



Great Lakes UK Limited

**PROPOSED GREAT WOLF LODGE -
LAND TO THE EAST OF M40 AND
SOUTH OF A4095, CHESTERTON,
BICESTER**

Volume 3: Environmental Statement Non-
Technical Summary



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INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

Great Lakes UK Limited (the Applicant) has submitted a full planning application to Cherwell District Council for a proposed Great Wolf Lodge in Chesterton, Bicester (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development'), on land to the east of the M40 and south of the A4095 (hereafter referred to as the 'Site'). The location and footprint of the Site can be viewed within **Figure 1**.

The planning application seeks permission for redevelopment of the existing 9 holes of the wider 18 hole golf course at Bicester Hotel, Golf and Spa to provide a new leisure resort incorporating waterpark, family entertainment centre, conference facilities and restaurants with associated access, parking and landscaping.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is the assessment of the environmental consequences (both positive and negative) of a project prior to the determination of a planning application by a local planning authority. The statutory requirements for an EIA are set out in the Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017.

The findings of the EIA are reported within the Environmental Statement (ES) which sets out a description of the development, the reasonable alternative options considered in the design development, the existing environmental conditions at the Site and the surrounding area, the likely significant effects on the environment and local communities and the measures proposed to avoid, minimise or reduce these effects.

This document is the Non-Technical Summary of the ES and has been prepared using non-technical language. The ES can be consulted for more information on any of the topics within this Non-Technical Summary.

The EIA has been prepared by a team of experienced and qualified experts.



Figure 1 - Site Location Plan

THE SITE AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

OVERVIEW OF THE EXISTING SITE

The Site is approximately 18.6 hectares in area and is located to the east of the southbound M40 and south of the westbound A4095, in the northern area of the Bicester Hotel Golf and Spa, within the Chesterton Parish of Cherwell District, South Oxfordshire. The extent of the Site on an aerial map is shown in **Figure 2**. The Site is situated approximately 500 metres (m) to the west of the centre of Chesterton village, 3.2 kilometres (km) west of Bicester town centre, and 2.5km from the retail centre known as Bicester Village.

Adjacent to the Site are the existing Bicester Hotel Golf and Spa buildings and the remaining 9 holes of the existing 18 hole golf course. The existing Bicester Hotel Golf and Spa buildings will remain alongside the remaining 9 holes of the golf course, should the Proposed Development be consented and constructed. Access to the existing Bicester Hotel Golf and Spa is via Green Lane (main customer access) and the A4095 (service access). A Public Right of Way (Footpath 161/6/10) also crosses the Site in a north to south-east direction.

The Cherwell Local Plan (2011-2031) supports proposals for new or improved tourist facilities within the Cherwell District that “*demonstrate direct benefit for the local ‘visitor’ economy*” and increase overnight stays and visitor numbers within the District.



Figure 2 – The Site

EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

SOCIO-ECONOMICS

The latest population figures from 2017 confirm that there were 150,000 people living in Cherwell, 3,000 of which were in the local area. Both Cherwell and Oxfordshire have a lower population density than the average for Great Britain. Employment density in the local area (the number of jobs divided by the resident population of working-age) is also lower than the average in Cherwell, Oxfordshire and Great Britain.

There is a strong leisure and tourism industry in the area. There were approximately 2.1 million tourism day trips to Cherwell in 2017, which does not include visits to Bicester Village of which there were 6.6 million.

The Proposed Development is unique to Cherwell and Oxfordshire and would attract a different visitor base than existing leisure facilities, which currently includes seven swimming pools available for community access in Cherwell. There are currently 8 golf courses in Cherwell which all offer 18-hole courses, some with driving ranges. The location of these golf courses means that everyone in Cherwell with access to a car can reach a course within 20 minutes' drive time.

TRANSPORT

The Site is located west of Chesterton and fronts the A4095 to the north, with the M40 to the west. The A4095 is a two-way carriageway operating under the national speed limit of 60mph, from which a new vehicle access will be provided.

There is currently no footway provided on the A4095 in the immediate vicinity of the Site. However, a footway is provided approximately 500 metres to the east of the Site along the A4095, from which there is a network of interconnected footways which provides access into the centre of Chesterton.

A Public Right of Way (Footpath 161/6/10), runs through the Site from Green Lane to the A4095 (see **Figure 3**).

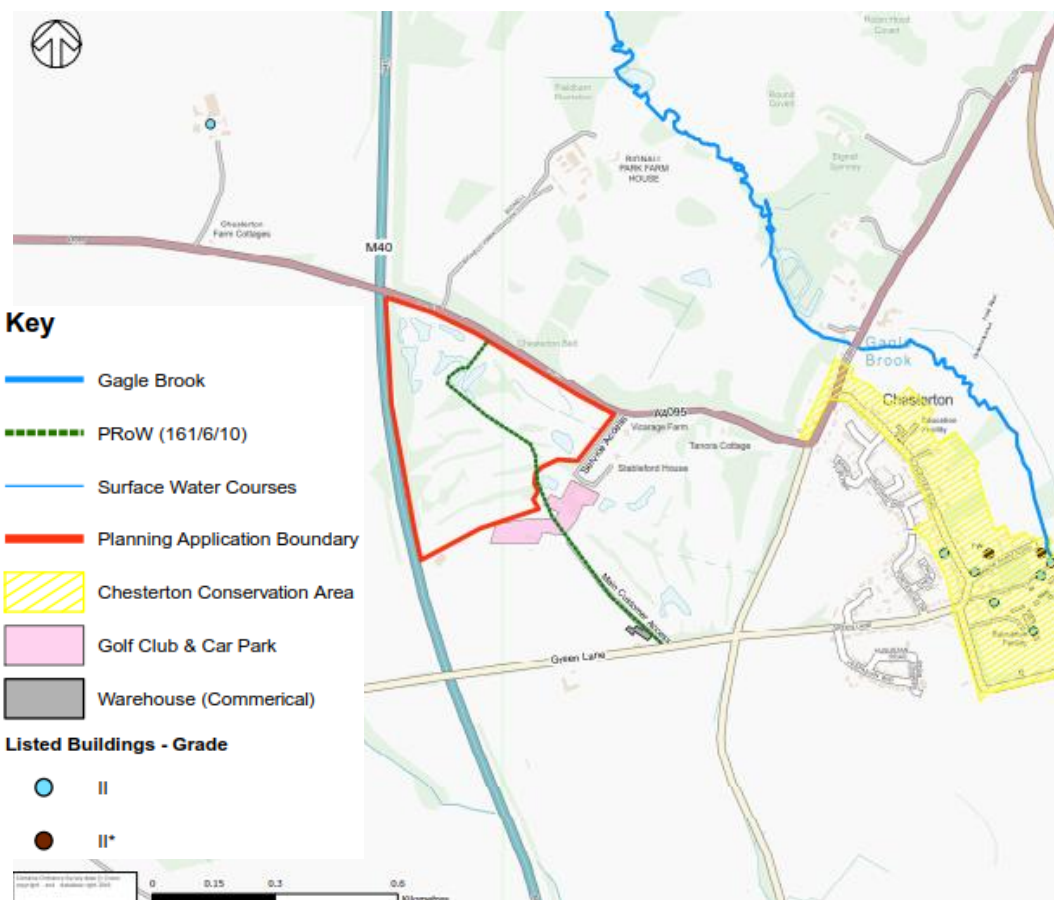


Figure 3 – Features of the Site and the Surrounding Area



There are a range of cycle opportunities in the area around the Site including a shared foot/cycle way alongside Vendee Drive which forms part of a signed cycle route connecting to Bicester town centre and nearby residential areas. National Cycle Network Route 51 runs alongside the A41 Oxford Road south east of the Site and is a traffic-free shared pedestrian cycle route, providing a signed cycle route connecting the Site south towards Wendlebury, Kidlington and Oxford and north towards Bicester Village and Bicester Town Centre.

The nearest bus stop to the Site is located on Alchester Road approximately 700m east of the Site. This bus stop is served by the 21 service which runs once a day from Chesterton to Bicester Town Centre. Additional bus stops are situated in the centre of Bicester along Manorsfield Road which provide services to the wider area.

The nearest train station is Bicester Village Railway Station located approximately 4.6km to the east of the Site. Bicester Village Station is located on the Oxford to London Marylebone line with services operating in each direction every 30 minutes. Bicester North Railway Station is located approximately 4.8km to the north east of the Site and offers connections to London Marylebone, Banbury, Birmingham Moor Street and Snow Hill. Services run up to twice per hour in each direction.

AIR QUALITY

The Site is not currently located within an Air Quality Management Area¹; the closest is approximately 2.7km to the north east of the Site. There are no reports of breaches in national air quality standards within 5km of the Site in recent years and the overall trend shows that pollutant concentrations have been decreasing over the last 5 years.

The closest residential dwellings, Stableford House and Vicarage Farm, are located to the east of the Site. There are other residential dwellings beyond this, with the closest being Tanora Cottage (to the east).

NOISE

A survey of existing noise levels was carried out in March 2019 to measure the existing baseline noise climate across the Site and surrounding area, with monitoring locations representative of the proposed hotel accommodation nearest to the M40, and the nearest residential dwellings

¹ Where air pollution levels are, or are likely to, exceed national air quality objectives.



(Stableford House and Vicarage Farm) to the Site. This concluded that the existing noise climate experienced across the Site and at nearby dwellings is dominated by road traffic noise and natural sounds, such as wind disturbed vegetation.

BIODIVERSITY

The Site is not located within 2km of any ecological designated sites. The Site contains a variety of habitat types of ecological value including ponds, woodland and grasslands.

Surveys to determine the presence of protected species on the Site have been undertaken in 2018 and 2019 which found evidence of bat, badger, breeding birds, reptiles, great crested newts and invertebrates. There is also suitable habitat to support hedgehog.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND BUILT HERITAGE

The Chesterton Conservation Area is located approximately 1km to the east of the Site. There is one registered Park (Middleton Park) and a number of Grade II listed buildings and scheduled monuments within 2km of the Site (see **Figures 3 and 4**). The potential for archaeological remains to survive within the Site is considered to be low for the prehistoric, Roman, Early Historic, medieval and post-medieval periods. There is a greater chance that remains relating to the modern period survive, although these would likely relate to agricultural use of the Site and its subsequent development into a golf course, and are therefore unlikely to represent significant remains.

GROUND CONDITIONS

The Site is located in a predominantly rural area, consisting of farm land and recreational land to the north, south and west. The Site has previously been in use as agricultural land and partly a quarry. The Site is located within an area that is able to easily transmit pollution to groundwater.

Several mounds (approximately 1.2m to 2m high) are located on the Site as part of the golf course. These mounds are understood to have been created with re-worked natural soils; however, one of the mounds located on the northern boundary was noted to have brick and concrete in the material at the surface.

WATER RESOURCES, FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

The Site and the surrounding areas are considered to be at a low risk of flooding from rivers and sea and a low risk of surface water flooding. The Site lies in close proximity to a number of surface water and land drains. The groundwater levels at the Site are high.

There are several water bodies situated within the Site, comprising drainage ditches and engineered ponds, lakes and swamps associated with the golf course, the majority of which are located towards the northern end of the Site.

The closest water body is Gagle Brook which is located approximately 520m to the north-east of the Site, at its closest point (see **Figure 3**).

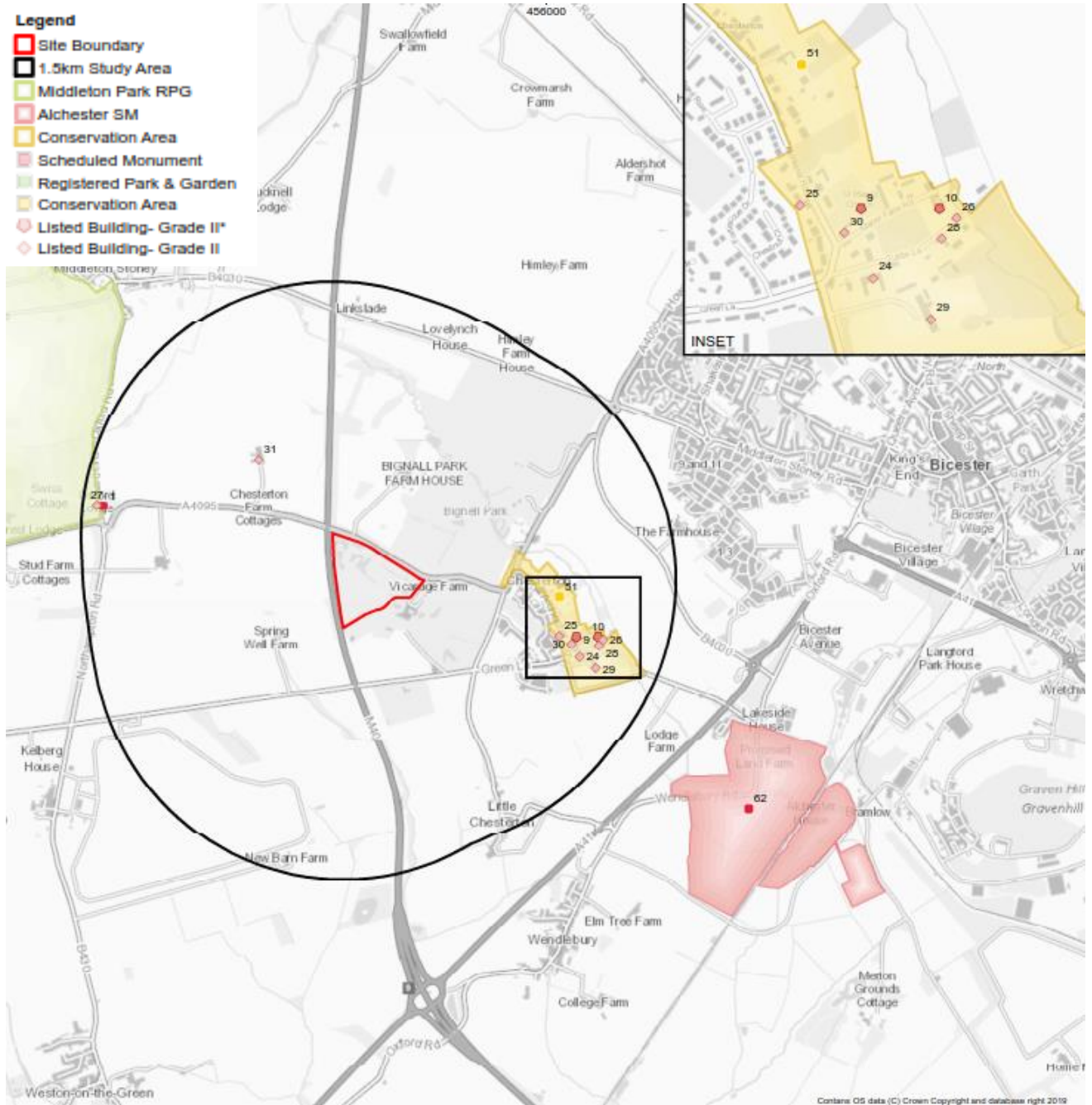


Figure 4 - Designated Heritage Assets

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

The landscape surrounding the Site is relatively flat to the south-east and undulating with gently rising valley slopes to the north-east. The landscape is also well vegetated and the Site is well contained visually by hedgerows and woodland between 4 to 13m tall. The land within the Site area is of typical golf course terrain which includes open space, ponds, mounds and dense woodland

areas. The Site also has a gentle fall from the north-western corner towards the south-eastern boundary, with a change in level of approximately 7m.

A visual appraisal was undertaken in February 2019 to consider the ‘winter’ baseline when vegetation is not in leaf. Further fieldwork was carried out in April and May 2019. Viewpoint locations for the assessment are shown in **Figure 5** and were agreed with Cherwell District Council.

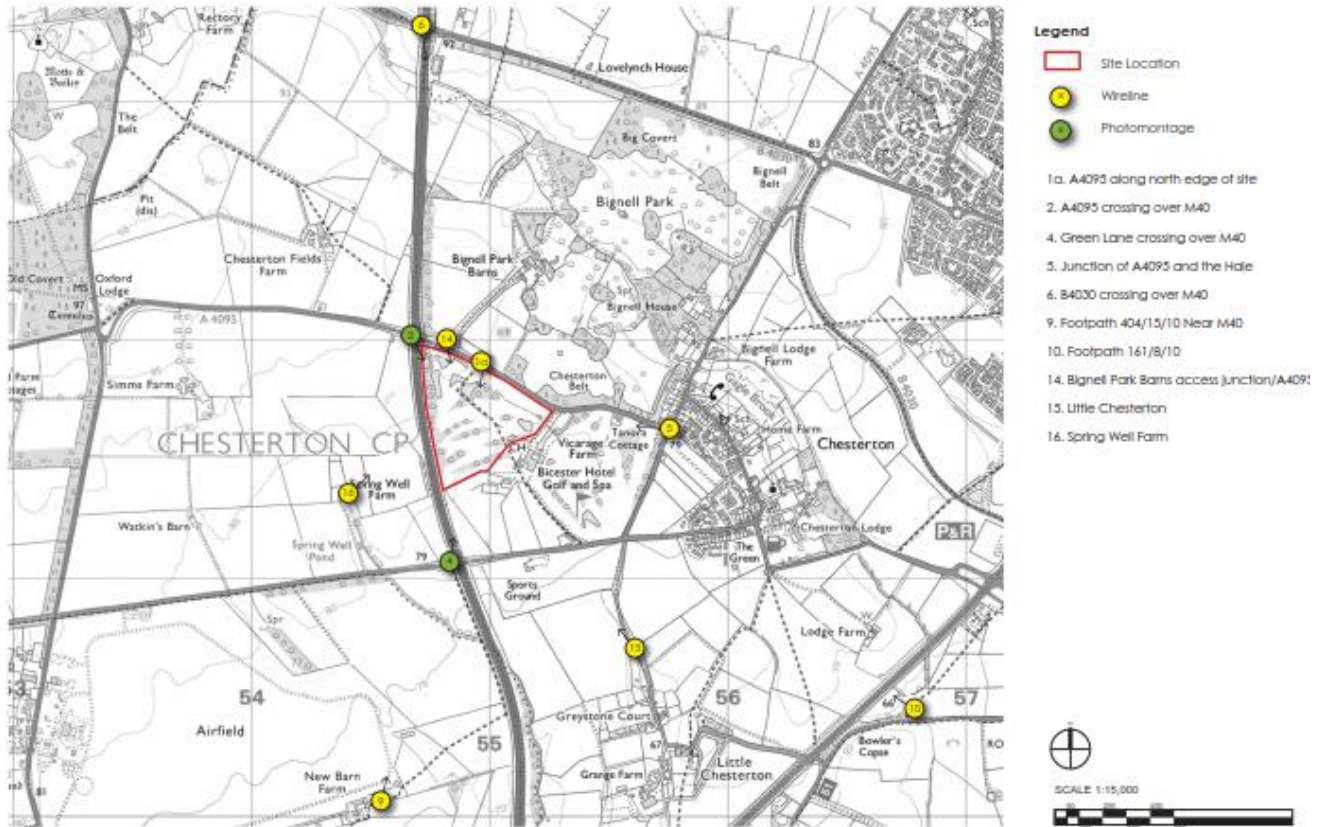


Figure 5 – Viewpoint Location Plan

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

OVERVIEW

The Proposed Development comprises a hotel, waterpark, restaurants, conferencing facilities, family entertainment centre and associated parking and landscaping. **Figure 6** shows a visual illustration of the layout of the Proposed Development and **Figures 7 – 9** show visual illustrations of the proposed hotel, conference centre and water park.

The hotel will comprise 498 rooms, 10% of which are accessible for the disabled. The family entertainment centre will connect the guestrooms to the waterpark and conference centre and will provide an adventure park, food and beverage and merchandise / retail. The waterpark will provide a variety of pools and slides, with the slides to be housed within a Slide Tower protruding from the building.



Figure 6 – Layout of the Proposed Development



Figure 7 – Hotel Concept Design



Figure 8 – Conference Centre Concept Design



Figure 9 – Water Park Concept Design

WHAT ARE THE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS OF VISITORS TO THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT?

PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE ACCESS

The Proposed Development will provide a new shared foot/cycleway along the southern side of the A4095 between the Site and Chesterton, and improved pedestrian crossing facilities including dropped kerbs at the access point to Public Right of Way (Footpath 161/1) to the north of Chesterton, enhancing the pedestrian connection to this route.

The Public Right of Way (Footpath 161/6/10) which crosses the Site in a north to south-east direction, will be diverted around the south-eastern boundary of the Site, as shown in **Figure 10**. A new shared foot/cycleway connection will also be provided between the Site entrance and Chesterton (to the east) and from the Site entrance to the end of the existing public footpath (to the west). Footpaths will connect areas across the Site, between the car park, hotel and nature trail.

Cycle storage and adequate cycle paths will be provided on Site for guests and staff. A total of 80 cycle parking spaces are included within the Proposed Development, 40 of which are short-stay spaces reserved for guests and the remaining 40 long-stay spaces reserved for staff.

VEHICLE ACCESS

Great Wolf Lodge is highly accessible, being close to a M40 exit and adjacent to A4095 road. The Proposed Development will include a new vehicular access T-Junction which will connect to the A4095, as shown in **Figure 10**. The A4095 will be widened to accommodate a right turn lane. This access will be used for both construction traffic and for vehicles when the Proposed Development is operational.

In addition, there will be a shuttle bus service to transport visitors and staff from Bicester North and Bicester Village rail stations and Bicester town centre to the Proposed Development, which aims to reduce the use of private cars.

Service vehicles will use a route around the perimeter of the car park.

Emergency vehicles will have access around the entire perimeter of the buildings.

CAR PARKING

There will be a total of 902 parking spaces provided as part of the Proposed Development, which include 56 disabled accessible parking bays and 90 electrical charging points.

10% of all parking spaces at the Proposed Development will have electrical charging facilities to promote low-carbon travel (with the entire car park being future proofed to enable this percentage to increase as needed to match demand).

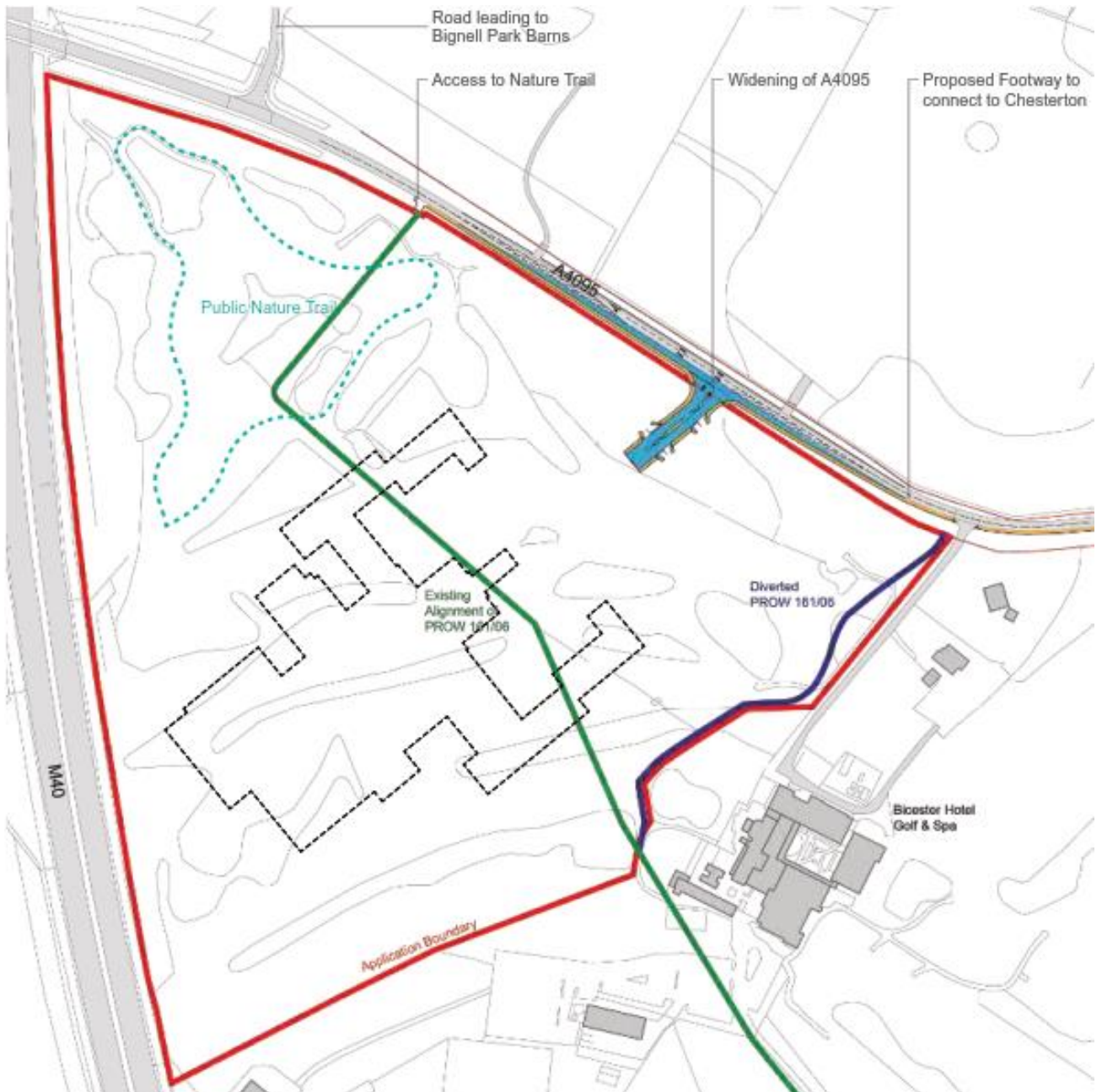


Figure 10 - Proposed Route for the diversion of Public Right of Way 161/6/10

WILL THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PROVIDE ANY OPEN SPACE AND PLANTING?

Six hectares of public parkland, including nature trails, is proposed in the north-western part of the Site. This will comprise a series of paths with interspersed benches. This parkland area will include play space that utilises natural features such as mounding, boulders and fallen logs, in combination



with timber play equipment. This area will be available for use by the general public, as well as guests of the lodge.

The Site is very well visually contained by hedgerows and woodland between 4-13m tall. Taller vegetation is located on the western boundary of the Site. To maximise the natural vegetative screening at the Site, the taller structures of the Proposed Development are to be located on the western side of the Site adjacent to the M40. This reduces the visual effect on properties to the east.

The landscaping and planting proposals for the Proposed Development include the conservation and enhancement of landscape components of value within the existing Site where possible, to include existing waterbodies; large areas of woodland / plantation; boundary vegetation and individual trees. Extensive planting is proposed across the Site, including new woodland planting. Green roofs are proposed on the roof of the new buildings. The Proposed Development also seeks to strengthen connectivity between ecology and landscape, reduce flood risk and enhance visual amenity.

As the habitats created will take time to establish, details of habitat management (e.g. grassland mowing regime) is provided in a Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan, which also includes measures to maintain areas for ecological benefit.

WILL THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT INCLUDE ANY NEW LIGHTING?

The lighting design for the Proposed Development aims to make the Site safe, secure and accessible while minimising light pollution to residents and ecology. The design considers functional illumination and feature illumination. Feature illumination adds pockets of interest and focus across the Site and aids navigation to key locations across the Site at night-time. As discussed below in respect of landscape and visual impacts, the lighting has been specifically designed to ensure it will have minimal impact beyond the Site boundary.

HOW WILL THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PROTECT NATURE?

The Proposed Development will achieve a net gain for biodiversity of 41%. The Proposed Development will retain existing vegetation and ponds where possible, create new valuable habitats and enhance existing habitats to improve their value for wildlife, through planting of native species, sensitive lighting and drainage strategies, dropped kerbs and fence cut-outs to allow fauna to move freely around the site, and installation of bird and bat boxes.

Specific biodiversity management and monitoring measures (e.g. Great Crested Newt monitoring, bat box maintenance, etc.) have been incorporated into a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan for the Site.



HOW WILL THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES?

ENERGY

The scheme has been designed to achieve an energy efficient and sustainable development and includes features such as an innovative heating and cooling system, using Reversible Air Source Heat Pumps and a Water Source Heat Pump which will capture heat that would typically be lost to the atmosphere; the captured heat will be used to contribute towards heating throughout the year. Reversible Air Source Heat Pumps will also generate chilled water and 1,000m² of photovoltaic panels will be provided on the south-facing water park roof to provide a renewable form of energy generation for electricity or hot water. Further details can be found in the Energy and Sustainability Statement.

FLOODING AND DRAINAGE

The Site is of low flood risk and the main flood risk to the Proposed Development is from groundwater flooding to the south east of the Site. This will be managed using a network of land drains installed beneath the proposed car park.

The proposed drainage will offer a reduction in flood risk to all sources.

WATER CONSUMPTION

Annual water consumption will be minimised through the adoption of a number of measures including efficient showers, toilets and wash hand basin taps, water efficient commercial dishwashing and washing machines, a leak detection system and a surface water recycling system.

WHEN WILL THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BE CONSTRUCTED?

It is estimated that the Proposed Development will be constructed over approximately 2 years and will comprise of enabling works, ground and foundation works, frame and envelope works and interior fitout.

ALTERNATIVES AND DESIGN EVOLUTION

Developers are required to provide a description of reasonable alternatives considered (for example different locations, sizes and designs). No reasonable alternative sites have been considered for this Site; a detailed assessment of other sites in and on the edge of ten town centres in the wider area in the Planning Statement has been undertaken to support this conclusion. Different options in respect of the Proposed Development, including the positioning and layout of buildings, the maximum height of buildings, the scale and massing of buildings, the car park layout, access routes, landscaped areas and building façades have been considered during the design evolution. The evolution of the



Proposed Development has been influenced by a number of environmental factors, specifically biodiversity, landscape and traffic and transport.

THE EIA

OVERVIEW

Under the Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017, the Proposed Development is defined as the type and scale of development that requires an EIA. An EIA has been undertaken to meet the requirements of the relevant planning legislation and policy and assess the effects of the Proposed Development on the environment.

The EIA considers impacts during both construction and operation (once completed and occupied) of the Proposed Development. The construction stage assessment looks at temporary activities required for building the Proposed Development and their effects on the environment and local community. During construction, the majority of the Proposed Development's effects would be avoided or mitigated by industry standard practice and control measures which would be implemented through a Construction Management Plan. A Draft Construction Management Plan has been prepared for the planning application and it is anticipated that this will be secured through planning conditions. The operational stage assessment looks at the permanent presence of the Proposed Development on the environment and local community.

The EIA has been completed following consultation with Cherwell District Council, Oxfordshire County Council and other relevant stakeholders. In addition, members of the public were consulted at two public exhibition events to acquire comments and feedback to inform the design.

All the findings of the EIA are reported in the Environmental Statement which has been submitted in support of the planning application for the Proposed Development.

APPROACH TO THE ASSESSMENT

Environmental effects have been assessed using available appropriate national and international standards or limits (e.g. European Union Quality Standards). In the absence of relevant standards, professional judgement by technical specialists has been used.

The significance level attributed to each effect is based on the **change** due to the Proposed Development and the **sensitivity** of the affected environmental receptor receiving the change. Residual effects (the likely final effect of the Proposed Development when the extent to which measures to reduce or reverse negative effects or enhance positive effects have been taken into account) have also been assessed.

The terms used to define environmental effects in the Environmental Statement are as follows:

- **Major (beneficial or adverse) effect:** where the Proposed Development would cause a substantial improvement or deterioration to the existing environment/receptor;
- **Moderate (beneficial or adverse) effect:** where the Proposed Development would cause a noticeable improvement or deterioration to the existing environment/receptor;
- **Minor (beneficial or adverse) effect:** where the Proposed Development would cause a perceptible improvement or deterioration on to the existing environment/receptors; and
- **Negligible:** where the Proposed Development would result in no discernible improvement or deterioration to the existing environment/receptors.

For the majority of assessments, effects deemed as **moderate** or **major** are considered to be **significant** and those deemed as **minor** or **negligible** are considered to be **not significant**.

Effects are described as:

- Beneficial or adverse;
- Permanent or temporary;
- Direct or indirect, secondary or transboundary;
- Duration (short, medium or long-term), frequency and reversibility of effect;
- Inter-relationship between different effects (both cumulatively and in terms of likely effect interactions); and
- Significant or not significant.

In terms of the duration of an effect, generally the EIA considers that a short-term effect is up to 2 years in duration, a medium-term effect is between 2 and 10 years, and a long-term effect is greater than 10 years in duration. Any variation of this approach is explained in the relevant chapter of the ES.

The following section provides a summary of the likely residual environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development during construction and operation.



ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

SOCIO-ECONOMICS

CONSTRUCTION

There are no potential significant effects in relation to the construction phase.

OPERATION

Once operational, the Proposed Development is anticipated to provide 460 full time equivalent jobs. There is likely to be a **minor beneficial (not significant)** effect on employment.

Given the number of jobs that would be created by the Proposed Development and the likely increase in demand for jobs in the area, the Proposed Development is expected to create local jobs. There is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on the geographical distraction of employees.

Visitors to the Proposed Development are estimated to spend approximately £4.9m per year in Oxfordshire on retail and food & drink outside the Proposed Development. This is less than a 1% increase on total annual visitor spending in Oxfordshire and is therefore expected to have a **negligible (not significant)** residual effect on visitor spending.

The Proposed Development would result in a step change in leisure provision in Cherwell and Oxfordshire, in terms of providing a unique attraction which is currently not replicated elsewhere in the sub-region. Loss of 9 holes of golf from Bicester Hotel Golf Spa is unlikely to result in a material loss of amenity to most Cherwell residents or damage the wider hotel and leisure business. The new leisure provision provided within the Proposed Development is therefore expected to outweigh any negative impact from the loss of golf course space. Therefore, there is likely to be a **moderate beneficial (significant)** effect on the contribution to leisure.

The Proposed Development will offer key skills development and training opportunities and a variety of different occupational skilled jobs, able to accommodate many different types of workers with different work experience. There is likely to be a **moderate beneficial (significant)** effect on local residents' skills.

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

CONSTRUCTION

Construction vehicle movements associated with the Proposed Development are not considered to be significant on the majority of links relative to existing traffic on the local road network. As part of the Construction Management Plan, routes for construction vehicles have been identified which



seek to route construction vehicles via a direct route to the strategic road network and also avoid local villages such as Chesterton. During the construction phase the Proposed Development would result in a **negligible (not significant)** effect on the highway network local to the Site, in relation to severance, delay, amenity, fear, intimidation, accidents and safety.

OPERATION

Vehicle movements associated with the Proposed Development during the operational phase are not considered to be significant relative to existing traffic on the local road network. There is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and drivers relating to severance.

The Proposed Development would not have a material effect on the operation of the highway network local to the Site or vehicle delay at the junctions assessed. The diversion of the Public Right of Way (Footpath 161/6/10) would connect from an existing point where it intersects the Site boundary to the existing end of the public footpath and therefore does not change the overall start and end points of the route and would not have a material change on the journey time for pedestrians using the public footpath. There is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on pedestrians, cyclist, public transport users and drivers relating to delay.

There is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on pedestrians, cyclist, public transport users and drivers relating to amenity. The Proposed Development will provide a new shared foot/cycleway and improved pedestrian crossing facilities, enhancing the pedestrian facilities in this area. The creation of a new shared foot/cycleway between the site and Chesterton, where pedestrians are currently required to walk within the grass verge, provides improved amenity over the current arrangement.

There are no inherent safety issues associated with the existing highway network local to the Site which result in any concerns regarding road safety, and the change in traffic movements as a result of the operation of the Proposed Development would have a negligible effect on accident patterns and highway safety in the vicinity of the Site. The creation of a new shared foot/cycleway between the site and Chesterton, where pedestrians are currently required to walk within the grass verge, provides a betterment for pedestrians, reducing fear and intimidation of walking along this route, reducing the risk of accidents and improving safety. There is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on pedestrians, cyclist, public transport users and drivers relating to fear, intimidation, accidents and safety.

Overall, the Proposed Development is likely to result in a **not significant** effect on the highway network local to the Site. The proposed development of a Framework Travel Plan will promote



sustainable travel choices at the Site and reduce reliance on the private car, reducing the effect of the Proposed Development on the local highway network.

AIR QUALITY

CONSTRUCTION

A construction phase impact assessment has been undertaken to assess the potential risk of dust soiling and human health impacts associated with construction related activities. Potential impacts will be managed through the Construction Management Plan. The potential risks were considered to be low and there is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect during construction associated with these.

In relation to construction phase traffic impacts, due to the temporary and short term nature of the works, it is not anticipated that construction traffic will lead to significant impacts. There is therefore likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect during construction

OPERATION

An operational phase impact assessment has been undertaken to assess the impacts of the Proposed Development on existing sensitive receptors. This found that effects on air quality as a result of road traffic emissions are predicted to be **negligible (not significant)**, following the implementation of a Framework Travel Plan that promotes sustainable modes of transport (i.e. walking, cycling and public transport), to ensure that existing residential properties along the A4095 through the village of Chesterton are protected from increased pollutant concentrations, associated with road traffic travelling to and from the Proposed Development.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

A model was developed to predict the future noise environment and the effects associated with the construction and operation of the Proposed Development.

CONSTRUCTION

Predicted noise levels for the majority of the enabling and structural works, as well as construction of the road and parking infrastructure, would not be considered significant at the nearest noise-sensitive residential locations. The building envelope and fit-out work would produce lower noise levels. Construction noise effects are predicted to be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

In terms of construction traffic noise, there is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on the receptors.

In terms of vibration, there would be ground vibratory compaction during the enabling works phase. It is estimated that even at distances of 40m from the nearest residential locations, the worst-case



vibration levels would not be considered significant. Although piling is likely to be used as part of the substructure work, this will occur more than 150m from the nearest residential properties, and 100m from the Bicester Hotel, Golf and Spa. Other construction activities would produce lower levels of vibration. The effect of construction vibration is predicted to be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

OPERATION

The effects of the operation of the Proposed Development in terms of associated road traffic, on-site activities and fixed plant are **negligible (not significant)**. The reduction in road traffic noise impacting the Bicester Hotel, Golf and Spa, and Stableford House will represent a **negligible to minor beneficial effect (not significant)**. The decreases in noise at some receptors are associated with the Proposed Development building providing screening from road traffic on the M40.

The suitability of the noise environment at the Site for the Proposed Development was confirmed. It was concluded that traffic noise levels can be reduced to suitable internal noise levels in the proposed hotel guestrooms using standard thermal double glazing.

BIODIVERSITY

CONSTRUCTION

The construction phase of the Proposed Development will remove some areas of habitats of ecological value on the Site including hedgerow and water bodies. In addition, habitats retained on the Site and located to the north of the Site could be affected indirectly by dust, airborne pollution or waterborne pollution. Although the Construction Management Plan will detail how pollution will be minimised and controlled, and hoarding or fencing will be installed around the construction works to protect the surrounding habitats, some traffic-related effects remain. Direct loss on Site will be unavoidable but will be compensated for by new and enhanced habitats delivered by the completed Proposed Development, although these may take time to establish. There will be an **adverse** effect of **Site scale significance** to habitats of ecological importance during the construction phase.

Due to disturbance, loss of habitats and potential impacts on retained habitats on Site, the Proposed Development could result in **adverse** effects at a **Site scale significance** on protected species during the construction phase.

OPERATION

Pollution from the Proposed Development is unlikely via water or air during operation based on the drainage regime and the nature of the development. Traffic related effects, which are likely to be confined to the area around the access junction, may however cause low-level pollution impacts on woodland adjacent to the A4095. The woodland adjacent to the road, however, does not appear to be of significant ecological value and the area of effects would likely be small (limited to within a few

metres of the road), also pollutant levels are likely to be high already in habitat near the intersection of the M40 and the A4095. Overall operational effects upon off-site habitat of ecological value are likely to be **negligible**.

Landscaping will focus around habitats of ecological importance and use replacement tree planting, grassland verges, rain gardens and small hedges to form buffer habitats. These will protect retained habitats from disturbance, dust, pollution and lighting. The drainage strategy describes measures to ensure that surface water drainage does not have significant negative effects relating to pollution upon the water environment, and in turn the ecologically valuable habitats. Management of habitats created during the construction phase will improve the quality, connectivity and volume of ecologically important habitats within the local area. The Proposed Development will achieve a net gain for biodiversity of 41%. Overall there will be a **beneficial** effect at a **Site scale** upon habitats of ecological value at the Site.

During operation, new habitats will become established and provide foraging and commuting habitat for protected species. Bat and bird boxes will be provided and new fencing cut-outs will allow badger, hedgehog and other mammals to pass through the Site. Overall there will be a **negligible** effect on protected species, other than invertebrates where there will be a **beneficial** effect at the **Site scale** due to the significant improvement in area of valuable habitats.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

CONSTRUCTION

The construction phase has the potential to impact directly upon any buried archaeological remains which may be present within the Site. Ground breaking works could potentially result in the removal of such remains, however, the level of effect would be dependent upon the significance of any remains identified. Archaeological site investigations are currently being undertaken to further understand the potential for archaeological remains to survive. At the time of writing of the ES, nine of 15 trenches have been excavated and no archaeology has been encountered. In the event remains are encountered, a review of the assessment on archaeology will be undertaken to understand any changes to potential effects and the requirement for any mitigation measures as a result. The aim of any proposed mitigation will be to ensure that the residual effect is **not significant**.

OPERATION

Potential effects on the settings of six designated heritage assets have been assessed as a result of operation of the Proposed Development. Effects range from **no adverse** effect to **minor adverse**



effect (**not significant**). The built elements of the Proposed Development are at a distance from the assets and the character of the landscape and presence of screening vegetation limits visibility.

GROUND CONDITIONS

CONSTRUCTION

Construction workers and Site neighbours could be exposed to unexpected contaminants that are present in the ground during any earthworks or Site clearance works, however, the works will be managed through a Construction Management Plan, including measures to minimise dust. There is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on construction workers and third-party neighbours. There is also likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on the movement of chemical contaminants into surface water/groundwater due to mitigation measures which will be put in place.

OPERATION

Future Site users will be exposed to any contaminants that are present in the ground. A pre-construction ground investigation will be carried out to identify potential contaminant linkages. If required a Remediation Strategy will be produced to clean up any contaminated soils for the Site. Where the presence of buildings and hardstanding across the Site are present, it will limit the potential for dermal contact, ingestion or inhalation of contaminated soil by future users. There is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on future site users.

There is potential for runoff from areas of car parking, containing hydrocarbons, into groundwater or nearby surface waters. The water park could also potentially discharge water into the underlying aquifers via drainage channels. Inceptors will be installed into surface water drainage to prevent pollution from hydrocarbons from vehicles using roadways and car parks. There is therefore likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect.

Potential impacts to buildings as a result of ground gas and potential impacts of contaminants on water supply pipes are also likely to be **negligible (not significant)**.

WATER RESOURCES, FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

CONSTRUCTION

The water resources, flood risk and drainage assessment assessed the potential effects of flood risk to construction workers and residents and users of the surrounding area. The Proposed Development is likely to result in a **negligible (not significant)** effect on flood risk to these receptors.

During construction (and operation) the Site would discharge surface water to the existing ditch network leading to Gagle Brook to the south. A surface water management plan will be implemented



for the construction phase to ensure that the quantity and quality of surface water is managed, therefore there is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on water quality of the existing surface water drainage ditch network and outfall. Site groundwater would also be investigated and managed and there is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on potential changes to groundwater levels and contamination of groundwater.

OPERATION

The water resources, flood risk and drainage assessment assessed the potential effects of flood risk to residents and users of the surrounding area during operation. The Proposed Development is likely to result in a **negligible (not significant)** effect on flood risk to these receptors.

The drainage for the Proposed Development will ensure that the quantity and quality of surface water is managed. There is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on the existing surface water drainage ditch network and outfall in relation to water quantity and rate, and a **minor adverse (not significant)** effect in relation to water quality. Site groundwater would also be investigated and managed and there is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on potential changes to groundwater levels and contamination of groundwater.

During operation, the Site foul water is to be discharged to an on-site pumping station. From here it will be pumped approximately 500m to the nearest Thames Water foul sewer. There is likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on the Thames Water sewer. There is also likely to be a **negligible (not significant)** effect on the Thames Water's mains cold water infrastructure network.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

CONSTRUCTION

It is likely that construction features and activities would be visible from areas in close proximity to the Site and elevated locations such as bridges over the M40. The majority of the construction works would mainly be limited to the central parts of the Site. Landscape effects during construction are considered to be **minor adverse (not significant)**. Visual effects on users of Public Right of Way 161/6/10, residents of Vicarage Farm and Stableford House, and visitors to the hotel and spa are considered to be **moderate to major adverse (significant)**. Visual effects of all other visual receptors are considered to be **not significant**.

OPERATION

Impacts during operation are due to the long-term alteration from the existing golf course to the Proposed Development, which will be seen as a permanent component in the local landscape.

There will be a localised loss of boundary vegetation due to the new access off the A4095, but the character of the road will largely remain unchanged given that existing vegetation will be retained and additional planting will be provided. The new buildings and car park will involve removal of some trees (which are considered to be mostly of low value) within the central part of the Site. This will be compensated with new planting including woodland, new parkland trees, species-rich hedgerows around the perimeter of the car park, additional hedgerow trees, extensive trees and hedgerows within the car park, shrubs / ornamental planting (close to the hotel), and extensive areas of wildflower grassland. As a result, there would be a considerable improvement on the existing landscape resource of the Site. Most of the existing ponds would also be retained and enhanced. In the opening year (Year 0), landscape effects are considered to be **negligible (not significant)** and in Year 15 when landscape mitigation and planting has established, they are considered to be **negligible or neutral (not significant)**.

The proposed vegetated bunds along the southern and south-eastern boundaries of the Site will reduce the visual intrusion of the Proposed Development, particularly from the ground level. There will be views of the upper extent of the new buildings over the top of the bunds and partial views of the planted car park. Retained vegetation will provide a degree of screening in the summer but will only lightly filter views in the winter. In the opening year (Year 0), there would be visual effects upon the residents of Vicarage Farm and Stableford House, considered to be **moderate adverse (not significant)**. This reflects the worst case scenario, for views from upper floor windows that face the Site. Effects on views from lower floors or from other parts of the properties not facing the Proposed Development, would be less or neutral. For users of the Public Right of Way (Footpath 161/6/10) and visitors to the hotel and spa, visual effects also considered to be **moderate adverse (not significant)**. For all other receptors, visual effects are assessed as **minor – moderate adverse (not significant)** at the most, with some being **minor adverse and negligible (not significant)** and the rest **neutral**.

At night in Year 0 there would be a slight increase in impact upon the receptors mentioned individually above, as a result of views of additional lighting from the water park, hotel rooms and car park, which generates a contrast to the relatively dark golf course. Overall, the visual effects remain the same as concluded for the daytime. For all other receptors, the magnitude of change at night is largely the same as assessed in the daytime.

In Year 15, establishment of new woodland planting on the bunds along the southern boundaries would help to soften and filter views of the Proposed Development. Coniferous species would further enhance the screening in the winter months and also reflects the current planting mix elsewhere in the golf course. Extensive tree and hedgerow planting will have established in the car park to

significantly reduce views of hard standing, parked cars and the buildings beyond. In Year 15, visual effects upon the residents of Vicarage Farm and Stableford House are considered to be **minor to moderate adverse (not significant)** and for users of the Public Right of Way (Footpath 161/6/10) and visitors to the hotel and spa, **minor adverse (not significant)**. For all other receptors visual effects would be **minor adverse (not significant)** at the most, with majority being **negligible (not significant)** or **neutral**.

At night, establishment of woodland vegetation along the bunds and extensive car park planting would reduce the perception of visible lighting. However, an increase in sky glow will remain. For all receptors, the visual effects are largely the same as assessed in the daytime. The effects are considered to be **minor to moderate adverse, minor adverse, and negligible or neutral (not significant)**.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

A cumulative assessment has been undertaken as part of the EIA. This considers the potential for 'cumulative effects', which include the combination of effects at single receptors as a result of the Proposed Development, in addition to the combination of effects from the proposed Development in conjunction with other developments coming forward in the area (referred to as 'committed developments').

There are no effect interactions within the construction phase of the Proposed Development, therefore no combined effects are anticipated during this phase.

There is potential for the interaction of effects during the operational phase of the Proposed Development. This may give rise to combined beneficial effects on the local population regarding operational employment, contribution to leisure, employee training and college partnerships and noise and vibration of road traffic.

When considering the Proposed Development and the committed developments, beneficial cumulative effects are anticipated in relation to Socio-economics, these include significant beneficial effects in relation to contribution to leisure and employee training and college partnerships. For the remaining topics, it is concluded that there will be no significant cumulative effects of the Proposed Development in-combination with other committed developments on sensitive receptors identified through the EIA process.



FURTHER INFORMATION

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The Environmental Statement has been submitted together with other planning application documents and drawings to Cherwell District Council to assist planning officers in deciding on the application. During this period Cherwell District Council will contact relevant stakeholders to seek their view on the Proposed Development.

Members of the general public will also be able to provide comments on the planning application which will be made available on the planning portal on Cherwell District Council's website.

WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

Further information, including a copy of the planning application documents, the full Environmental Statement and this Non-Technical Summary are available on Cherwell District Council's website.

Comments on the planning application can also be made on Cherwell District Council's website (<https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/115/planning/443/see-or-comment-on-a-planning-application>).

CAN I HAVE A COPY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT OR THIS NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY?

The Environmental Statement and this Non-Technical Summary will be available to view online at Cherwell District Council's website. A hard copy of the Environmental Statement and Non-Technical Summary for public viewing will be made available at Cherwell District Council's offices at the following address:

Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
Bodicote
Banbury
OX15 4AA.

Paper copies of the ES documents can be provided at a cost. Please contact Cherwell District Council for more information.



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