

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

Introduction

3.1 This Chapter provides a description of the Site as defined by the Site Location Plan submitted with the application (**Figure 3.1**), and the surrounding area. Further technical details on the Site's characteristics, and the baseline conditions pertinent to each technical assessment, can be found in each of the Technical Chapters.

Site Description

3.2 The Site is approximately 7.17 ha and is situated approximately 6 km to the north of Oxford and at the gateway of Kidlington. The Site consists of a broadly triangular field, surrounded by linear vegetation associated with the A4260 Frieze Way to the west and Oxford Road to the east. Short sections of these routes adjacent to the field fall within the Site boundary, including the slip roads to Stratfield Brake Sports Ground to the west. The Site boundary extends south along Oxford Road to include the ramped access and embankment down to Oxford Parkway Station.

3.3 The main part of the site is a triangular shape and comprises of a willow plantation of relatively recent origin (less than 20 years) bounded by hedgerows and trees, with a strip of neutral grassland located between the boundaries and plantation. A woodland is present off-site along the southern boundary and an area of planted scrub is also present within the northern section of the site.

3.4 As above, the Site includes stretches of Oxford Road along its north-eastern boundary, and Frieze Way along the north-western boundary. Kidlington Roundabout is located to the north of the site, and woodland forms the southern boundary of the site, beyond which is agricultural land. Beyond the south-eastern boundary of the Site is Oxford Parkway Railway Station and the Park and Ride, and to the west of the Site is Stratfield Brake Sports Ground.

3.5 The Site is bound by a number of site allocations within the adopted Local Plan, namely Allocated Site PR6b (residential development of 690 dwellings) to the south-east, Allocated Site PR6c (for the potential construction of a golf course should this be required as a result of site PR6b) to the south-west, and Site Allocation PR7a (for 430 dwellings, an extension to Kidlington Cemetery and 11 hectares of land to provide formal sports/green infrastructure for the development and for the wider community) to the north-east. Beyond Oxford Parkway to the south-east is Allocated Site PR6a (690 dwellings and other associated uses). A Plan showing the site in the context of these allocations can be found at **Figure 3.2**.

3.6 The Site exhibits a varied topography, with a relatively flat gentle gradient of 1:150 –1:200 falling east to west. Existing site sections can be found at **Figure 3.3**.

Designations

- 3.7 The Site is not in or adjacent to an environmentally sensitive area, as defined by Regulation 2(1) of the EIA Regulations (i.e. sites designated as Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Parks, World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and sites covered by international conservation designations).
- 3.8 There are no statutory designated sites of nature conservation value located within or immediately adjacent to the Site. The closest statutory site is the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which includes the constituent Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Pixey and Yarnton Meads SSSI, located approximately 1.9km southwest of the Site at its closest point. Other constituent SSSIs nearby include Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common & Green SSSI, which is located approximately 2km south at its closest point, and Wolvercote Meadows SSSI, located approximately 2.1km southwest. Rushy Meadows SSSI is located 2.3km northwest of the site, Hook Meadow & Trap Grounds SSSI is located approximately 2.7km south of the Site, New Marston Meadows SSSI is located approximately 3.9 km southwest of the Site, and Iffley Meadows SSSI is 7.6km southwest of the Site.
- 3.9 The woodland located off-site adjacent to the southern boundary, is listed on the MAGIC database as a Priority Deciduous Woodland which also forms part of the Stratfield Brake Cherwell District Wildlife Site (DWS). It is noted it does not form part of the Stratfield Brake Woodland Trust Reserve (which is also designated as part of the DWS) located to the west of the Site, and it is isolated from the Reserve by the Frieze Way A4620. The Meadows West of the Oxford Canal is an Oxfordshire Local Wildlife Site (LWS) which lies approximately 0.6km west of the site, and is separated from the Site by Frieze Way, Stratfield Brake DWS and Oxford Canal.
- 3.10 There are tree belts along the eastern and western boundaries of the Site associated with Oxford Road and Frieze Way, and scrub vegetation in the north of the Site. A line of five Poplars are located at the northern tip of the Site and are prominent in local views. The embankment down to Oxford Parkway consists of Field Maple, Hornbeam, Hazel and Hawthorn. The majority of the internal arrangements of the field within the Site are occupied by the commercial willow plantation. There are seven TPOs on the Site boundary (five on the northern boundary and two on the eastern boundary).
- 3.11 The Site is located in Flood Zone 1 and therefore is not considered at risk of fluvial flooding. The north of the Site indicates a risk of surface water flooding due to its topography. There are field ditches found on the western boundary and to the northern edge of the woodland. The north of the Site contains a Gas Main and Overhead Power Cable.
- 3.12 The Site is washed over by the Oxfordshire Green Belt but there are no other landscape, environmental, or historic designations covering the site. No Scheduled Monuments, Registered

Parks and Gardens or Registered Battlefields are present within or in the vicinity of the Site. Whilst there are no Listed Buildings within the Site, there are a number of Listed Buildings within its proximity.

3.13 The Agricultural Land Classification mapping service identifies that the land comprises Grade 3 Agricultural Land.

Surrounding Area

3.14 Surrounding the Site are a mix of uses, including retail, transport infrastructure, sports and recreation and proposed residential. There are a number of allocations surrounding the Site such that residential development is proposed to the north-west, north-east and south-east of the Site (**Figure 3.2**). Immediately to the west is Stratfield Brake sports ground and immediately east is land proposed for formal sports and public open space as part of wider allocation PR7a. To the south-west is Oxford Parkway Railway Station and Park and Ride.

3.15 The Site is well related to existing and proposed development and is in a highly accessible location, adjacent to the strategic highway network as well as Railway Station and Park and Ride. It is therefore accessible by a range of transport modes.

3.16 There are a number of Public Rights of Way (PROW) which extend from the settlement edge of Kidlington into the surrounding landscape. This includes the Oxford Canal Walk which follows the Oxford Canal in a north-south direction. National Cycle Route 51 runs through the centre of Kidlington.

Planning History

3.17 There is no recent planning history of relevance. Planning permission was granted for the change of use from agricultural to motorcycle track in January 1998 for a period of 1 year (reference 97/01897/F).

Identified Sensitive Receptors

3.18 **Table 3.1** sets out the sensitive receptors at which Technical Chapters have identified significant effects may occur.

Table 3.1: Sensitive Receptors

Discipline	Sensitive Receptors
Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contextual landscape receptors: effects on landscape receptors beyond the Site boundary, for example, direct and indirect effects on landscape character Site landscape receptors: effects on landscape receptors within the Site boundary; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual receptors: effects arising from the changes to the landscape which are perceived by both static and transient receptors. Includes users of the nearby local roads, PROWs, residential properties, Oxford Parkway Railway Station and other open space/recreation grounds.
Chapter 8: Ecology and Nature Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory sites: Oxford Meadows SAC and constituent SSSIs • Non-statutory sites adjacent DWS woodland and Stratfield Brake DWS • Habitats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Willow Plantation and Neutral Grassland - Adjacent woodland - Hedgerows with Trees • Fauna <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Badgers - Bats - Birds - Invertebrates
Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated Heritage Assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grade II Listed Stratfield Farmhouse - Grade II Listed Frieze Farmhouse - Oxford Canal Conservation Area • Non designated heritage assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ridge and furrow earthworks - Historic landscape character - Potential buried archaeological remains
Chapter 10: Transport and Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers • Pedestrians • Cyclists • Local Communities
Chapter 11: Noise and Vibration	Residential receptors at South Avenue/Croxford Gardens and Oxford Road. Future residential receptor at Stratfield Farm and east of Bicester Road.
Chapter 12: Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Health Receptors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residential Properties, Users of sports grounds/recreation grounds and education centre. • Ecological Receptors
Chapter 13: Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential Properties • Users of local roads • Heritage Assets • Ecology
Chapter 14: Flood Risk and Drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads (Oxford Road and the A4260) • Residential properties • Users of the Proposed Development • Commercial properties • Stratfield Brake woodland • Sports fields • Impact zone of the Pixey and Yarnton Meads SSSI. • Wildlife area adjacent to both the Oxford Canal and the ditch/channel through Stratfield Brake woodland which conveys surface water drainage from the Proposed Development.
Chapter 15: Socio-Economics	<p>The labour force, population and the economy in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment • Labour Market

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Expenditure • Economic performance • Business Rates Revenues • Deprivation • Open space provision
Chapter 16: Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GHG Emissions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Global Climate System • Climate Resilience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stadium Structure - Mechanical, Electrical and Power Assets - Landscape Planting - Stadium Staff - Players - Fans/Spectators - Hotel Guests - Conference Users - Pitch - Whole site, structures, assets and site users - Drainage System
Chapter 17: Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarries and other sources of minerals, and other finite raw material resources. • Landfills and other waste management infrastructure
Chapter 18: Major Accidents and Disasters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population and human health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stadium users - pedestrians - road users; • Biodiversity - species and habitats; • Land, soil, water, air and climate; • Material assets, cultural heritage, and landscape.