess and define any significant impacts on potential archaeological or cultural

heritage resources by the proposed development and to recommend appropriate more detailed mitigation strategies where, following discussions, they are considered to be appropriate.

## **Agricultural Land**

### Potential Impacts

5.11 The potential impacts of the proposal on agricultural land include:

- the loss of agricultural land as a national or local resource;
- the impact on farm viability;
- severance of land;
- temporary impacts due to construction dust on a sensitive crop;
- effect on land drainage patterns; and
- degradation and loss of soil resource.

### Resources or Receptors

5.12 The site has been subject to an Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey which was carried out on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF – now replaced by DEFRA). This assessment found that the site comprises predominately Grade 3b land i.e. non “best and most versatile agricultural land” with patches of Grade 3a.

5.13 There are gaps in the MAFF survey of the site and these relate to areas where access could not be obtained at the time of survey, including limited areas of woodland / hedgerow along Weasel Lane, residential homes, the converted farm complex and the raised embankments and cuttings abutting the railway.

5.14 The development of the site will affect the existing farming businesses.

5.15 Sub-surface field drains could be present in some areas and these will need to be investigated.

- 5.16 No crops, including soft fruit, within or within the environs of the site are highly sensitive to dust.

#### Design Mitigation

- 5.17 The site boundary follows existing field boundaries and so avoids the fragmentation of any single field into smaller units.
- 5.18 A soil management strategy will be included as part of the ES with the aim of beneficially reusing the soil resource within the development. There will be a particular emphasis on conserving the topsoil.

#### Potential Significant Effects

- 5.19 A preliminary assessment of the likely significant impacts on agriculture indicates that effects may include a small loss of “best and most versatile agricultural land” and the loss of arable and pasture land to the occupying farm businesses.

#### Outline of Assessment Methodology

- 5.20 The existing MAFF ALC survey which covers the entire site will be relied upon.
- 5.21 Initial interviews with the managers of occupying farm businesses have indicated that three farming business will be affected. However, all of this is either on insecure tenancies, is insignificant in terms of the percentage of land lost from their total farmed area or has a minimal impact on a contracting farm business. The assessment will consequently include details relating to the size and nature of the agricultural enterprises utilizing the site and the effect upon them of the loss of the site. Both the ALC and farming circumstances baseline assessments and the assessment of effects will be undertaken in accordance with the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012).

## **Ecology**

### Potential Effects

- 5.22 The proposed development has the potential to directly affect habitats and species and also indirectly affect populations, found within and utilising the site. Similarly, the proposal has the theoretical potential to affect protected, notable or biodiversity action plan species.

### Resources and Receptors

- 5.23 A substantial amount of ecological survey work was undertaken for the previous application, including an initial desk study, a full season of fieldwork and consultation with relevant environmental organisations. Therefore, the ecological potential of the site is already well known, although the existing data will be reviewed and updated in 2013 for this application.
- 5.24 The desk survey collated and reviewed baseline ecological data to identify known ecological constraints such as statutory or non-statutory designations, or known sites for protected species. This information will be reviewed and where necessary, organisations re-consulted to ascertain up-to-date information.

#### Consultees included:

- Environment Agency (West Area Office);
- Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Environmental Records Centre;
- Buckinghamshire Badger Group;
- Buckinghamshire Bat Group;
- Buckinghamshire Bird Recorder Group; and
- BSBI Vice-County Recorder.

- 5.25 Natural England's "Nature on the Map" and the Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) websites were used, as recommended by Natural England. In addition, background information concerning any protected, rare or notable species within the vicinity of the site will be reviewed on the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) database.
- 5.26 Habitat survey work has been updated and followed the Extended Phase 1 survey methodology, as recommended by Natural England, whereby the habitat types present are identified and mapped, together with an assessment of the species composition of each habitat.
- 5.27 Hedgerows on key areas of the site have been the subject of an initial assessment under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 in order to assess whether hedgerows would be likely or unlikely to qualify as 'important' under the 'Wildlife and Landscape' Regulations. 25 of the 42 hedgerows identified were found to qualify, mainly due to their location adjacent to public rights of way.
- 5.28 Faunal activity was recorded during the previous survey work with specific attention paid to any potential use of the site by protected species, species listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act as species of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity, or other notable species. In addition, specific survey work was undertaken for the presence of Great Crested Newt, Badger, bats, breeding and overwintering birds and common reptiles.
- 5.29 A number of different habitats were identified within the site including: semi-improved grassland, improved grassland, recolonizing ground, scrub, hard standing, buffer planting, grassland, arable, water bodies, hedgerows, woodland, mature trees and buildings.

5.30 The nearest statutory designated nature conservation site is Howe Park Wood SSSI, which lies some 1.5km to the north of the site. The nearest non-statutory nature conservation sites are:

- the County Wildlife Sites of Thrift, Broadway and Salden Wood (CWS), which lie to the north and south of the application site;
- the Biological Notification Sites of the disused railway to the south west and the south of the site;
- the Milton Keynes Woodland Corridor (MKWC) of Bottledump Roundabout and northwards along the North Buckinghamshire Way; and
- the Milton Keynes Wetlands Corridor (MKWC) along the Tattenhoe Brook to the north of the site.

#### Potential Significant Effects

5.31 Based on the previous survey work, the potential effects appear to be limited to those on the CWS and BNS sites which abut the northern and southern boundaries of the application site and to Great Crested Newt which is known to use a pond located adjacent to the north of the proposal area. Further survey work is ongoing and may identify other features, habitats or species of interest. To assess the level of effects, a formal ecological appraisal will be undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process.

#### Outline Assessment Methodology

5.32 The approach to the ecological assessment will be based upon the principles set out in the 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the United Kingdom' published by the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM), 'Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment' which is produced by the Institute of Environmental Assessment in conjunction with more recent publications such as 'Biodiversity and Environmental Assessment: A Good Practice Guide for Road Schemes' (Bryon, H 2000),

Developing Naturally (Oxford, M 2000), A handbook for 'Scoping Projects' (Environment Agency, 2002) and recent journal articles published by the IEEM.

5.33 The overarching philosophy of the adopted approach in these publications and the intended ecological assessment of the proposal is:

- to avoid significant reductions in biodiversity; and
- to enhance biodiversity where practicable.

### **Hydrology and Drainage**

#### Potential Impacts

5.34 Development of the site will alter the way in which water can infiltrate or run off the land. Potential impacts include:

- reduction in existing water quality;
- changes in local drainage patterns;
- impact on habitat (see also ecology);
- affect on flow rates within surface watercourses; and
- increased theoretical potential for localised flooding.

#### Resources and Receptors

5.35 The EIA will include a Flood Risk Assessment which examines the effect of the proposed development on the existing hydrology and drainage of the site, in particular Tattenhoe Brook.

#### Design Mitigation

5.36 Following consultation with the Environment Agency and the Internal Drainage Board, the development will incorporate a variety of sustainable drainage systems. These will attenuate peak flows of surface water out from the site, by promoting appropriate SuDS measures within the area.

- 5.37 They will also improve the quality of water discharged from the development to protect the downstream water quality environment, by guarding against the risk of accidental spillages and treating where necessary the surface water outflows from the site.

#### Potential Significant Effects

- 5.38 Potentially significant effects upon Tattenhoe Brook and flood risk have been identified. Hydrology and Drainage are therefore scoped into the EIA process.

#### Outline of Assessment Methodology

- 5.39 A hydrology baseline will be collated based upon desk study of existing hydrological data, consideration of Milton Keynes Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on this issue and discussions with the Environment Agency and the Internal Drainage Board. Additionally, it will use an approved methodology, such as the Flood Estimation Handbook.
- 5.40 The assessment will consider the effects of the proposed development on surface and groundwater flows and water quality during construction and operation. Where adverse effects are identified, mitigation measures will be recommended to minimize these effects.
- 5.41 If appropriate, a Code of Practice will be developed, specifying any measures that should be implemented during construction. These measures will include detention basins within the site and a strategically sited downstream storm water attenuation lake and pollution control systems.

## **Landscape Character and Visual Resources**

### Potential Impacts

- 5.42 Development of the site will change the landscape and visual character of the area. It will therefore represent a potential impact in terms of change to the landscape and visual amenity of the area.

### Resources and Receptors

- 5.43 The site and the surrounding agricultural land fall within the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands character area (No. 88) as defined by the Countryside Agency and English Nature Character Map of England (1996).

### Design Mitigation

- 5.44 The overall design will seek to incorporate appropriate measures to limit construction and operational impacts to sensitive landscape and visual receptors.

### Potential Significant Effects

- 5.45 There are potential significant effects of the development in terms of the visual and landscape issues and these have been scoped into the EIA process.

### Outline of Assessment Methodology

- 5.46 The impact assessment methodology to be used in the preparation of this study will be based on the following guidance:

- ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Second Edition’, Landscape Institute (LI) and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) 2002 – the Guidelines are due to be updated shortly and the latest advice will be referred to in the EIA;
- ‘Landscape Character Assessment’, The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (CAX 84) 2002; and

- 'Preparation of Environmental Statement/Planning Projects that require Environmental Assessment; Good Practice Guide', DoE 1995.

5.47 The extent of the Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) was determined for the previous application through the use of computer software with external publicly accessible viewpoints towards the site assessed and recorded. This has provided a first level sieve in determining the viewpoints against which the impact will be assessed.

5.48 Sensitive viewpoint locations are to be agreed with Aylesbury Vale District Council. Where appropriate, photomontages of prospective views will be produced as part of the EIA.

### **Traffic, Movement and Access**

#### Potential Impacts

5.49 The proposed development of approximately 1,855 dwellings with ancillary employment, educational and community facilities will generate additional traffic both during the construction and operational phases.

#### Resource or Receptors

5.50 Receptors include residential properties in the Newton Longville, Mursley, Far Bletchley, Tattenhoe and Tattenhoe Park. In relation to the local highway network receptors will include the following:

- Whaddon Road;
- Drayton Road;
- A421 (H8);
- A5 (T) A4146 junction;
- Stoke Hammond By-pass;
- Snelshall Street (V1);

- Tattenhoe Street (V2);
- Fulmer Street (V3);
- Childs Way (H6);
- Chaffron Way (H7);
- Standing Way (H8);
- Groveway (H9);
- Bletcham Way (H10);
- Junction 13 of the M1 motorway;
- the local redway system; and
- local footpaths.

#### Design Mitigation

- 5.51 The final design of the scheme will be public transport focused, (seeking to encourage modal shift – the strategy will include linking any public transport solutions, with facilities in Milton Keynes), incorporate measures to reduce the impact of the road traffic generated and seek to maximise the use of non-motorised forms of movement.

#### Potential Significant Effects

- 5.52 The proposed development has the potential to have a significant effect on the local highway network. In order to determine the level of such an effect, a transport assessment will be undertaken.

#### Outline of Assessment Methodology

- 5.53 Existing traffic baseline data will be obtained from the Milton Keynes Council strategic model. This is standard practice as the model has been developed to cover the area of influence of the development.

5.54 The assessment methodology for predicting generation of traffic by the proposed development will be agreed with the appropriate highways authorities. The work will be undertaken in line with the Guidance on Transport Assessments and mitigation measures will consider the Council's requirements in terms of the operation of road junctions and the highway network.

### **Air Quality**

#### Potential Impacts

- 5.55 The potential impacts of the proposed development on air quality are:
- Dust complaints and elevated concentrations of airborne particles (PM<sup>10</sup>) during construction;
  - Increased concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and PM<sup>10</sup> arising from the development traffic; and
  - The suitability of the site for sensitive uses given the high traffic flows on the nearby A421 and the Bletchley landfill site.

#### Resource or Receptors

5.56 The receptors will include sensitive uses such as homes and schools.

#### Design Mitigation

5.57 The final design of the scheme will be orientated around a public transport strategy, the disposition and density of development will reflect sensitive areas of the site, with particular regard to the A421 and the Bletchley Landfill Site.

#### Potential Significant Effects

5.58 The proposed development has the potential to have a significant effect upon the amenities of the residents and school children in close proximity of the A421 and the Bletchley Landfill Site.

- 5.59 In order to determine the level of such an effect, an impact assessment will be completed.

#### Outline of Assessment Methodology

- 5.60 The assessment will rely on existing air quality baseline data available for the area. The impact of the construction of the proposed development will be assessed qualitatively, drawing on long term wind speed, wind direction and rainfall data and the location of highly and medium sensitive receptors. This will be with respect to the construction activities to assess the risk of dust complaints and baseline PM<sup>10</sup> concentrations, to assess the risk of the short term national air quality objective being exceeded.
- 5.61 The impact of the operation of the proposed development will be assessed by predicting the change in concentrations of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sup>10</sup> at existing and proposed sensitive receptors as a result of the development traffic. In addition a qualitative assessment of the likely impact of the Bletchley landfill site on the amenity of future residents and users of the proposed development will be assessed taking account of the local authority's odour complaints register, any hydrogen sulphide monitoring currently being undertaken by the Local Authority and discussions with the relevant Environment Agency site inspector.
- 5.62 The details of the assessment methodology for predicting air quality will be agreed with the air quality officers from Aylesbury Vale District Council and Milton Keynes Council and included within the EIA.

#### **Noise**

##### Potential Impacts

- 5.63 The proposed development includes noise sensitive uses such as residential and educational uses. Where these are situated in close proximity of the A421, Whaddon

Road or the East West rail link, the current topography has potential to create an environment that provides a sub-standard environment.

#### Resource or Receptors

- 5.64 Receptors include sensitive uses such as homes and schools within close proximity of the A421 and the East / West Railway.

#### Design Mitigation

- 5.65 The final design of the scheme will be orientated around a master plan layout, the disposition and density of development will reflect sensitive areas of the site, with particular regard to the A421 and the East / West railway.
- 5.66 In addition where opportunities are maximised in relation to public transport solutions and non-motorised user facilities some mitigation of traffic generation may be achieved.

#### Potential Significant Effects

- 5.67 The proposed development has the potential to have a significant effect upon the amenities of the residents and school children in close proximity of the A421 and the East West rail link, if it is reopened.
- 5.68 In order to determine the level of such an effect, an impact assessment will be completed.

#### Outline of Assessment Methodology

- 5.69 For the previous application existing noise baseline data was used and supplemented with site specific new data. The assessment methodology for predicting the impact of noise within the development will be agreed with the appropriate representative from Aylesbury Vale District Council and included within the EIA.

## **Socio-Economic Issues**

### Potential Impacts

- 5.70 The proposed development has the potential to affect local socio-economic issues in two ways. Firstly, the development will provide homes for new residents which will require places of employment and the use of community facilities such as schools, shops and health facilities. Secondly, the site will include new places of employment, a primary school and local shops and facilities which can be used by the planned and existing residents of the locality.

### Resource or Receptors

- 5.71 The primary receptors are the planned and the existing communities in the vicinity of the site and existing community facilities in the vicinity of the site which includes those at Newton Longville, Tattenhoe Park and Far Bletchley.

### Design Mitigation

- 5.72 The development will be designed as a sustainable extension to Milton Keynes with new facilities designed to serve the wider hinterland to limit the need for residents to travel to meet their daily needs.

### Potential Significant Effects

- 5.73 It is considered that the proposed works have the potential to produce significant changes in the local socio-economic situation. Therefore this topic is scoped into the EIA process.

### Outline of Assessment Methodology

- 5.74 The overall aim is to assess the impact of the scheme on the surrounding area, during both the construction and operational phases. The activities will involve:

- defining baseline conditions; and
- identifying relevant data and the existing situation. This will rely on a collation of published socio-economic data and site assessments.

## **Services and Utilities**

### Potential Impacts

- 5.75 The proposed development will generate additional demands on existing infrastructure and services. Additionally, during construction there may be the need to move or interrupt the existing infrastructure.

### Resources or Receptors

- 5.76 Services that the development may have an effect upon include the existing power, telecommunications, water, foul water treatment and waste disposal infrastructure.

### Potential Significant Effects

- 5.77 A potentially significant construction effect could be disruption to the normal operation of existing commercial premises while services to the site area are installed.

### Design Mitigation

- 5.78 Relevant utility companies (Eastern Electricity, British Gas Transco, Anglia Water, British Telecom and NTL) will be consulted regarding the development proposal along with the Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Board, Aylesbury Vale District Council and Milton Keynes Council.
- 5.79 The British Pipeline Agency has a number of pipes that transect the site in a north / south orientation. The master planning of the site will seek to retain in situ these pieces of national infrastructure with appropriate safety distances.

### Outline of Assessment Methodology

- 5.80 Through consultation with the relevant utility companies and authorities, the existing infrastructure baseline will be established. The impact of the proposed development and construction work upon the existing infrastructure capacity and operation will be assessed. Required improvements to the existing services to accommodate the proposed development can then be determined.

### **Interactive and Cumulative Impacts**

- 5.81 This section will consider the predicted residual effects (after mitigation) of individual environmental components upon other aspects, including any cumulative effects. This process will be interactive throughout the EIA process and will depend in the findings of the different studies. Where interactive effects are identified they will also be appraised in relation to any appropriate mitigation proposals.

## **6. THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT**

6.1 We set out below the likely structure of the Environmental Statement.

### **Application Site and Project Description**

The Application Site

Outline of the Development Proposal

Objectives and Justification

Consideration of Alternatives

Design Philosophy

Elements of the Proposal

- housing
- employment
- educational provision
- mixed use areas
- community reserve sites
- structural public open space
- transportation infrastructure
- landscape and nature conservation
- parkland / retained agricultural land

Project Implementation

Ancillary Infrastructure and Works to Utilities

Site Management and Adoption

Construction Programme

### **Archaeology**

Introduction

Assumptions and Technical Deficiencies

Guidance Documents

## Methodology

- data assessment
- statutory and informal consultees

## Significance Criteria

## Existing Site Conditions

- existing features on site

## Potential Impacts of the Proposal

## Mitigation Measures

- additional mitigation measures

## Residual Effects

## **Agricultural Land**

### Introduction

### Assumptions and Technical Deficiencies

### Guidance Documents

## Methodology

- data assessment
- statutory and informal consultees

## Significance Criteria

## Existing Site Conditions

- existing features on site

## Potential Impacts of the Proposal

## Mitigation Measures

## Residual Effects

## **Ecology**

### Introduction

### Assumptions and Technical Deficiencies

### Guidance Documents

## Assessment Methodology

- desk study
- consultation
- habitat survey methodology
- faunal survey methodology

## Significance Criteria

## Existing Ecological Features

## Existing Use of the Site by Wildlife

## Ecological Evaluation

- principles of site evaluation
- designated site evaluation
- evaluation of habitats
- species evaluation – protected species

## BAP species

## Other species

## Potential Impacts of the Proposal

- review of potential impacts and mitigation
- impacts on surrounding habitats
- impacts on other species
- overall impact assessment

## Mitigation Measures

- Tattenhoe Brook

## Residual Effects

## **Landscape Character and Visual Impact**

### Introduction

### Assumptions and Technical Deficiencies

- Zone of Visual Influence

### Guidance Documents

- policy and assessment analysis

#### Methodology

- data assessment
- statutory and informal consultees

#### Significance Criteria

#### Existing Site Conditions

- principal viewpoints
- existing landscape features on Site

#### Landscape and Visual Effects of the Proposed Development

#### Potential Impacts of the Proposal

#### Mitigation Measures

#### Visual Impact Impacts Tables

#### Construction Phase Impacts

#### Residual Effects

- on completion in 2026
- in 2046 – after 20 years

### **Hydrology and Drainage**

#### Introduction

#### Assumptions and Technical Deficiencies

#### Assessment Methodology

#### Significance Criteria

#### Existing Conditions

- flooding
- surface water quality
- ground water

#### Potential Impacts of the Proposal

#### Possible Effects of the Impacts

## Mitigation Measures

- SUDS
- BNS
- CWS

## Sensitivity Tests

## Residual Effects

## **Traffic, Movement and Access Issues**

### Introduction

### Assumptions and Technical Deficiencies

- extent of the assessment
- traffic growth assumptions
- committed development assumptions
- trip attraction related to the proposed development

### Guidance Documents

- standards and guidelines
- compliance with transport planning policy

### Assessment Methodology

### Significance Criteria

### Existing Conditions

- existing access into and around the Application Site
- existing congestion in the vicinity of the Site
- existing public transport
- existing links to the National and local cycle network
- committed development in the vicinity of the Site

### The Proposal

- new public transport routes
- cycling facilities
- pedestrian links

- links to the adjacent road system

#### Potential Impact of the Proposal

- on public transport
- cycle routes
- pedestrian links
- safe routes to school
- on the adjacent road system
- construction traffic
- other impacts

#### Mitigation Measures

#### Residual Effects

### **Air Quality**

#### Introduction

#### Assumptions and Technical Deficiencies

#### Significance Criteria

#### Existing Conditions

- A421
- Whaddon Road
- East / West Railway

#### The Proposal

#### Potential Impacts of the Proposal

#### Mitigation Measures and Residual Effects

### **Noise**

#### Introduction

#### Assumptions and Technical Deficiencies

#### Significance Criteria

#### Existing Conditions

- A421
- Whaddon Road
- East / West Railway

The Proposal

Potential Impacts of the Proposal

Mitigation Measures and Residual Effects

### **Socio-Economic Issues**

Introduction

Assumptions and Technical Deficiencies

Significance Criteria

Existing Conditions

- population characteristics
- local economy
- unemployment
- travel to work patterns
- community facilities (inc health, social services and emergency services)
- educational facilities

The Proposal

- new residents
- new jobs
- new schools
- new local community facilities

Potential Impacts of the Proposal on Local and Wider Facilities

- employment opportunities
- educational opportunities
- local facilities
- wider facilities

Mitigation Measures and Residual Effects

## **Services and Utilities Issues**

Introduction

Assumptions and Technical Deficiencies

Statutory Framework/Guidance Documents

Significance Criteria

Existing Conditions

- Eastern Electricity
- British Gas Transco
- Anglia Water (drinking water and foul water)
- Internal Drainage Board
- British Telecom
- British Pipeline Agency

Potential Impacts of the Proposal

Mitigation Measures

Residual Effects

## **Interactive and Cumulative Issues**

Introduction

Key Residual Effects after Mitigation

- Archaeology
- Ecology
- Hydrology and Drainage
- Landscape and Visual Amenity
- Traffic, Movement and Access
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Socio-Economic Issues
- Services and Utilities

### Interactive and Cumulative Effects

- Amenity
- Natural Resources
- Material Assets

6.2 In addition, the planning application will be supported by the following documents:

- Design and Access Statement;
- Statement of Community Engagement;
- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Retail Impact Assessment;
- Transport Assessment;
- Employment Assessment;
- Health Impact Assessment;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment; and
- Energy Statement.

## **7. PROJECT PROGRAMME AND CLIENT TEAM**

### **Project Programme**

7.1 We have made the following assumptions about the timetable in terms of the delivery of the project.

- Submission of Planning Application – Summer 2013;
- Determination of Application – Spring 2015;
- Site Marketing – Autumn 2015;
- Project Start – Spring 2016;
- First Completions – Autumn 2016;
- Delivery over 10 years (at approximately 200 dwellings/year)
- Project Completion - 2026

### **EIA Project Team**

7.2 The following consultants have been appointed for the EIA element of the planning process.

- Planning – Januarys
- Masterplanning – David Lock Associates
- Landscape Character & Visual Impact – FPCR Environment and Design Ltd
- Ecology – FPCR Environment and Design Ltd
- Arboriculture – FPCR Environment and Design Ltd
- Archaeology & Cultural Heritage – CgMs
- Transport – Pell Frischmann
- Flooding & Drainage – Pell Frischmann
- Noise – Pell Frischmann
- Air Quality – Pell Frischmann
- Services & Utilities – Pell Frischmann
- Energy – Pell Frischmann

- Agricultural Land – Kernon Countryside Consultants
- Socio-Economics – David Lock Associates