

## 5. Consideration of Alternatives

### Introduction

5.1 This Chapter reports the ‘reasonable alternatives’ considered with respect to the Proposed Scheme.

5.2 Paragraph 2, Schedule 4, of the EIA Regulations<sup>1</sup> states that an ES should include:

*‘a description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of development design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects’.*

5.3 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)<sup>2</sup> indicates that where ‘...*alternative approaches to development have been considered, the ES should include a description of the reasonable alternatives studied which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics. In evaluating the reasonable alternatives studied, an indication should be provided of the environmental effects...*’.

5.4 As such, in line with the EIA Regulations, if no alternatives have been studied the EIA does not necessarily need to report reasonable alternatives.

### Approach to Consideration of Alternatives

5.5 The EIA Regulations and the online PPG do not identify a specific methodology for the assessment of alternatives or criteria to be used to inform the assessment of ‘reasonable alternatives’. The methodology adopted is based on professional experience of similar projects and an understanding of the Proposed Scheme and its characteristics, as well as focus on the delivery of a proportionate assessment, in line with PPG.

5.6 For the purpose of the EIA, the consideration of alternatives has followed a two-step approach, set out as follows:

- **Step 1:** Consideration of ‘factors’ that constitute alternatives and justification / discussion for the inclusion / exclusion from further assessment; and
- **Step 2:** Assessment of factors brought forward from Step 1 and, where applicable, comparison of environmental effects.

### Consideration of Alternatives

5.7 A report of each alternative is provided as follows:

- **Step 1:** Consideration of ‘factors’ that constitute alternatives and justification / discussion for the inclusion /exclusion from further assessment; and

- **Step 2:** Assessment of factors brought forward from Step 1 and, where applicable, comparison of environmental effects.

## Step 1: Appraisal of Alternatives

5.8 **Table 5.1** reports Step 1.

**Table 5.1: Step 1 appraisal of alternatives**

Alternative 'Factors'	Considered at Step 2	Justification / discussion
Alternative sites (location)	✘	<p>Alternative sites have not been considered as they are outside of the Applicant's control.</p> <p>Given the above, alternative sites were not considered by the Applicant and have not been considered in Step 2.</p>
Alternative technology	✘	<p>Whilst alternative technologies are available in terms of the construction of the Proposed Scheme, these are largely dictated by 'build-ability' and cost exercises rather than environmental-focused considerations.</p> <p>The Proposed Scheme is a residential project. Given this use, alternative 'technologies' are not considered to be applicable as they would be for other types of development (i.e. industrial processes or energy generation).</p> <p>Specific energy strategy technologies have been considered as part of the <b>Energy and Sustainability Statement</b> prepared in support of the Application, but this is driven by requirements of planning policy and other regulatory compliance (i.e. Building Regulations) above site specific environmental considerations.</p> <p>Therefore, alternative technologies are not considered to be applicable and will not be taken forward to Step 2.</p>
Alternative development design (including size and scale)	✓	<p>The design of the Proposed Scheme has evolved in response to stakeholder engagement, market demand / feedback, technical studies and environmental constraints and opportunities. Therefore, a design process has been undertaken where 'alternatives' have been considered and disregarded.</p> <p>In light of this, the alternative development design factor is considered in Step 2.</p>
'Do Nothing' Scenario	✓	<p>The EIA (as reported within this ES) has assessed the likely significant effects, based on a deviation from the baseline environment, which is in essence the current scenario. <b>Technical Chapters 6 and 7</b> have also considered the 'future baseline' in the absence of the Proposed Scheme coming forward (i.e. a 'do nothing'</p>

Alternative 'Factors'	Considered at Step 2	Justification / discussion
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scenario) and this is not repeated here.

## Step 2: Assessment of Alternatives

### Alternative Development Design

- 5.9 As identified above, alternative development design is the only factor considered relevant for assessment in terms of alternatives.
- 5.10 The Applicant has not considered fundamentally different development designs. However, the design of the Proposed Scheme has been predominantly led in response to the environmental constraints posed by the Site, as informed by technical studies/surveys/modelling.
- 5.11 Due to the outline nature of the Proposed Scheme, the detail of individual dwellings is not fully specified, and as such parameters have been used to define the maximum extents of each aspect, as set out in **Chapter 4: Development Specification** and shown on **Figure 4.1: Parameter Plan**. Therefore, in the appraisal below, only the parameters have been considered and the detailed layout of dwellings is subject to future reserved matters applications.
- 5.12 The parameters of the Proposed Scheme have been predominantly influenced by the following:
- Landscape and visual sensitivity – The Site’s Parcels differ in their landscape and visual sensitivity. Parcel A is visually well contained by established tree and hedgerow boundaries, and is reduced in landscape sensitivity with it being located adjacent to Warwick Road (B4100). In contrast, the lack of screening at Parcel B’s eastern boundary and its elevated topography allow for open views into the Site from the east. In response to this constraint, built form of the Proposed Scheme is contained solely within Parcel A, with Parcel B comprising only ground/below ground-level ecological and drainage features, in addition to relatively visually-unintrusive children’s play features;
  - Hanwell Conservation Area and associated listed buildings – In order to avoid the cause of harm to the setting of Hanwell Conservation Area and the listed buildings within it, the Proposed Scheme will be screened with woodland planting across the northern Parcel boundaries. The densest area of planting will be located in the line of sight between these assets and dwellings in the north-eastern corner of Parcel A, to provide effective screening upon its maturity;
  - Hanwell Community Observatory – The astrological observatory located within Hanwell has been identified as a light-sensitive receptor. The Lighting Strategy for the Proposed Scheme, as informed by a quantitative **Lighting Impact Assessment**, will ensure that obtrusive light spill and sky glow caused by the Proposed Scheme will not result in a detrimental impact on the Observatory;

- Intersecting PRowS – The PRow 191/6/30 crosses Parcel A, connecting Hanwell Fields to Gullicote Lane, and the PRow 239/7/20 is located parallel to the eastern boundary of Parcel B. Both PRowS and Gullicote Lane will be retained in their current alignments as part of the Proposed Scheme to maintain pedestrians’ accessibility between Banbury and Hanwell. The amenity of PRow 191/6/30 will also be enhanced with the location of children’s play features between it and the proposed dwellings; and
- Topography and drainage – As described above, the topography of the Site slopes downwards towards the eastern boundary of Parcel B. The SuDS attenuation basin of the Proposed Scheme has been located within this area, and away from the Parcel’s western boundary, so as to benefit from positive drainage.

5.13 Accounting for the above, the Proposed Scheme has been designed with consideration of a number of constraints and opportunities; both on-Site and in the surrounding area, to minimise its impact upon sensitive receptors.

## References

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<sup>1</sup> The Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Available at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents> [Accessed: 03/02/2023].

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Online Resource). Planning Practice Guidance Environmental Impact Assessment. Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/environmental-impact-assessment> [Accessed: 03/02/2023].