

The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

Application Reference Number: PL/2025/08778

Decision Date: 07/01/2026

Applicant:	Gleeson Land
Particulars of Development:	Request for an EIA Scoping Opinion, in accordance with Regulation 15 of The Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017 (as amended) Housing.
At:	Land East of Blackmore Farm, Melksham

Thank you for your request for a scoping opinion in relation to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the above-mentioned proposal.

Following careful consideration of the information provided, we are writing to provide you with a formal EIA scoping opinion.

1. INTRODUCTION

This Scoping Opinion Report is issued by Wiltshire Council in response to the request for a Scoping Opinion submitted on behalf of Gleeson Land under Regulation 15 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 2017.

The purpose of this Scoping Opinion is to provide guidance on the key environmental issues and topics that should be assessed in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed development. The scoping process helps to identify the likely significant effects of the development on the environment and the scope of information that should be provided in the EIA.

In order to provide this opinion I have had regard to the information provided by you within your Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report dated October 2025. Your conclusion at paragraph 1.12 that the proposed development falls within the remit of the EIA Regulations under Schedule 2 and that the development has potential for likely significant environmental impacts individually or cumulatively with other development is agreed.

In addition, section 12 of the Scoping Report 'Summary of EIA Scoping Report' that details the technical topics that will be included in the EIA is also agreed, subject to comments and advice from council consultees detailed below.

DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

The site consists of mainly agricultural land located to the east of Blackmore Farm. Residential developments fronting the A3102 Sandridge Common are located adjacent the northern boundary of the site. An existing solar farm is located directly to the east. The site is located approx. 430 metres from the eastern edge of Melksham and approx. 1.9km from the centre of

Melksham. Directly to the west of the site is the consented Blackmore Farm application (approved under application PL/2023/11188) for up to 500 dwellings.

In term of site constraints –

- The development site is located in the open countryside
- Blackmore Farm located to the west of the site is grade II listed
- The site falls within the Avon Open Clay Vale character area
- The Wooded Greensand Hill Special Character Area is located approximately 250 metres to the northeast.
- Rights of Way MELW26, MELW27, MELW40 and MELW41 are located adjacent and/or pass through the site
- The site consists of predominately Grade 3 (good to moderate quality land) around Blackmore Farm and Grade 4 (poor quality) further to the south. Paragraph 5.212 of the Scoping Report is noted confirming the agricultural land classification (ALC) of the EIA Study Area is Grade 3b – but this should be soil sample evidenced and verified as part of any formal application
- The site is not located with flood zone 2 or 3 however limited parts of the site are subject to high levels of surface water flooding

2. PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

The following key policies, legislation, and guidance documents are relevant to the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed development:

- The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990)
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 2017
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)
- Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 made in 2025 which allocates land for housing to meet local needs.
- Wiltshire Local Plan Pre-Submission Draft 2020-2038 (at Regulation 24 stage) – The Council's draft Local Plan has reached Regulation 24 stage and is proceeding through examination. It is therefore a material consideration which will be given weight as appropriate at the time of any subsequent application

Other Relevant Legislation: The scoping opinion should also refer to any specific legislation or guidance that may apply to the development, such as:

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (for European protected species and habitats).
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (for national protected species).
- The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (for flood risk and management).
- The Climate Change Act 2008 (for carbon emissions considerations).
- The Air Quality Standards Regulations (2010).
- The Noise Policy Statement for England

3. SCOPE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

As required by legislation, before adopting this scoping opinion, the following matters have been taken into account:-

- a) Any information provided by the applicant about the proposed development;

- b) The specific characteristics of the particular development;
- c) The specific characteristics of development of the type concerned; and
- d) The environmental features likely to be significantly affected by the development

Once an authority has adopted a scoping opinion this does not preclude it from requiring additional information in connection with any statement that may be submitted in connection with an application for planning permission.

Section 12 of the Scoping Report 'Summary of EIA Scoping Report' is agreed with regards those technical topics identified and proposed to be 'scoped out' and technical topics to be 'scoped in' of the EIA.

The following comments are also relevant and should be considered if you decide to submit an application/ EIA. Please note the comments do not cover all subjects listed under paragraphs 12.1 and 12.2 of the Scoping Report only those where it is considered a response is necessary.

Cumulative Impacts

Section 11 of the Scoping Report on the 'Cumulative Effect Assessment Methodology' is agreed.

Landscape and Visual Impact

The scope of the assessment is agreed as detailed in section 6 of the Scoping Report.

The following comments have also been received from the council's landscape officer which should be considered accordingly –

'With regards the EIA scoping Opinion for the above site I have read through the 'EDP LVIA Assessment Methodology' and would note the following.

Whilst I note the use of valued landscapes TGN 02-21 to appreciate the value of receptors and have no problem with this as part of the LVIA methodology I would also expect that as the site is not in a nationally designated landscape (although it sits adjacent to Special Landscape Area 5 'The higher land of Spyre and Bowood Parklands' that the LVIA would benefit from assessing the site itself and determining its landscape value under NPPF (2024) para 187 (a) and whether the threshold of 'valued landscape' has been reached.

I would also note that chapter 7 of the GLVIA 3rd Edition (2013) along with the TGN 2024-01 'Notes and Clarifications on GLVIA 3rd Edition 2013' both specifically mention cumulative assessment. It should be noted that the following 6 planning applications have, over the past 2 years submitted 1427 dwellings in a generally uncoordinated and piecemeal fashion with only three of the site along with this current application having come through the as yet unapproved Local Plan Review SHLAA analysis.

PL/2023/11188 - 500 dwellings (LPR Site)

PL/2024/07097 - 300 dwellings

PL/2024/10345 - 295 dwellings (LPR Site)

PL/2024/10624 - 77 dwellings

PL/2025/06105 - 50 dwellings

PL/2025/06749 - 205 dwellings (LPR Site)

These applications are at various stages in the planning system including two at appeal. With the site at approximately 27Ha and assuming a minimum development density of 10 units/Ha that would equate to at least a further 270 housing units being added to the eastern edge of the settlement edge of Melksham creating a potential of at least 1697 housing units added in 2-3 years if [the two] appeals are allowed and approvals gained.

This [would comprise] a significant addition to the settlement edge of Melksham which would extend development out to the boundary of Snarlton Farm 80Ha Solar farm, itself an industrialising manmade influence on the landscape character of the 'Open Clay Vale' that has recently been granted an operational life extension from 25 years to 40 years.

I would strongly recommend that a separate cumulative LVIA is undertaken setting out a separate baseline to the site specific LVIA that considers the landscape impacts of the developments noted above in a 'combined' assessment in line with LTTGN 2024-01 unless the developments listed have begun to be built out during the assessment phase then an 'additional' assessment would seem most appropriate.

It is likely that a separate cumulative LVIA methodology will need to be submitted as the current Appendix EDP1 fails to mention any cumulative assessment methodology and I would not wish it to get mixed up with the main site based LVIA, especially the baseline study and its interpretation.

Whether it is felt that other aspects of the EIA would benefit from cumulative analysis I will leave to other officers to comment on, but I would raise Green and Blue Infrastructure (WCS Core Policy 52) and the Wiltshire GBI strategy requires consideration of Climate, Biodiversity, and Health and Wellbeing which are landscape matters which crossover with other officers including climate, ecology, drainage and sustainable transport.

It would seem sensible to ensure the cumulative impacts of the development in combination with these other developments would form an important determining factor in understanding the true environmental impact of the development and consequently developing effective mitigating measures, I would suggest in line with Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework.

In accordance with the GLVIA, I would expect to be asked to confirm viewpoint locations based on a ZTV model. I would expect two models to be undertaken, one for the site based LVIA and one for the cumulative assessment in order to allow combined and sequential viewpoints to be separately highlighted for the cumulative LVIA, hence the importance of separating these assessments to avoid confusion (as per LI TGN 20-01 Step 3a).'

Also see Appendix A below for comments from Natural England.

Ecology and Biodiversity

The scope of the assessment is agreed as detailed in section 7 of the Scoping Report.

The following comments have been also received from the council's ecologist –

'The site is located to the east of Melksham and adjacent to a recently approved planning application (PL/2023/11188) for up to 500 dwellings, employment land, primary school, open

space and associated infrastructure. The site consists of arable fields bound by hedgerows and trees and there is a small pocket of woodland within the southern portion of the site.

The site is not covered by any statutory nature conservation designations. The site consists mainly of arable fields and supports some habitats of ecological value to local wildlife, contributing to habitat connectivity with the wider landscape area, providing function for commuting and foraging by a range of species, via hedgerows, tree lines and grass margins. The site also includes an area of woodland in the southern section of the site area. This is listed under the Natural England Priority Habitat Inventory as deciduous woodland priority habitat. This would need consideration in the EIA. Records on site and within the surrounding area include hazel dormice, great crested newts (GCN), bats, badgers, grass snake, barn owl, water vole and otter.

Overall, we agree with the scope of the biodiversity assessment proposed in Chapter 7 Biodiversity, however, please see comments below.

Water vole

The EIA Scoping Report states that no evidence of water vole was noted along the watercourse during the surveys in 2021 and 2024 and therefore they are considered to be absent from the site and are being scoped out of the ES. There are water vole records within the surrounding area, including on the Clackers Brook to the west and south of the site, therefore the ES will need to provide sufficient evidence and justification to support water vole being scoped out of the assessment.

Great crested newts (GCN)

The EIA Scoping Report sets out that surveys were undertaken in 2021 and 2024 and that the 7 ponds within 250m of the site have been assessed as being unsuitable or have had negative eDNA results for GCN. The site would appear to provide some suitable terrestrial habitat for GCN, therefore the ES will be expected to provide sufficient evidence and justification to support GCN being scoped out of the assessment.

Beaver

The stream that runs through the site is a tributary of the River Avon and there are numerous records of beavers on the River Avon approximately 1.9km to the west of the site. The EIA Scoping Report does not consider beavers, even to scope them out, therefore the ES should consider the potential for impacts on beavers which could be commuting along the stream.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Under the Environment Act 2021 an application on this site would be required to deliver a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and must be accompanied by a completed statutory metric calculation (including condition assessment sheets and maps) using the current version of the Natural England Biodiversity Metric.

Wildlife corridors

It is noted that the development of this site immediately adjacent to the consented development to the west, will significantly reduce the remaining gap between the urban area of Melksham and the large solar farm to the east, thereby reducing the potential for wildlife to readily commute north south around the eastern side Melksham. The application should therefore include a comprehensive green and blue infrastructure strategy that retains existing wildlife corridors and creates new ones to maintain habitat connectivity.

The ES should consider any mitigation and enhancement measures approved for the adjacent planning application to ensure a coordinated approach to wildlife protection and enhancement.'

Also see Appendix A below for comments from Natural England.

Noise and Vibration

Technical baseline and scope of assessment are agreed. Paragraphs 8.15 to 8.17 of the Scoping Report are noted and are welcomed.

Transport and Accessibility

Paragraph 9.33 of the Scoping Report is noted and agreed with regards cumulative effects of adjacent development. With regard to paragraph 9.34 other development in the area that should be reviewed include (as a minimum) –

- Land South of Snarlton Farm, Snarlton Lane, Melksham (currently at appeal)
- Land north of the A3102, Melksham (still to be determined)

The following comments have also been received from the council's highways officer –

'The site is located on the outskirts of Melksham and will be accessed directly off the classified A3102 Sandridge Common. This route and neighbouring communities may be affected by construction traffic to the site, however this will be for a limited time during the construction period. It is unlikely that any environmental impacts on the highway such as verge overrun from increased traffic will occur due to the nature of the existing roads in the immediate vicinity, however this could be controlled or mitigated by a Construction Traffic Management Plan that includes HGV routing.'

A future planning application would be expected to include a robust CTMP to minimise negative highways impacts, however I do not consider this needs an EIA from a Highway and Transport point of view.'

Air Quality

Technical baseline and scope of assessment are agreed. Comments in paragraph 10.15 regarding air quality in-combination effects with adjacent development is welcomed.

Also see Appendix A below for comments from Natural England regarding air quality.

Water Environment and Flood Risk

It is agreed that this technical topic has been scoped out of the EIA however see Appendix B below detailing comments from the Environment Agency and Appendix C detailing comments from the council's drainage team.

Also see Appendix A below for comments from Natural England regarding water quality.

Cultural Heritage and Archaeology

It is agreed that this technical topic has been scoped out of the EIA however the following comments have been received from the council's conservation officer –

'There are no designated heritage assets located within the proposed development area itself and it does not fall within any particularly sensitive area from the point of view of the built historic environment. Expected impacts relate to the settings of nearby assets and I consider that the level of impact which would result can reasonably be expected to be able to be assessed via the documents which would usually be submitted during the planning application process (including Heritage Assessment required under paragraph 194 of the NPPF). As a result, I agree with the conclusions of the Environmental Impact Scoping Report that impacts on Blackmore Farm are most likely but that these will not result in 'significant' impacts for the purposes of an EIA. As a result, I would not expect built heritage to be included as a chapter within any future Environmental impact Assessment (EIA) and have no objection to it being scoped out as proposed.'

In respect of the requirements of the NPPF, I note that a preliminary Archaeological and Heritage Baseline Assessment has been submitted. Whilst I make no comment at this stage on the conclusions reached, its scope appears reasonable but I would suggest that consideration also be given to any impact on assets to the east on rising land of Sandridge including the Sandridge Park Estate and Sandridge Tower. I note that the Environmental Impact Scoping Report briefly notes the potential for cumulative impact when taken into consideration with the site already approved and I would expect any final Heritage Assessment to discuss this issue in more detail.'

Climate Change

It is agreed that this technical topic has been scoped out of the EIA however see Appendix A below for comments from Natural England regarding climate change.

Appendix A Comments from Natural England

Date: 18 November 2025
Our ref: 533354
Your ref: PL/2025/08778



Wiltshire Council

BY EMAIL ONLY

Consultations
Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 900

Dear Karen Dabinett & Simon Day

Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping consultation (Regulation 15 (4) of the Town and Country Planning EIA Regulations 2017): EIA Scoping for up to 300 residential dwelling.
Location: Land East of Blackmore Farm, Melksham

Thank you for seeking our advice on the scope of the Environmental Statement (ES) in the consultation dated and received on 10 November 2025.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

A robust assessment of environmental impacts and opportunities based on relevant and up to date environmental information should be undertaken prior to a decision on whether to grant planning permission. Annex A to this letter provides Natural England's advice on the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed development.

Further guidance is set out in Planning Practice Guidance on [environmental assessment, natural environment and climate change](#).

Should the proposal be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment then, in accordance with Section 4 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Natural England should be consulted again.

Please note that Natural England must be consulted on Environmental Statements.

Please send any new consultations or further information on this consultation to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Kimberley McDowell
Consultations Team

Annex A – Natural England Advice on EIA Scoping

General Principles

[Schedule 4](#) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, sets out the information that should be included in an Environmental Statement (ES) to assess impacts on the natural environment. This includes:

- A description of the development – including physical characteristics and the full land use requirements of the site during construction and operational phases
- Expected residues and emissions (water, air and soil pollution, noise, vibration, light, heat, radiation etc.) resulting from the operation of the proposed development
- An assessment of alternatives and clear reasoning as to why the preferred option has been chosen
- A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development including biodiversity (for example fauna and flora), land, including land take, soil, water, air, climate (for example greenhouse gas emissions, impacts relevant to adaptation, cultural heritage and landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors
- A description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment – this should cover direct effects but also any indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium, and long term, permanent and temporary, positive, and negative effects. Effects should relate to the existence of the development, the use of natural resources (in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity) and the emissions from pollutants. This should also include a description of the forecasting methods to predict the likely effects on the environment
- A description of the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and where possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment
- A non-technical summary of the information
- An indication of any difficulties (technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered by the applicant in compiling the required information

Further guidance is set out in Planning Practice Guidance on [environmental assessment](#) and [natural environment](#).

Cumulative and in-combination effects

The ES should fully consider the implications of the whole development proposal. This should include an assessment of all supporting infrastructure.

An impact assessment should identify, describe, and evaluate the effects that are likely to result from the project in combination with other projects and activities that are being, have been or will be carried out. The following types of projects should be included in such an assessment (subject to available information):

- a. existing completed projects;
- b. approved but uncompleted projects;
- c. ongoing activities;
- d. plans or projects for which an application has been made and which are under consideration by the consenting authorities; and
- e. plans and projects which are reasonably foreseeable, i.e. projects for which an application has not yet been submitted, but which are likely to progress before completion of the development and for which sufficient information is available to assess the likelihood of cumulative and in-combination effects.

Environmental data

Natural England is required to make available information it holds where requested to do so. National datasets held by Natural England are available at <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/publications/data/default.aspx>.

Detailed information on the natural environment is available at www.magic.gov.uk.

Natural England's SSSI Impact Risk Zones are a GIS dataset which can be used to help identify the potential for the development to impact on a SSSI. The dataset and user guidance can be accessed from the [Natural England Open Data Geoportal](#).

Natural England does not hold local information on local sites, local landscape character, priority habitats and species or protected species. Local environmental data should be obtained from the appropriate local bodies. This may include the local environmental records centre, the local wildlife trust, local geo-conservation group or other recording society.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

General principles

The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (paragraphs 192-196) sets out how to take account of biodiversity and geodiversity interests in planning decisions. Further guidance is set out in Planning Practice Guidance on the [natural environment](#).

The potential impact of the proposal upon sites and features of nature conservation interest and opportunities for nature recovery and biodiversity net gain should be included in the assessment.

Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) is the process of identifying, quantifying, and evaluating the potential impacts of defined actions on ecosystems or their components. EclA may be carried out as part of the EIA process or to support other forms of environmental assessment or appraisal. [Guidelines](#) have been developed by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

Local planning authorities have a [duty](#) to conserve and enhance biodiversity as part of their decision making. Conserving biodiversity can include habitat restoration or enhancement. Further information is available [here](#).

Designated nature conservation sites

The proposal is unlikely to adversely impact any European or internationally designated nature conservation sites (including 'habitats sites' under the NPPF) or nationally designated sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves or Marine Conservation Zones).

Regionally and Locally Important Sites

The ES should consider any impacts upon local wildlife and geological sites, including local nature reserves. Local Sites are identified by the local wildlife trust, geoconservation group or other local group and protected under the NPPF (paragraph 192 and 193). The ES should set out proposals for mitigation of any impacts and if appropriate, compensation measures and opportunities for enhancement and improving connectivity with wider ecological networks. Contact the relevant local body for further information.

Protected Species

The conservation of species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 is explained in Part IV and Annex A of Government Circular 06/2005 [Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System](#).

The ES should assess the impact of all phases of the proposal on protected species (including, for example, great crested newts, reptiles, birds, water voles, badgers and bats). Natural England does not hold comprehensive information regarding the locations of species protected by law. Records of protected species should be obtained from appropriate local biological record centres, nature conservation organisations and local groups. Consideration should be given to the wider context of the site, for example in terms of habitat linkages and protected species populations in the wider area.

The area likely to be affected by the development should be thoroughly surveyed by competent ecologists at appropriate times of year for relevant species and the survey results, impact assessments and appropriate accompanying mitigation strategies included as part of the ES. Surveys should always be carried out in optimal survey time periods and to current guidance by suitably qualified and, where necessary, licensed, consultants.

Natural England has adopted [standing advice](#) for protected species, which includes guidance on survey and mitigation measures. A separate protected species licence from Natural England or Defra may also be required.

District Level Licensing for Great Crested Newts

District level licensing (DLL) is a type of strategic mitigation licence for great crested newts (GCN) granted in certain areas at a local authority or wider scale. A [DLL scheme for GCN](#) may be in place at the location of the development site. If a DLL scheme is in place, developers can make a financial contribution to strategic, off-site habitat compensation instead of applying for a separate licence or carrying out individual detailed surveys. By demonstrating that DLL will be used, impacts on GCN can be scoped out of detailed assessment in the Environmental Statement.

Priority Habitats and Species

Priority Habitats and Species are of particular importance for nature conservation and included in the England Biodiversity List published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Most priority habitats will be mapped either as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, on the Magic website or as Local Wildlife Sites. Lists of priority habitats and species can be found [here](#). Natural England does not routinely hold species data. Such data should be collected when impacts on priority habitats or species are considered likely.

Consideration should also be given to the potential environmental value of brownfield sites, often found in urban areas and former industrial land. Sites can be checked against the (draft) national Open Mosaic Habitat (OMH) inventory published by Natural England and freely available to [download](#). Further information is also available [here](#).

An appropriate level habitat survey should be carried out on the site, to identify any important habitats present. In addition, ornithological, botanical, and invertebrate surveys should be carried out at appropriate times in the year, to establish whether any scarce or priority species are present.

The Environmental Statement should include details of:

- Any historical data for the site affected by the proposal (e.g. from previous surveys)
- Additional surveys carried out as part of this proposal
- The habitats and species present

- The status of these habitats and species (e.g. whether priority species or habitat)
- The direct and indirect effects of the development upon those habitats and species
- Full details of any mitigation or compensation measures
- Opportunities for biodiversity net gain or other environmental enhancement

Ancient Woodland, ancient and veteran trees

The ES should assess the impacts of the proposal on any ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, and the scope to avoid and mitigate for adverse impacts. It should also consider opportunities for enhancement.

Natural England maintains the Ancient Woodland [Inventory](#) which can help identify ancient woodland. The [wood pasture and parkland inventory](#) sets out information on wood pasture and parkland.

The [ancient tree inventory](#) provides information on the location of ancient and veteran trees.

Natural England and the Forestry Commission have prepared [standing advice](#) on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees.

Biodiversity net gain

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states that decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

Biodiversity Net Gain is additional to statutory requirements relating to designated nature conservation sites and protected species.

Proposals for mandatory biodiversity net gain should be in line with the Environment Act 2021 and supporting regulations. Further information on biodiversity net gain, including [draft Planning Practice Guidance](#), can be found [here](#)

The statutory [biodiversity metric](#), together with ecological advice, should be used to calculate the change in biodiversity resulting from proposed development and demonstrate how proposals can achieve a net gain.

The metric should be used to:

- assess or audit the biodiversity unit value of land within the application area
- calculate the losses and gains in biodiversity unit value resulting from proposed development
- demonstrate that the required percentage biodiversity net gain will be achieved

Biodiversity Net Gain outcomes can be achieved on site, off-site or through a combination of both. On-site provision should be considered first. Delivery should create or enhance habitats of equal or higher value. When delivering net gain, opportunities should be sought to link delivery to relevant plans or strategies e.g. Green Infrastructure Strategies or Local Nature Recovery Strategies.

Opportunities for wider environmental gains should also be considered.

Landscape:

Landscape and visual impacts

The environmental assessment should refer to the relevant [National Character Areas](#). Character area profiles set out descriptions of each landscape area and statements of environmental opportunity.

The ES should include a full assessment of the potential impacts of the development on local landscape character using [landscape assessment methodologies](#). We encourage the use of Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), based on the good practice guidelines produced jointly by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment in 2013. LCA provides a sound basis for guiding, informing, and understanding the ability of any location to accommodate change and to make positive proposals for conserving, enhancing or regenerating character.

A landscape and visual impact assessment should also be carried out for the proposed development and surrounding area. Natural England recommends use of the methodology set out in *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 2013* ((3rd edition) produced by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment and Management. For National Parks and AONBs, we advise that the assessment also includes effects on the 'special qualities' of the designated landscape, as set out in the statutory management plan for the area. These identify the particular landscape and related characteristics which underpin the natural beauty of the area and its designation status.

The assessment should also include the cumulative effect of the development with other relevant existing or proposed developments in the area. This should include an assessment of the impacts of other proposals currently at scoping stage.

To ensure high quality development that responds to and enhances local landscape character and distinctiveness, the siting and design of the proposed development should reflect local characteristics and, wherever possible, use local materials. Account should be taken of local design policies, design codes and guides as well as guidance in the [National Design Guide](#) and [National Model Design Code](#). The ES should set out the measures to be taken to ensure the development will deliver high standards of design and green infrastructure.

It should also set out detail of layout alternatives, where appropriate, with a justification of the selected option in terms of landscape impact and benefit.

Heritage Landscapes

The ES should include an assessment of the impacts on any land in the area affected by the development which qualifies for conditional exemption from capital taxes on the grounds of outstanding scenic, scientific, or historic interest. An up-to-date list is available at www.hmrc.gov.uk/heritage/lbsearch.htm.

Connecting People with nature

The ES should consider potential impacts on access land, common land, public rights of way and, where appropriate, the England Coast Path and coastal access routes and coastal margin in the vicinity of the development, in line with NPPF paragraph 105. It should assess the scope to mitigate for any adverse impacts. Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIP) can be used to identify public rights of way within or adjacent to the proposed site that should be maintained or enhanced.

Measures to help people to better access the countryside for quiet enjoyment and opportunities to connect with nature should be considered. Such measures could include reinstating existing footpaths or the creation of new footpaths, cycleways, and bridleways. Links to other green networks and, where appropriate, urban fringe areas should also be explored to help promote the creation of wider green infrastructure. Access to nature within the development site should also be considered, including the role that natural links have in connecting habitats and providing potential pathways for movements of species.

Relevant aspects of local authority green infrastructure strategies should be incorporated where appropriate.

Soils and Agricultural Land Quality

Soils are a valuable, finite natural resource and should also be considered for the ecosystem services they provide, including for food production, water storage and flood mitigation, as a carbon store, reservoir of biodiversity and buffer against pollution. It is therefore important that the soil resources are protected and sustainably managed. Impacts from the development on soils and best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land should be considered in line with paragraphs 187 and 188 of the NPPF. Further guidance is set out in the Natural England [Guide to assessing development proposals on agricultural land](#).

As set out in paragraph 223 of the NPPF, new sites or extensions to sites for peat extraction should not be granted planning permission.

The following issues should be considered and, where appropriate, included as part of the Environmental Statement (ES):

- The degree to which soils would be disturbed or damaged as part of the development
- The extent to which agricultural land would be disturbed or lost as part of this development, including whether any best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land would be impacted.

This may require a detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey if one is not already available. For information on the availability of existing ALC information see www.magic.gov.uk.

- Where an ALC and soil survey of the land is required, this should normally be at a detailed level, e.g. one auger boring per hectare, (or more detailed for a small site) supported by pits dug in each main soil type to confirm the physical characteristics of the full depth of the soil resource, i.e. 1.2 metres. The survey data can inform suitable soil handling methods and appropriate reuse of the soil resource where required (e.g. agricultural reinstatement, habitat creation, landscaping, allotments and public open space).
- The ES should set out details of how any adverse impacts on BMV agricultural land can be minimised through site design/masterplan.
- The ES should set out details of how any adverse impacts on soils can be avoided or minimised and demonstrate how soils will be sustainably used and managed, including consideration in site design and master planning, and areas for green infrastructure or biodiversity net gain. The aim will be to minimise soil handling and maximise the sustainable use and management of the available soil to achieve successful after-uses and minimise off-site impacts.

Further information is available in the [Defra Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soil on Development Sites](#) and

The British Society of Soil Science Guidance Note [Benefitting from Soil Management in Development and Construction](#).

Air Quality

Air quality in the UK has improved over recent decades but air pollution remains a significant issue. For example, approximately 85% of protected nature conservation sites are currently in exceedance of nitrogen levels where harm is expected (critical load) and approximately 87% of sites exceed the

level of ammonia where harm is expected for lower plants (critical level of 1µg) ^[1]. A priority action in the England Biodiversity Strategy is to reduce air pollution impacts on biodiversity. The Government's Clean Air Strategy also has a number of targets to reduce emissions including to reduce damaging deposition of reactive forms of nitrogen by 17% over England's protected priority sensitive habitats by 2030, to reduce emissions of ammonia against the 2005 baseline by 16% by 2030 and to reduce emissions of NO_x and SO₂ against a 2005 baseline of 73% and 88% respectively by 2030. Shared Nitrogen Action Plans (SNAPs) have also been identified as a tool to reduce environmental damage from air pollution.

The planning system plays a key role in determining the location of developments which may give rise to pollution, either directly, or from traffic generation, and hence planning decisions can have a significant impact on the quality of air, water and land. The ES should take account of the risks of air pollution and how these can be managed or reduced. This should include taking account of any strategic solutions or SNAPs, which may be being developed or implemented to mitigate the impacts on air quality. Further information on air pollution impacts and the sensitivity of different habitats/designated sites can be found on the Air Pollution Information System (www.apis.ac.uk).

Information on air pollution modelling, screening and assessment can be found on the following websites:

- SCAIL Combustion and SCAIL Agriculture - <http://www.scail.ceh.ac.uk/>
- Ammonia assessment for agricultural development <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/intensive-farming-risk-assessment-for-your-environmental-permit>
- Environment Agency Screening Tool for industrial emissions <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/air-emissions-risk-assessment-for-your-environmental-permit>
- Defra Local Air Quality Management Area Tool (Industrial Emission Screening Tool) – England <http://www.airqualityengland.co.uk/laqm>

Natural England has produced *'Air pollution and development: advice for local authorities. How to assess sector-specific planning applications that could affect air quality on a protected site'*. This standing advice is to help planning authorities understand the impact on statutory protected sites from particular developments that emit specific air pollutants. The advice covers emissions of ammonia (NH₃), nitrogen oxides (NO, NO₂ or NO_x), nitrogen deposition, acid deposition and sulphur dioxide (SO₂).

The standing advice is Natural England's formal statutory advice and is a material consideration. It provides decision makers with the information needed to fulfil their statutory duties when making decisions on planning applications with potential air pollution impacts.

Water Quality

The planning system plays a key role in determining the location of developments which may give rise to water pollution, and hence planning decisions can have a significant impact on water quality, and land. The assessment should take account of the risks of water pollution and how these can be managed or reduced. A number of water dependent protected nature conservation sites have been identified as failing condition due to elevated nutrient levels and nutrient neutrality is consequently required to enable development to proceed without causing further damage to these sites. If your planning application is affected by Nutrient Neutrality, the ES needs to take account of any strategic solutions for nutrient neutrality or Diffuse Water Pollution Plans, which may be being developed or implemented to mitigate and address the impacts of elevated nutrient levels. These solutions or plans should be relevant to the specific planning consultation site. Further information can be obtained from the Local Planning Authority.

Climate Change

The ES should identify how the development affects the ability of the natural environment (including habitats, species, and natural processes) to adapt to climate change, including its ability to provide adaptation for people. This should include impacts on the vulnerability or resilience of a natural feature (i.e. what's already there and affected) as well as impacts on how the environment can accommodate change for both nature and people, for example whether the development affects species ability to move and adapt. Nature-based solutions, such as providing green infrastructure on-site and in the surrounding area (e.g. to adapt to flooding, drought and heatwave events), habitat creation and peatland restoration, should be considered. The ES should set out the measures that will be adopted to address impacts.

Further information is available from the [Committee on Climate Change's \(CCC\) Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk](#), the [National Adaptation Programme \(NAP\)](#), the [Climate Change Impacts Report Cards](#) (biodiversity, infrastructure, water etc.) and the [UKCP18 climate projections](#).

The Natural England and RSPB [Climate Change Adaptation Manual](#) (2020) provides extensive information on climate change impacts and adaptation for the natural environment and adaptation focussed nature-based solutions for people. It includes the Landscape Scale Climate Change Assessment Method that can help assess impacts and vulnerabilities on natural environment features and identify adaptation actions. Natural England's [Nature Networks Evidence Handbook](#) (2020) also provides extensive information on planning and delivering nature networks for people and biodiversity.

The ES should also identify how the development impacts the natural environment's ability to store and sequester greenhouse gases, in relation to climate change mitigation and the natural environment's contribution to achieving net zero by 2050. Natural England's [Carbon Storage and Sequestration by Habitat report](#) (2021) and the British Ecological Society's [nature-based solutions report](#) (2021) provide further information.

Contribution to local environmental initiatives and priorities

The ES should consider the contribution the development could make to relevant local environmental initiatives and priorities to enhance the environmental quality of the development and deliver wider environmental gains. This should include considering proposals set out in relevant local strategies or supplementary planning documents including landscape strategies, green infrastructure strategies, tree and woodland strategies, biodiversity strategies or biodiversity opportunity areas.

Appendix B Comments from the Environment Agency

Mr Steven Sims
Wiltshire Council
Development Services Central
County Hall, Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

Our ref: WX/2025/139460/01-L01
Your ref: PL/2025/08778
Date: 20 November 2025

Dear Mr Sims

EIA SCOPING OPINION - CONSTRUCT UP TO 300 RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS, WITH GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACCESS

LAND EAST OF BLACKMORE FARM, MELKSHAM

Flood Risk

The site falls within flood zones 2 and 3. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will need to accompany any future planning application. This should consider all sources of flooding.

Sequential test - advice to LPA

In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), development in flood risk areas should not be permitted if there are reasonably available alternative sites, appropriate for the proposed development, in areas with a lower risk of flooding. The sequential test establishes if this is the case.

Avoiding flood risk through the sequential test is the most effective way of addressing flood risk because it places the least reliance on measures such as flood defences, flood warnings and property level resilience.

Who undertakes the sequential test?

It is for you, as the local planning authority (LPA), to determine an appropriate area of search and to decide whether the sequential test has been passed, with reference to the information you hold on land availability. You may also ask the applicant to identify any other 'reasonably available' sites which are on the open market and to check on the current status of identified sites to determine if they can be considered 'reasonably available'. Further guidance on the area of search can be found in the planning practice guidance [here](#).

Water Supply and Wastewater

Adequate water and wastewater infrastructure is needed to support sustainable development. National Planning Policy Guidance identifies that a healthy water environment will also deliver multiple benefits, such as helping to enhance the natural

environment generally and adapting to climate change. This issue should be included and assessed in any EIA.

The [EU Water Framework Directive](#) applies to surface waters (and groundwater). It requires member states, among other things, to prevent deterioration of aquatic ecosystems and protect, enhance and restore water bodies to 'good' status.

The NPPF Planning Practice Guidance states that when drawing up wastewater treatment proposals for any development, the first presumption is to provide a system of foul drainage discharging into a public sewer to be treated at a public sewage treatment works (those provided and operated by the water and sewerage companies). This should be done in consultation with the sewerage company of the area.

Where a connection to a public foul sewer is not feasible (in terms of cost and/or practicality) a package sewage treatment plant can be considered. The package sewage treatment plant should offer treatment so that the final discharge from it meets the standards set by the required Environment Agency Environmental Permit

A proposal for a package sewage treatment plant and infrastructure should set out clearly the responsibility and means of operation and management to ensure that the permit is not likely to be infringed during the life of the plant.

Sustainable Construction

Sustainable design and construction should be implemented across the proposed development. This is important in limiting the effects of and adapting to climate change. Running costs for occupants can also be significantly reduced.

Biodiversity

The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that pursuing sustainable development includes moving from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature, and that a core principle for planning is that it should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution.

Information on biodiversity impacts and opportunities should inform all stages of development including, for instance, site selection and design including any pre-application consultation as well as the application itself.

Groundwater Protection / Contaminated Land

If historic use of the site may have caused contamination, then NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing both new and existing development from contributing to, or being put at risk from unacceptable levels of water pollution. Government policy also states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is presented.

Further guidance on what should be contained in the assessment and issues associated with groundwater protection can be found in our Groundwater Protection Policy document (GP3) which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/groundwater-protection-principles-and-practice-gp3>

GP3 is intended to be used by anyone interested in groundwater and in particular those wanting to undertake activities which have the potential to impact on groundwater.

Pollution Prevention during Construction

Safeguards should be implemented during the construction phase to minimise the risks of pollution from the development. Such safeguards should cover:

- the use of plant and machinery
- oils/chemicals and materials
- wheel washing and dirty water disposal
- the use and routing of plant and vehicles
- the location and form of work and storage areas and compounds
- the control and removal of spoil and wastes.

The applicant should refer to the Environment Agency's Pollution Prevention Guidelines at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/pollution-prevention-guidance-ppg>

Waste

Should this proposal be granted planning permission, then in accordance with the waste hierarchy, we wish the applicant to consider reduction, reuse and recovery of waste in preference to offsite incineration and disposal to landfill during site construction. If you require more specific guidance it is available on our website www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/waste/.

NOTE TO APPLICANT

Planning Advice – Charging

Please note, we may charge for further technical input into areas of the planning process, beyond the environmental issues identified above. Our charged advice is provided through a formal agreement made up of an offer letter, a programme of advice and [standard terms and conditions](#). We will discuss the advice you need with you and agree a programme to specify the tasks that will be carried out.

The programme will also give the approximate timetable and cost for the advice. The programme can be varied by written agreement for any changes that need to be made. Charges are based on cost recovery and have been set at £115 per hour.

Please note that the view expressed in this letter is in response to a scoping opinion only and does not represent our final view in relation to any future planning application made in relation to this site. We reserve the right to change our position should new information, or updates to guidance occur, in relation to any such application.

The applicant should seek their own expert advice in relation to technical matters relevant to any planning application before submission.

Yours sincerely

Ms Ellie Challans

Sustainable Places - Planning Specialist

02030 259311

wx.sp@environment-agency.gov.uk

Appendix C Comments from the Councils Drainage team

To: Development Management

From: Drainage Team (AtkinsRéalis)

Planning App Ref: PL/2025/08778

Service Ref:

Date: 21/11/2025

PROPOSAL

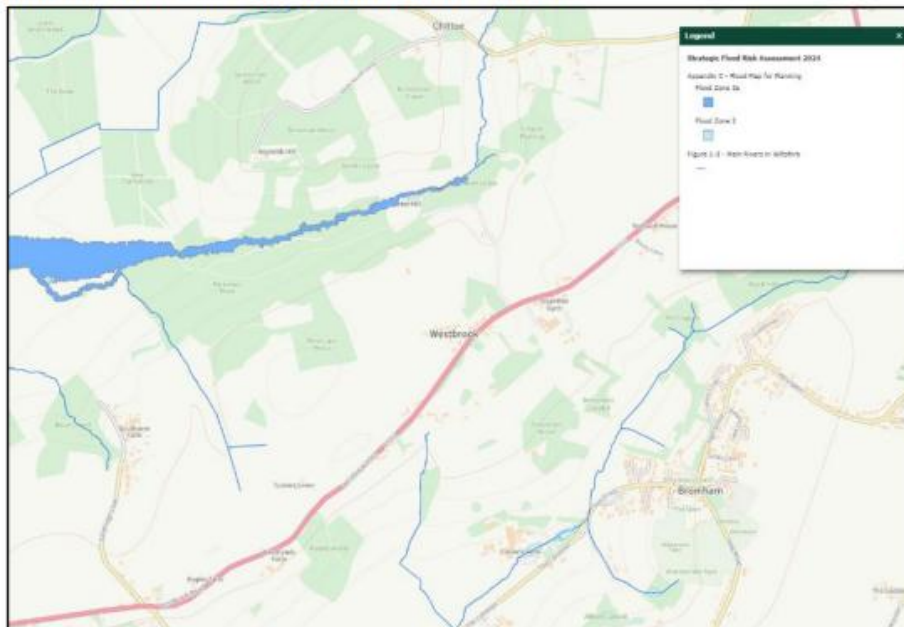
Request for an EIA Scoping Opinion, in accordance with Regulation 15 of The Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017 (as amended) Housing.

SITE LOCATION

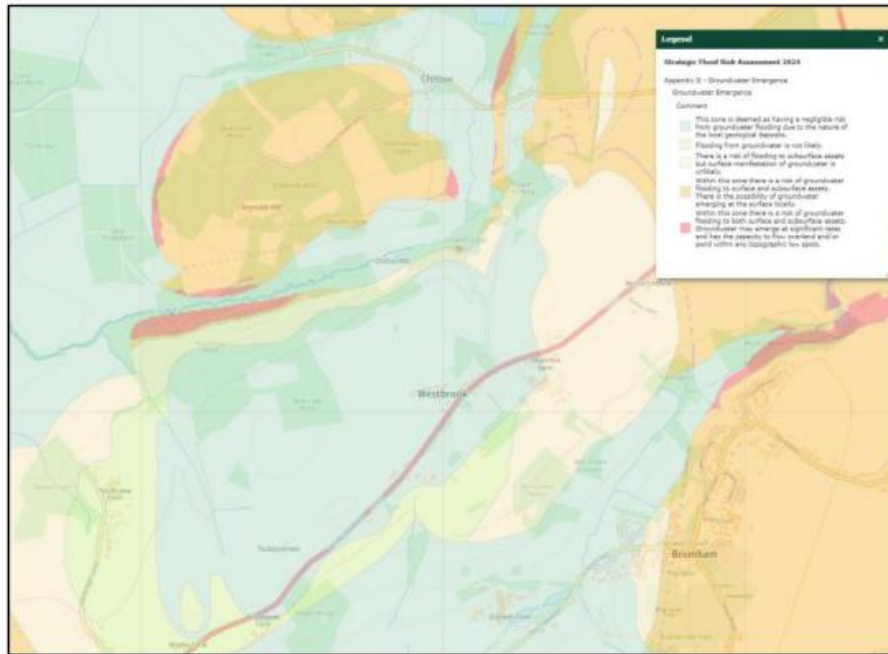
Land East of Blackmore Farm, Melksham.

The site is located adjacent to 1x unnamed inland river.

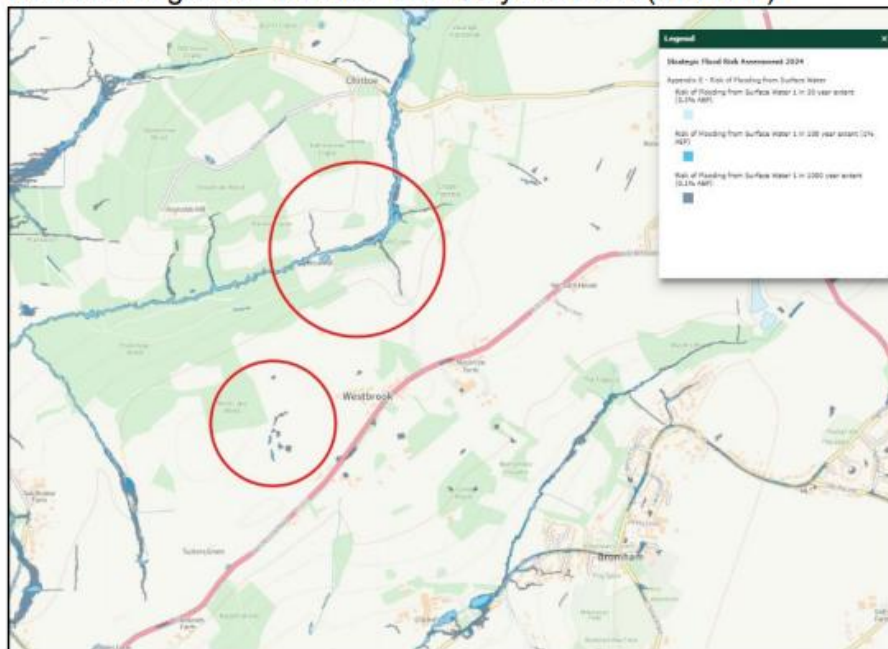
The Wiltshire Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, SFRA Data Explorer, has indicated that the site is located within Flood Zone 1.



The site does have a risk of groundwater flooding to surface and subsurface assets with localised groundwater emergence, which will need to be managed as part of the drainage strategy for the development.



According to the SFRA Explorer, the small areas of the site are also indicated to be at flood risk from rainfall greater than the 1 in 100-year event (1% AEP).



A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required for this application. The site-specific FRA should demonstrate that the site is not adversely affected by flood risk from different sources, and how the flood risk from all sources will be managed without increasing flood risk to the development itself or elsewhere. It should also outline the proposed drainage strategy for the site. The applicant is referred to the Environment Agency's advice on how to prepare an FRA, as well as their standing advice for vulnerable developments.

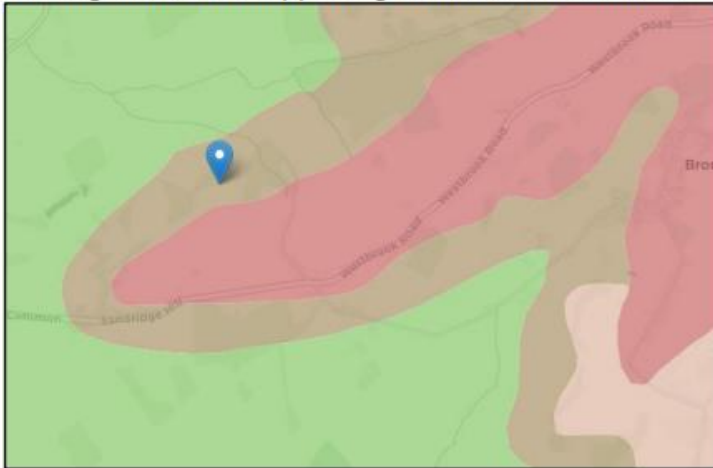
The applicant shall review all published Section 19 reports on historic flooding within Wiltshire and incorporate these into their holistic assessment of flood risk, and historic flood events. These reports can be found on the council website here [Flooding - Wiltshire Council](#)).

APPLICATION DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- EIA Scoping Report.
- Appendix 5.2 BRD4599-OR1-A-Melksham DS_Parts 3-7 of 7.

DRAINAGE STRATEGY / DRAINAGE DESIGN

Based on BGS/Cranfield University Soilscapes mapping, the site is indicated to be underlain by freely draining slightly acidic sandy soils (**red** – soilscape 10) and slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage (**brown**– soilscape 8). The suitability of infiltration to dispose of surface water will need to be assessed by the applicant using appropriate Ground Investigations and supporting detailed desk studies.



Based on DEFRA Magic Maps the site has been shown not to be in Source Protection Region. Additionally, the site is shown to be a medium priority zone for issues regarding surface water nitrate, sediment and phosphate; and a lower spatial priority zone for woodland water quality.

The applicant should note that in all instances the preference should be to utilise blue-green SuDS which provide multi-faceted benefits to the site (in terms of water quantity, quality, amenity and biodiversity); for example, for attenuation features preference should be given to use of swales / ponds / detention basins (if technically feasible) instead of attenuation tanks.

The applicant should adopt a holistic approach to planning the site, and sufficient space for SuDS features should be provided at an early stage in order to fulfil the requirements of the National Standards for SuDS; the LLFA will not accept statements that there is insufficient space for SuDS or that SuDS have not been utilised due to cost.

Any proposals must be designed in accordance with the National Standards for SuDS and the latest SuDS Manual (C753). The National Standards for SuDS will be applicable unless the Council's own requirements are more stringent.

The LLFA would consider this to be a greenfield site for the purposes of planning.

The applicant should note the EA's updated climate change guidance (dated 27 May 2022) when preparing the Flood Risk Assessment / Drainage Strategy.

The developer should provide the following information as part of future planning applications in accordance with the [National Standards for SuDS](#):

Standard 1: runoff destinations

- Existing greenfield/brownfield runoff rates for the site.
- Post development runoff rates. These must also be in accordance with Wiltshire Council's betterment policy update, which can be found [here](#).
- The strategy mimics the existing drainage characteristics of the site by retaining and utilising any existing drainage features.
- Evidence that the [surface water disposal hierarchy](#) has been applied and how all other options have been exhausted.
- If infiltration is proposed, it is implemented in manner that does not create an offsite impact, particularly if there are reports of groundwater flooding in the area.
- Consent for any outfalls from the proposed drainage systems into a public sewer or other drainage system not owned by the applicant.

Standard 2: interception

- The first 5mm of rainfall from the majority of rainfall events will be managed by interception features and will not result in runoff from the site to surface water or piped systems.
- SuDS source control measures to manage water quantity and maintain water quality will be implemented wherever possible, and throughout the management train, so the development is not reliant upon large attenuation features close to the points of discharge.
- A schedule and plan of interception features must be provided, showing their location, type, and contributing catchment.

Standard 3: management of extreme rainfall and flooding

- A detailed topographical survey that clearly identifies the existing drainage features on the site as well as level contours to show overland flow routes.
- Existing flood flow routes through the site have been maintained or where they will be affected, adequate measures to intercept and safely control flows through the site have been provided to ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere.
- Exceedance routes that minimise the risks to people and property.
- Evidence that the finished floor levels above the maximum predicted 100-year flood level or if no flooding is predicted, at a sufficient height above the SW drainage cover levels.
- The drainage strategy does not increase flood risk as a result of catchment transfer.
- All proposed drainage features are outside flood zones 2 and 3 and where they are adjacent to an ordinary watercourse, they are not located within the EA surface water flood maps. Where drainage features are located adjacent to flood zones 2 and 3, they must be above the 1 in 100 year plus climate change flood level. This information can be provided by the EA.
- Calculations and drawings for the drainage system design showing designated holding areas and conveyance routes based on no flooding on site for a 1 in 30 year plus climate change rainfall event.
- Calculations and drawings for the drainage system design showing designated holding areas and conveyance routes based on no flooding on site for a 1 in 100 year plus climate change rainfall event in respect to a building (including basement) or utility plant susceptible to water within the development.
- Calculations should include an allowance for increased surface water runoff, as a result of urban creep, in accordance with LASOO guidance.
- Hydraulic Models should set the MADD factor / additional storage volume factor to $0\text{m}^3 / \text{ha}$ in order to prevent an overestimation of storage capacity in the proposed drainage network.
- If the drainage model includes runoff from the full site (both permeable and impermeable areas), the default Cv values of 0.75 (summer) and 0.84 (winter) may be used. If runoff is only included from impermeable catchment areas within the drainage model, a Cv value of 1 must be used.

- If attenuation tanks are proposed that an allowance for reduced attenuation volume due to silt ingress (as per Section 21.9.9 of the SuDS Manual CIRIA C753).

Standard 4: water quality

- The applicant must provide a pollution hazard assessment for all areas draining to SuDS features, and demonstrate that the proposed treatment train achieves the required pollution mitigation indices for suspended solids, metals, and hydrocarbons, using the Simple Index Approach (CIRIA SuDS Manual C753, Table 26.3).
- At least two stages of SuDS treatment must be provided for runoff from high-risk areas (e.g., car parks, roads), and at least one stage for low-risk areas (e.g., roofs).
- Calculations and supporting plans must be submitted to evidence compliance.
- A maintenance plan must be provided to ensure the long-term effectiveness of water quality treatment.

Standard 5: amenity

- The applicant must provide details of how SuDS features will deliver amenity benefits, including integration with public open space, accessibility, safety, and opportunities for recreation or education. Plans should clearly show how SuDS contribute to the quality and usability of the site for future occupants and the wider community. Note this may require additional engagement with the council's urban design and landscape officers.

Standard 6: biodiversity

- The applicant must provide details of how SuDS features will deliver biodiversity benefits, including planting schedules, habitat creation, and connectivity to existing ecological networks. A biodiversity net gain statement should be included, demonstrating how the SuDS proposals contribute to site-wide ecological enhancement. Maintenance plans should support the long-term success of these features. Note this may require additional engagement with the council's ecology and landscape officers.

Standard 7: design of drainage for construction, operation, maintenance, decommissioning and structural integrity

- A clearly labelled drainage layout plan showing the pipe networks and any attenuation ponds. The plan should show any pipe node numbers referred to within the drainage calculations.
- A plan showing the cross sections and design of any attenuation pond and its components.
- Geotechnical factual and interpretive reports, including infiltration tests in accordance with British Research Establishment (BRE) Digest 365 – Soakaway Design.
- Groundwater level monitoring (taking into account seasonal variations).
- The applicant is referred to Wiltshire Council's Surface Water Soakaway Guidance for the standards that must be met for planning approval and adoption of infiltration drainage features.
- Adequate measures during construction to control pollution to existing watercourses and groundwater.
- Details of how the proposed and existing drainage features on the site will be maintained and managed after completion with confirmation from the relevant authority that they will adopt any systems that are being offered for adoption.
- If access to the site is predicted to flood, an emergency plan must be agreed with Wiltshire Council. Guidance on the preparation of an emergency plan can be found [here](#).

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The applicant shall provide a complete Drainage Strategy in accordance with the latest [National Standards for SuDS](#).
2. The Environment Agency is to be consulted regarding any anticipated increase in runoff or flow to the main river located north-west of the site.
3. It is noted that the applicant intends to connect to the existing foul and potable water network owned and operated by Wessex Water to serve the proposed development.
 - a. The applicant is to provide written approval from the asset owner for connections to the foul or potable network.
 - b. The applicant is to provide written approval from the asset owner for the adoption of any new sewerage or connections/amendments to the existing network.
 - c. The applicant is to provide written approval from the asset owner regarding the acceptance of any discharge or increase in flow to the existing surface, foul or combined water networks.

The applicant should note that in all instances, the preference of the EA and the LLFA is for foul discharge to be to the foul / combined sewerage network (subject to agreement from the Sewerage Undertaker for the area (Wessex Water)).

INFORMATIVES

The applicant is reminded of their riparian responsibilities for maintaining flows within ordinary watercourses. Guidance on riparian ownership can be found here [Owning a watercourse - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)".

To aid in the development of compliant drainage strategies, the following are recommended without prejudice. We would recommend also utilising the best practice guidance within *The SuDS Manual*, and *Getting SuDS Right from the Start*:

Standard	Best Practice Considerations
Standard 1 – Drainage Hierarchy	• Retain and enhance existing natural drainage features where possible. • Use site layout to maximize opportunities for infiltration and above-ground conveyance. • Identify how communal rainwater harvesting can be utilised to help improve viability of inclusion. • Identify whole-life cost-benefits such as water bill reductions for implementing rainwater harvesting.
Standard 2: Interception	• Use green roofs, permeable paving, rain gardens, and bioretention to maximize interception. • Distribute source control features throughout the site for maximum effectiveness. • Provide a maintenance plan to ensure interception features remain effective.
Standard 3: Management of Extreme Rainfall and Flooding	• Use topographical surveys to identify and preserve natural overland flow routes. • Design SuDS features with freeboard and overflow routes. • Ensure safe access and egress during extreme events. • Consider overland flows originating from outside redline boundary

	• Consider how the drainage systems will perform in the event of blockage and failure
Standard 4: Water Quality	• Use vegetated SuDS (swales, ponds, wetlands) for effective pollutant removal. • Include forebays or sediment traps upstream of main SuDS features. • Provide a maintenance plan for regular removal of silt and debris.
Standard 5: Amenity	• Use gentle side slopes, accessible paths, and seating to make SuDS features usable and attractive. • Involve local communities in the design of SuDS spaces.
Standard 6: Biodiversity	• Design SuDS to create wetland mosaics, wildlife corridors, and habitat connectivity. • Consider how SuDS can help provide wider BNG benefits / credits to the site
Standard 7: Construction, Operation, Maintenance, Decommissioning, and Structural Integrity	• Plan for safe access for maintenance. • Include decommissioning plans for temporary features.