



# NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

October 2014

Land at  
Wykham Park Farm  
Banbury

GALLAGHER  
ESTATES

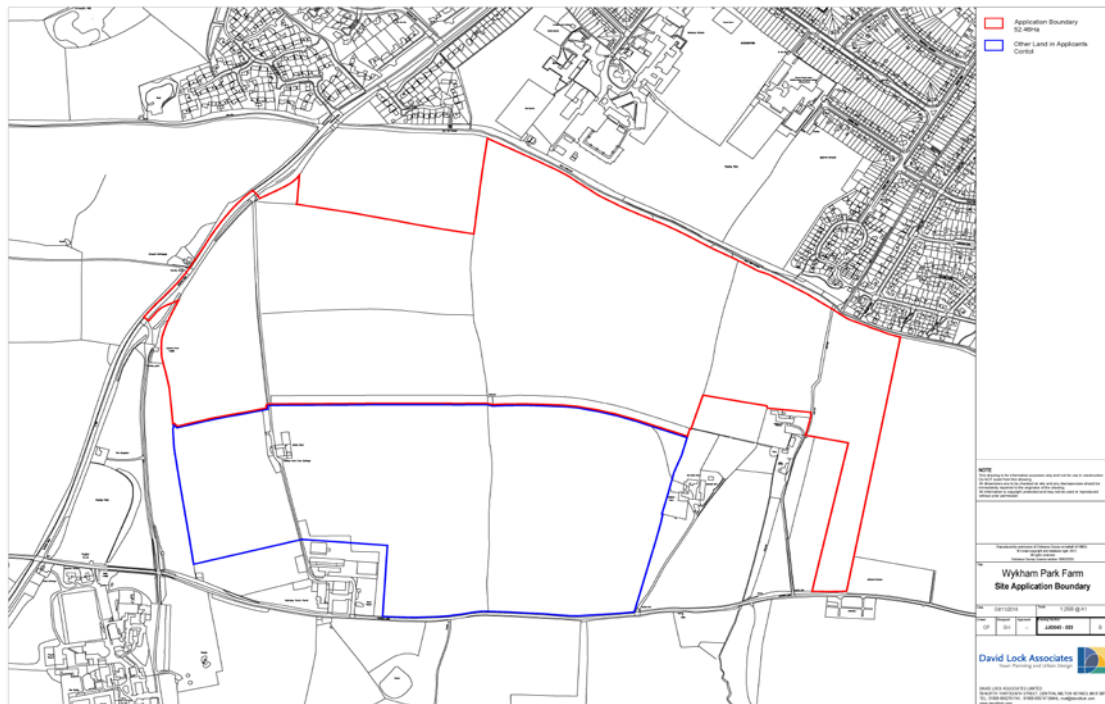
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**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This document summarises the findings of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of a proposed residential-led urban extension on land east of Bloxham Road (A361) and south of Salt Way, Banbury. The following plan shows the location and the detailed boundary of the Proposed Development.



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- 1.2 The purpose of an EIA is to assess the likely significant environmental effects of a development proposal. These effects have been assessed as “adverse” or “beneficial”; and of “major”, “moderate”, “minor” or “negligible” significance, in accordance with recognised EIA methodology and applying professional judgement.
- 1.3 The “significance” of each effect takes into account both its “magnitude” and the “sensitivity” of the receptor affected. For example, a change of “large” magnitude affecting a receptor of “high” sensitivity would generally result in an effect of “major” significance. Conversely, a change of “small” magnitude affecting a receptor of “low” sensitivity would generally result in an effect of “minor” significance.
- 1.4 The full findings of this EIA are reported in an Environmental Statement (ES). The ES is available on Cherwell District Council’s website and can also be obtained on request from:

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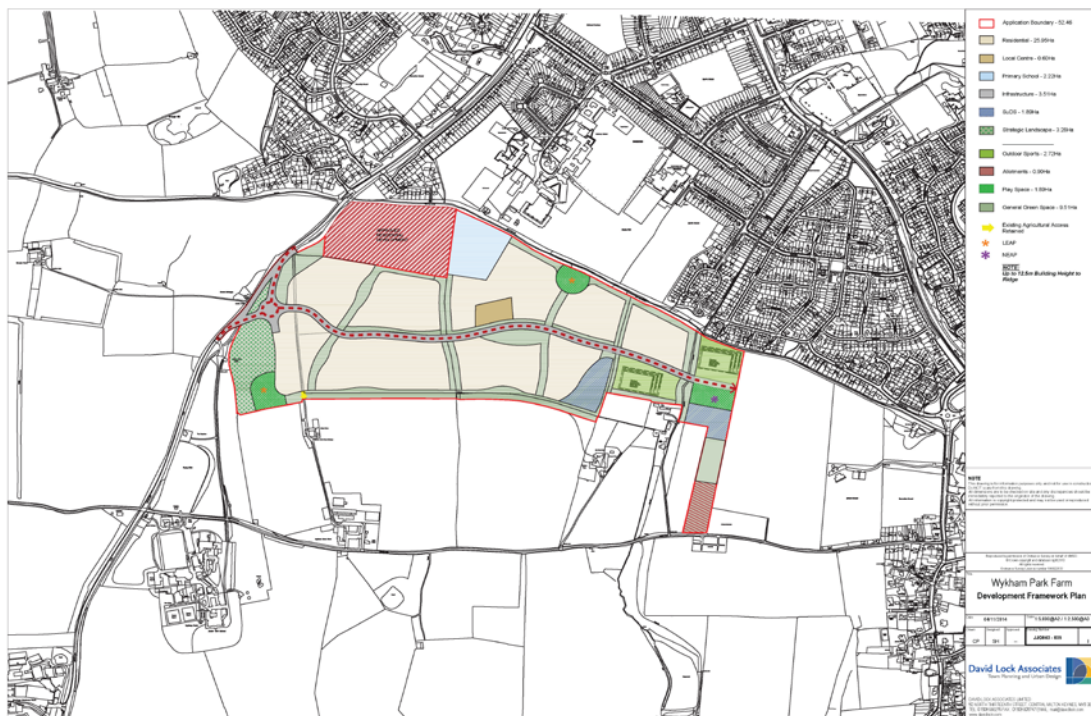
- 1.5 This concise document summarises the main findings of the ES in non-technical language, for a wide readership.
- 1.6 The ES supports an Outline Planning Application (OPA) to Cherwell District Council for the Proposed Development. Comments on it should therefore be directed to Cherwell District Council, as part of its consideration of the OPA.

## 2. THE SITE AND THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 The Application Site extends to some 52 hectares (128 acres) to the east of Bloxham Road (A361) and south of Salt Way, approximately 1.7km to the immediate south of Banbury centre. In general terms, the Site is bounded by Bloxham Road (A361) to the west, Salt Way, a footpath and cycle way to the north, and fields to the south and east.
- 2.2 The site is currently predominately rural in character and is intensively cultivated arable and pasture agricultural land. The site contains a network of hedgerows and associated ditches and woodland. There are no water features within the site. A dry drainage ditch runs in an easterly direction along the southern boundary of the site.
- 2.3 There are a number of Public rights of way (PROW) that cross the site, mostly in a north-south direction at the eastern part of the site and along the western site boundary. A Public Bridleway heads north, through the site, connecting Wykham Lane with Salt Way.
- 2.4 The topography of the site is generally undulating with small shallow valleys running south towards the Sor Brook Valley, some 1.5km to the south of the site.
- 2.5 The Proposed Development comprises, in summary:
- up to 1,000 residential dwellings (class C3);
  - mixed use space for local retail and other services including retail (comprising up to 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> of A1 floorspace), financial services (A2) and restaurants, pubs and takeaways (A3, A4, A5);
  - land for a primary school (class D1);
  - community and sport buildings (classes D1 and D2);
  - green infrastructure including formal pitches, informal open space and landscape areas and children's play spaces;
  - sustainable urban drainage systems, including attenuation basins and drainage channels;
  - connections to the surrounding highway, footpath, cycleway and bridleway network;
  - infrastructure and utilities provision, including car parking; and
  - ground remodelling, engineering works and demolition.

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- 2.6 The construction period assumed for the site, as reported in the housing trajectory that supports the main modifications to the Cherwell Local Plan, extends from 2015/16 until 2025/26. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which would be agreed with Cherwell District Council, would minimise environmental impacts during this period.
- 2.7 The Proposed Development is allocated within the proposed south west extension of Banbury, defined as South of Salt Way – East and South of Salt Way – West, in the Cherwell Local Plan: Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications to the (Submission) Local Plan (August 2014).
- 2.8 Outline Planning Permission and means of access is sought at this stage. Detailed design is reserved for later agreement by Cherwell District Council.
- 2.9 The following Development Framework Plan has formed the basis for the EIA. The detailed design of the Proposed Development would be consistent with this overarching development framework. This conformity would be secured by appropriate conditions attached to any grant of Outline Planning Permission.



### **3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

3.1 The Proposed Development is being brought forward against a backdrop of support for, well conceived sustainable development proposals in the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as well as the proposed allocation of the Site as part of South of Salt Way- East in the proposed Main Modifications to the Cherwell Local Plan.

### **4. SOCIO-ECONOMIC EFFECTS**

4.1 No significant adverse socio-economic effects are predicted, taking into account the timely provision of supporting facilities as the development is built out. That timely provision would be secured by conditions and legal obligations attached to any grant of Outline Planning Permission.

4.2 Moderate beneficial effects on the local economy are predicted, around 97-110 construction jobs opportunities per year.

4.3 Less quantifiable, but major beneficial effects on the local housing market are reported. Moderate beneficial effects on open space provision, education provision, and community facility provision are also predicted, again taking into account the timely provision of the proposed primary school, public open space and local centre/ community uses as the development is built out.

**5. TRANSPORT**

- 5.1 Construction of the Proposed Development is predicted to result in a maximum of around 100 two-way daily vehicle movements. Of those, around 20 are estimated to be HGV movements, although the number and timings of movements would be such that the construction of the Proposed Development would not have a discernible effect on traffic conditions in the area. Furthermore, construction traffic would be routed to avoid unsuitable roads in the area. Further mitigation would be provided through the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (para. 2.6).
- 5.2 The intention of the access strategy for the proposed development is to access the site from Bloxham Road (A361). To adequately accommodate the anticipated development traffic, it is proposed to create a new 4-arm roundabout onto the Bloxham Road (A361). The design allows for the retention of access to Tudor Hall School, and the existing properties, Crouch Cottages, along Bloxham Road, and can, if necessary, accommodate the proposed priority access junction to land immediately west of the site which is the subject of a planning application for 400 residential units (14/01188/OUT). The 30mph traffic limit on Bloxham Road is intended to be extended to the south of the new roundabout junction to reflect the start to the urban 30mph speed limit.
- 5.3 The Proposed Development has the potential to increase traffic levels on the surrounding road network. The traffic modelling work has been informed by discussions with Oxfordshire County Council and has been based on a zonal approach, 19% of trips were identified to travel south, with the remaining 81% travelling north to subsequently be distributed at each junction.
- 5.4 An assessment of the potential impacts associated with the Proposed Development has indicated locations where junction interventions are required, which comprise a number of highway improvements at Bloxham Road/ Queensway, Bloxham Road/ Springfield Road and along Oxford Road.
- 5.5 This assessment indicates that the Proposed Development would not materially increase traffic flows along the Bloxham Road and into Banbury Town or unacceptably impede access to the wider road network for existing residents, taking into account the junction improvements proposed. Moreover, the modifications brought about by the Proposed Development and improvements already proposed



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by other developments within the area, are reported to have a beneficial impact on the Oxford Road network in the longer term.

- 5.6 The detailed traffic modelling undertaken has also taken account of additional development resulting from the wider growth proposals to the south and south west of Banbury, as identified in the emerging Local Plan. The assessments demonstrate that, subject to the mitigation measures identified, the local network has the capacity to absorb both the traffic generated by the Proposed Development and the traffic that is likely to be generated as a result of the wider growth proposals for the southern part of Banbury.
- 5.7 The Proposed Development includes new pedestrian and cycle routes connecting with the existing walking and cycling networks in the area, as well as providing for the extension of bus services into the Site. A key component of the transport mitigation measures is the implementation of a Travel Plan.
- 5.8 Overall, the proposed new transport infrastructure detailed in the Transport Assessment and the measures set out in the Travel Plan would ensure no significant residual adverse effects on transport conditions would arise from the Proposed Development.

**6. AIR QUALITY**

- 6.1 Application of measures within the proposed CEMP (see para. 2.6 above) would ensure impacts on local air quality during construction, including dust generation, would be of no greater than negligible significance.
- 6.2 Following completion, the Proposed Development is expected to result in negligible effects on pollutant levels in the area, with the exception of some areas along Oxford Road and Horsefair where minor adverse/ negligible effects are reported. This however is a worst case scenario and does not account for any improvement to air quality nor emissions that is likely to occur in the future.

**7. NOISE**

- 7.1 Application of measures within the proposed CEMP (see para. 2.6 above) would limit effects arising from noise and vibration during construction to minor adverse levels.

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- 7.2 Following completion, the Proposed Development is expected to give rise to no more than negligible effects, both in terms of traffic noise in the wider area and noise levels experienced within the Proposed Development.

**8. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS**

- 8.1 The assessment finds there to be significant landscape effects due to changes in character and land use of the Site during construction. Such effects will occur on any development site and are likely to comprise potential significant effects on the land use, landscape features including hedgerows and trees, the use of public rights of way; and tranquillity of the Site.
- 8.2 The changes would affect only small parts of the wider national, county and district character areas in which the site is located, and are not reported to be significantly harmful.
- 8.3 Views of construction activities will be limited to locations close to the Site. Potential significant effects are reported to occur from two local viewpoints a public footpath west of Wykham Farm Cottage adjacent to the Site (viewpoint 6) and the public footpath on Crouch Hill approximately 420m north-west of the Site (viewpoint 12). Moderately significant effects are reported to occur from two local viewpoints including Salt Way/Cycle Route 5 (viewpoint 2) and from where construction of housing would be seen through a gap in the trees and vegetation lining the route looking south, and the entrance gateway to Tudor Hall School (viewpoint 10).
- 8.4 Mitigation is proposed through an extensive Green Infrastructure Strategy comprising some 18 ha or over 30% of the site and seeks to deliver landscape, biodiversity and recreational enhancements and provide extensive areas for recreation. Furthermore, the Green Infrastructure provides landscape and visual benefits that include protection and enhancement of the existing vegetation framework; creation of green corridors and parkland designed to respect the setting of existing landscape features and public rights of way; and enclosure of the proposals and maintenance of the skyline in key views such as from Crouch Hill.
- 8.5 For the purposes of the LVIA, residual impacts have been defined as those remaining 15 years after completion, when proposed planting will have had the benefit of up to 25 years growth.

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- 8.6 Effects upon the landscape character of the Site reduce to moderately significant due to enhancement delivered by new strategic planting, improved recreational value and management of the existing vegetation as part of the Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- 8.7 After 15 years, moderate adverse effects on visual amenity are only predicted from Salt Way (viewpoint 10), the public footpath adjacent to Wykham Farm Cottage (viewpoint 6), the entrance gateway to Tudor Hall School (viewpoint 11), and the public footpath on Crouch Hill (viewpoint 12). Such effects will further reduce as the trees continue to mature.
- 8.8 In conclusion the landscape and visual effects that are predicted to result from the Proposed Development are not considered to be significant such that they would lead to unacceptable harm.

**9. ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY**

- 9.1 Turning to ecological impacts, no effects on any species or habitats of greater than minor adverse significance are predicted. These minor adverse effects should be considered in the context of the overall long term enhancements that include maturing of the new structural, hedgerow and marginal planting that will provide habitat for wildlife, in particular breeding birds and foraging bats.
- 9.2 The enhancements of the existing retained habitats and created habitats will be implemented and appropriate management of wildlife habitats will be maintained throughout the Site. It is therefore considered probable that there could be an overall minor beneficial residual impact on local species such as amphibians, birds, bats, invertebrates and common reptiles.

**10. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT**

- 10.1 The Master Plan has been designed to respect the setting of nearby heritage assets and will effectively reduce the level of non-physical (visual) effects upon the historic resource. No additional mitigation measures are therefore proposed, although the urbanising effect of the Proposed Development on the currently open rural settings of Salt Way, together with the Grade II Listed Wykham Farmhouse and Grade II Listed Buildings at Tudor Hall School, will result in minor adverse effects. The positive effect of enhancing public understanding and appreciation of the historic Salt Way through the provision of interpretation boards will reduce the residual significance of effect to minor/negligible adverse.

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- 10.2 As a result of the previous archaeological surveys and intrusive site investigations conducted within the Site in respect of the previous planning application, the development proposals have been tailored to allow preservation *in situ* of archaeological remains in the two easternmost fields within the Site boundary, through their inclusion within public open space. This includes the remains of the possible Neolithic causewayed enclosure and two potential Bronze Age round barrows.
- 10.3 Within the remainder of the Site, it is considered that any loss of, or damage to, the archaeological resource as a result of construction could be satisfactorily mitigated by a standard archaeological condition, securing preservation by record of the archaeological remains at an appropriate stage in the development process. As such, no residual adverse effects on these non-designated heritage assets are reported to arise.

**11. AGRICULTURE AND SOIL RESOURCES**

- 11.1 The Proposed Development would result in the loss of some 3.4 hectares (8.4 acres) of land in sub-grade 3a, which is within the “best and most versatile” category of agricultural land quality (grades 1 – 3a); some 35.5 hectares of agricultural land graded 3b; and some 10.5 hectares of land graded 4; which is of lower quality than the “best and most versatile” land. This loss is assessed as a minor adverse effect.
- 11.2 The re-use of topsoil within the Proposed Development and the application of standard measures to protect soil within landscaped and open areas would limit effects on the Site’s soil resources to no greater than minor adverse levels of significance.

**12. WATER RESOURCES**

- 12.1 Taking account of standard environmental protection measures (including those to be applied through the CEMP; para. 2.6) and the “hands off flow” approach adopted by Thames Water, will ensure effects on water resources would be negligible.

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- 12.2 The Proposed Development has been designed to limit surface water run-off from the Site to below the baseline rate, resulting in negligible effects on flood risk both within and surrounding the Site.

**13. GROUND CONDITIONS**

- 13.1 Taking account of standard environmental protection measures (including those to be applied through the CEMP; para. 2.6), the effects of the Proposed Development on ground conditions would also be negligible.

**14. UTILITIES**

- 14.1 Taking account of standard environmental protection measures to be applied through the CEMP (para. 2.6), as well as careful planning and execution of required supply reinforcements and diversions of existing utility infrastructure, no greater than negligible effects are predicted.

**15. WASTE**

- 15.1 A range of measures would be applied to reduce the generation of waste, encourage its re-use and recycling, and minimise the requirement for its disposal. During construction, the required Site Waste Management Plan would work in tandem with the CEMP to achieve these objectives. At occupation stage, a range of mitigation measures is proposed, including the provision of facilities for recycling and composting and the delivery of information to increase awareness of those facilities. As a result, no greater than negligible effects are predicted.

**16. CONCLUSION AND CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

- 16.1 Residual (post-mitigation) effects of more than minor significance (whether beneficial or adverse) would be limited to two areas: socio-economic impacts and landscape and visual effects.
- 16.2 Socio-economic effects would be beneficial (see section 4 above).
- 16.3 After 15 years effects upon the landscape character of the Site are moderately significant and moderate adverse effects on visual amenity are predicted in a number of areas to include from Salt Way; the public footpath adjacent to Wykham Farm

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Cottage; the entrance gateway to Tudor Hall School; and the public footpath on Crouch Hill. Such effects will further reduce as the trees continue to mature (see section 8 above).

- 16.4 The potential for cumulative impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Development in combination with development of additional and adjacent sites in the immediate areas, have been considered as part of the environmental assessments undertaken within this ES. The nature of the cumulative impacts that are likely to arise are reported as impacts on traffic generation, and by association, resultant impacts on noise and air quality.
- 16.5 No significant cumulative effects are anticipated to arise from the Proposed Development.
- 16.6 In overall terms, the outcome of the EIA is that significant beneficial effects are substantial, significant adverse effects are limited and beneficial effects outweigh adverse effects.

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