8. Assessment of Cumulative Effects

Introduction

8.1 This Chapter reports the assessment of cumulative effects in accordance with the EIA Regulations[1], as set out in Paragraph 1.2 of Chapter 1 of this ES. In addition, Schedule 4, Paragraph 5(e) of the EIA Regulations states the need to consider the following:

'the cumulation of effects with other existing and/or approved projects, taking into account any existing environmental problems relating to areas of particular environmental importance likely to be affected or the use of natural resources'.

8.2 To accord with the EIA Regulations, in terms of providing an assessment of cumulative effects, the following types of cumulative effects are reported in this Chapter:

- **Effect interactions:** the interactions of environmental effects of the Proposed Development affecting the same receptor, either within the Site or in the surrounding area; and
- **In-combination effects:** the combination of environmental effects of the Proposed Development in conjunction with / alongside environmental effects from other projects affecting the same receptor.

Guidance

8.3 There is no widely accepted current methodology or best practice for the assessment of cumulative effects for projects under The EIA Regulations. The PPG[2] refers to the parts of the EIA Regulations noted above, which require cumulative effects to be assessed and reported as part of an ES.

8.4 Guidance on the approach to the assessment of in-combination cumulative effects for projects that fall under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) regime has been issued by the Planning Inspectorate[3], however, as this is focused on NSIPs, it is not necessarily applicable to all projects / sectors.

8.5 Given this, the methodology adopted for the purposes of the assessment reported in this Chapter has been based on the principles of the Planning Inspectorate guidance, the types of receptors assessed and the nature of the Proposed Development alongside professional judgement, drawing on previous experience and knowledge at Turley. Such an approach is considered to be proportionate and robust.

Summary of Consultation

8.6 As set out in Chapter 2 of this ES, an EIA Scoping Report was submitted to Wiltshire Council in November 2025 (**Appendix 2.1**) outlining the approach and methodology to the assessment of cumulative effects within the EIA process as well as a list of projects to be considered as part of the assessment of in-combination effects ('Cumulative Projects').

8.7 The Scoping Opinion from Wiltshire Council (**Appendix 2.2**) confirmed their agreement to the methodology and Cumulative Projects proposed in the EIA Scoping Report (and as detailed below) and requested an additional project: PL/2024/10624, be considered in the landscape and visual assessment, along with the Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) (WCS Core Policy 52) and the Wiltshire GBI strategy.

8.8 As also detailed in **Chapter 2: Approach to EIA** and **Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual**, the ES assesses cumulative effects at the project level and therefore assessment of policy is excluded. Furthermore, the project PL/2024/10624 is located approximately 50km away and therefore has also been excluded from the assessment as it is considered to be too far away for there to be any common receptors. This is in accordance with the methodology proposed within the EIA Scoping Report.

8.9 No further consultation with Wiltshire Council or other statutory agencies has been undertaken during the preparation of this Chapter beyond that undertaken as part of the EIA Scoping Report and consultations undertaken for **Technical Chapters 6** and **7** and the transport and access assessment reported in **Appendix 8.1.**

Assessment Methodology

Effect Interactions

8.10 The assessment of effect interactions has followed a two-stages process, as follows:

- Step 1: identification of potential effect interactions; and
- Step 2: Qualitative appraisal.

Step 1- Identification of potential effect interactions

8.11 The assessment of effect interactions has considered the changes from baseline conditions (see **Chapter 2: Approach to EIA**) at common sensitive receptors due to the Proposed Development in **Technical Chapters 6** and**7**.

8.12 Common sensitive receptors are those receptors that have been assessed within two or more of the technical effect assessments in **Technical Chapters 6** and **7**. The assessment is based upon residual effects only.

8.13 To identify common sensitive receptors, all receptors assessed have been categorised into the 'factors' / 'receptor groups' (termed 'receptor categories') outlined in Regulation 4, Paragraph 2 (and expanded on in Schedule 4, Paragraph 4) of the EIA Regulations. These are as follows:

- Population and human health;
- Biodiversity (for example fauna and flora);
- Land (for example land take);
- Soil (for example organic matter, erosion, compaction, sealing);
- Water (for example hydromorphological changes, quantity and quality);

- Air;
- Climate (for example greenhouse gas emissions, impacts relevant to adaptation);
- Material assets;
- Cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological aspects; and
- Landscape.

8.14 When assigning receptors to receptor categories, it may be that for some effects the receptor(s) could span two receptor categories. Furthermore, it maybe that an effect could indirectly or subsequently affect a different receptor (e.g., changes in chemical quality of a water body could impact aquatic fauna/flora). Within the assessment of effect interactions, professional judgement has been applied in such circumstances when attributing receptors of effects into receptor categories.

8.15 Following the completion of **Technical Chapters 6** and **7**, the residual effects for the construction and operational stages have been collated into matrices (**Tables 8.2** and **8.3**) so that common sensitive receptors and hence the potential for effect interactions can be identified. If no residual effects for a specific receptor category were identified then these have not been included in **Tables 8.2** and **8.3**.

8.16 The threshold for inclusion within the matrices has been also set at a 'minor' level of effect as this is considered to address the potential for a number of residual effects that are not necessarily considered to be 'Significant' in isolation to become 'Significant' when they are considered collectively on a common sensitive receptor.

8.17 As noted in **Chapter 2: Approach to EIA**, a 'negligible' level of effect indicates that the effect is unlikely to cause a noticeable change at a receptor and / or the receptor is not considered sensitive to a change. Given this, negligible effects when considered collectively are unlikely to give rise to effect interactions.

8.18 Where the level of effect ranges across the receptors assessed, the worst-case level of effect has been included in **Tables 8.2** and **8.3** (i.e. the 'least beneficial' or 'most adverse').

Step 2 – Qualitative appraisal

8.19 Where potential effect interactions have been identified using the matrices, a qualitative assessment has been undertaken for the relevant receptor categories. This has included:

- Identification of specific receptor(s) considered for each effect 'contributing' to a potential effect interaction to understand the common receptor (and their attributes, such as location etc.). Where no specific common receptor(s) has been identified, then there have been no effect interactions identified.
- An appraisal where there are specific common receptors, considering.
  - Magnitude of change (or impact) of each residual effect;

- Sensitivity (or value, importance, etc.) of the receptor / receiving environment to change;
- Duration (of the effects individually and collectively utilising the short / medium / long-term criteria set out in **Chapter 2: Approach to EIA**) and reversibility of the effect;
- If the effects are temporary and / or permanent;
- If the effects are experienced / occur concurrently or sequentially; and / or
- The geographical / spatial extent of the individual effects.

8.20 An overall qualitative assessment of the cumulative effects on the identified receptor categories has then been made using the information contained within this ES (including **Technical Chapters 6** and **7**, supporting appendices in **Volume 2**, where appropriate) and professional judgement.

8.21 Where possible, a conclusion on effect interactions has been provided discussing the likelihood of the effect interactions being 'Significant' or 'Not Significant'. Beneficial effects do not outweigh adverse effects but may be experienced concurrently.

8.22 This process has been documented within the 'Assessment of Effect Interactions' section of this Chapter.

In-Combination Effects

8.23 The assessment of in-combination effects has followed a two-stepped approach, as follows:

- Step 1: Identification and evaluation of projects for further consideration; and
- Step 2: Assessment of in-combination effects, including an appraisal of common sensitive receptors.

8.24 It is noted that the scope and methodology for the assessment of other projects within other Application documents / plans may differ from the below due to specific technical requirements.

Step 1: Identification and evaluation of projects for further consideration

8.25 Step 1 was completed as part of the EIA Scoping Report (**Appendix 2.1**), with a list of twelve Cumulative Projects identified for consideration.

8.26 Since the submission of the EIA Scoping Report, an updated search for Cumulative Projects was undertaken, using the methodology and criteria set out within the EIA Scoping Report (**Appendix 2.1**). This search confirmed that a further project (PL/2024/07097) should be included as the project (referred to as Cumulative Project 13) is subject to appeal and in accordance with the proposed methodology will be included within the assessment.

Consideration of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) (App ref: 19/02437/FUL)

8.27 The BESS facility is associated with the existing Sandridge Solar Farm to the east of the Site. The facility was approved permission in 2019 and in accordance with the criteria for identifying Cumulative Projects would not be assessed as it is assumed the development would have become operational and form part of the baseline. However, given the proximity of the BESS development to the Site, and comments received during pre-application engagement with Melksham Without Parish Council, consideration of in-combination effects has been considered.

8.28 Construction of the BESS has commenced and therefore the construction stage of the BESS forms part of the baseline of this ES. Assessment of in-combination effects is limited to the operation of the BESS facility. The operational BESS development will be more than 100m from proposed residential land (**Figure 4.1**).

8.29 Given the scale of the development and location adjacent to the existing Solar Farm, the operation of the BESS facility is not considered to change the magnitude of impact, level of effect or Significance assessed at the Project level (see **Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual** and **Chapter 7: Biodiversity**). Assessment of the BESS facility is therefore scoped out of further assessment.

8.30 The Cumulative Projects considered within the in-combination assessment are confirmed in **Table 8.1** and their locations are illustrated in **Figure 8.1**.

Table 8.1: List of Cumulative Projects

Turley ID	Address / Application Reference	Description	Approximate distance and direction from the Site	Status
1	Land at Blackmore Farm, Sandridge Common, Melksham, PL/2023/11188	Demolition of agricultural buildings and development of up to 500 dwellings; up to 5,000 square metres of employment (class E(g)(i)) & class E(g)(ii)); land for primary school (class F1); land for mixed-use hub (class E / class F); open space; provision of access infrastructure from Sandridge Common (A3102); and provision of all associated infrastructure necessary to facilitate the development of the site (Outline application relating to access)	Immediately west of the Site	Approved May 2025
2	Snarlton Farm, Snarlton Lane, Melksham PL/2023/09968	Change of use of land from agricultural to commercial. Extension to commercial building (Ref: PL/2023/04036), extension specifically falling under use class B2/B8, associated works and associated parking.	500m west	Approved Sept 2024
3	Land South of Western Way Melksham Wiltshire PL/2022/08504	Outline application (with all matters reserved except for access) for the erection of up to 210 residential dwellings (Class C3) and a 70-bed care home (Class C2) with associated access, landscaping and open space (Resubmission of 20/08400/OUT)	2.4km southwest	Granted at appeal Nov 2023
4	Land at Upside, Melksham, Wiltshire PL/2022/06221	Demolition of existing buildings and structures, retention of alloy repair centre and development of 112 dwellings, 675 sqm of flexible employment/commercial space (Use class E(g)ii, iii/B2/B8), formation of public open space, foot and cycle links and associated works.	2.8km northwest	Pending Submitted Sept 2022
5	Land west of Semington Road 20/07334/OUT	Outline planning permission for up to 50 dwellings and formation of access and associated works (Outline application to consider access with all other matters reserved).	3km southwest	Granted at Appeal May 2022

Turley ID	Address / Application Reference	Description	Approximate distance and direction from the Site	Status
6	Land to the West of Semington Road, Melksham PL/2022/08155	Outline planning permission for up to 53 dwellings including formation of access and associated works, with all other matters reserved.	3.1km southwest	Granted at Appeal Sept 2024
7	Unit 3 Priory Court, Poulton Land at Semington Road 20/01938/OUT	Outline planning permission for up to 144 dwellings with informal and formal open space, associated landscaping and vehicular and pedestrian accesses off Semington Road. All matters reserved except for principal means of access.	3km southwest	Approved Sept 2021
8	Land north of the A3102, Melksham PL/2024/10345	The construction of 295 homes; public open space, including formal play space and allotments; sustainable drainage systems; and associated infrastructure; with 0.4ha of land safeguarded for a nursery. Access is to be provided from a new northern arm on the existing Eastern Way/A3102 roundabout junction, with a secondary access onto the A3102. Additional access points are proposed for pedestrians and cyclists.	540m northwest	Pending; Submitted Nov 2024
9	Land North of Bath Road (A365), Melksham PL/2025/06749	Outline planning application (with all matters except access reserved) for mixed use development comprising residential (up to 205 dwellings), land reserved for expansion of secondary school, public open space, landscaping and associated engineering works.	1.2km south west	Pending; Submitted Sep 2025
10	Land to the South of A365 Bath Road and West of Turnpike Garage, Melksham PL/2024/11426	Construction of warehouse with office space, parking and associated landscaping including site access.	1.4km south west	Pending; Submitted Dec 2024

Turley ID	Address / Application Reference	Description	Approximate distance and direction from the Site	Status
11	Land at Bowerhill Lane, Bowerhill, Melksham PL/2025/06105	Erection of up to 50 No. dwellings and associated works.	1.4km south west	Pending; Submitted July 2025
12	Land North of Berryfield Lane, Melksham PL/2025/00626	Outline planning application for up to 68 dwellings and formation of new access and associated works (All matters reserved other than access).	2.9km south west	Pending; Submitted January 2025
13	Land South of Snarlton Farm, Snarlton Lane, Melksham, Wiltshire PL/2024/07097 Appeal ref: 3373278	Erection of up to 300 dwellings (Class C3); land for local community use or building (incorporating Classes E(b), E(g) and F2(b) and (c)); open space and dedicated play space and service infrastructure and associated works on land South of Snarlton Farm (Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for two pedestrian and vehicle accesses (excluding internal estates roads) from Eastern Way) - Resubmission of PL/2023/07107)	300m south west	Pending Appeal Submitted October 2025

Consideration of Cumulative Project 1 (Land at Blackmore Farm, Sandridge Common, Melksham, PL/2023/11188)

8.31 As detailed in **Chapter 1: Introduction**, the Proposed Development is situated immediately adjacent to Cumulative Project 1, which was granted approval in May 2025.

8.32 The ES accompanying the application for Cumulative Project 1 was subject to a Scoping exercise for a previous iteration of the development (PL/2022/01864) which included both the consented development site as well as the Site. It is acknowledged that the Proposed Development could be considered a change or extension to an already authorised development.

8.33 To ensure that the potentially significant effects of both projects are assessed in the ES, Cumulative Project 1 was considered in-combination with the Proposed Development for all topics within the EIA Scoping Report (**Appendix 2.1**) for the Proposed Development. Potentially significant in-combination effects were scoped out for all topics with the exception of landscape and visual, transport and access, noise and vibration, and air quality.

8.34 In-combination effects have been found to be Not Significant for air quality and noise and vibration since the EIA Scoping Report; the results of which are detailed within the **Air Quality Assessment** and **Noise Impact Assessment** and summarised in **Chapter 2: Approach to EIA**.

8.35 As stated in **Chapter 2: Approach to EIA**, assessment of transport and access is limited to assessment of potentially significant effects of the Proposed Development, in-combination with other Cumulative Projects.

Consideration of Cumulative Projects in Transport and Access

8.36 Cumulative Projects have been included in the baseline traffic data scenarios (in addition to growth associated with future baseline). This is because cumulative assessment outputs form part of the baseline assessment required for evaluation within the **Transport Assessment (TA)** in line with standard transport assessment practices.

8.37 All Cumulative Projects (with the exception of Cumulative Projects 8 and 13) listed in **Table 8.1** have been excluded from the highway assessment due their negligible trip generation, or because traffic from those developments does not affect the Study Area.

8.38 The only cumulative project considered as a separate cumulative traffic scenario (outside of the baseline scenarios) is Cumulative Project 1. Given the location of Cumulative Project 1, immediately adjacent to the west of the Site and likely common receptors with the Proposed Development it is considered appropriate to assess the potential impact of this Cumulative Project separately. This is consistent with the approach detailed above.

8.39 The transport and access in-combination assessment is provided in **Appendix 8.1** and summarised below.

Step 2: Assessment of in-combination effects, including an appraisal of common sensitive receptors

8.40 Whilst Cumulative Projects have been identified, it does not necessarily follow that there will be in-combination effects with the Proposed Development as there needs to be an effect on the same receptor for a similar duration.

8.41 As confirmed in the EIA Scoping Report (**Appendix 2.1**), the focus of the in-combination assessment is on the environmental topics / effects 'scoped into' the EIA and reported in this ES.

8.42 The assessment stage comprises a review of the available environmental information that supported the applications for development consent to understand the exact receptors identified and therefore any commonality with the receptors considered in the relevant residual effects reported in **Technical Chapters 6 – 7** and **Appendix 8.1**. In instances where documentation is not available for Cumulative Projects, a review of the existing information and publicly accessible databases (e.g. MAGIC) has been undertaken to inform the identification of possible common sensitive receptors.

8.43 Where available, consideration has also been given to whether there is a concurrent construction or operational stage with the Proposed Development. Where there are Cumulative Projects under construction, it has been assumed that there is the potential for in-combination effects during construction and operation as a 'worst-case. The assessment of in-combination effects has differed between the technical topics due to the nature of the technical assessments, the data utilised, etc. However, the evaluation undertaken at the receptor level has considered the following for all technical topics:

- Magnitude of change identified in the relevant technical assessments[1];
- Sensitivity (or value / importance etc.) of the receptor / receiving environment to change; and / or
- Duration and reversibility of effect.

8.44 Through a combination of the evaluation and mitigation presented (both within this ES and the available documentation for the Cumulative Projects), conclusions have been drawn as to the likelihood for in-combination environmental effects, their nature (i.e. adverse or beneficial), whether they are greater, the same or lesser than effects identified at the project-level (i.e. for the Proposed Development in isolation), and whether they are likely to be 'Significant' or 'Not Significant'. Where relevant, consideration has also been given to how the Proposed Development contributes to the overall in-combination effects.

8.45 The assessment of in-combination effects has considered each relevant Cumulative Project with the Proposed Development or, if more relevant, the collective in-

[1] Given the numerous terms used across planning applications documents to describe effects, in some instances professional judgement has needed to be used to relate these values to the levels of effect used in this ES (i.e. negligible, minor, moderate and major).

combination effect arising from all Cumulative Projects with the Proposed Development.

Assessment of Effect Interactions

Step 1- Identification of potential effect interactions

8.46 The receptor categories for which likely residual effects were identified in **Technical Chapters 6** and **7** are presented in **Table 8.2** and **8.3** for the construction and operational stages of the Proposed Development, respectively.

8.47 Where the residual effects are reported as significant in **Technical Chapters 6** and **7**, these are show in **Table 8.2** and **8.3** in **bold** and shaded grey.

Table 8.2: Matrix of Effect Interactions (Construction Stage)

	Population and Human Health	Landscape	Biodiversity
Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual			
Changes to landscape character		**Major to Moderate Adverse**[2]	
Changes to Visual Amenity of Visual Receptors within 1km of the Site	**Major to Moderate Adverse**[3]		
Chapter 7: Biodiversity			
Direct loss and fragmentation of existing habitats and creation of new habitats on the Site			**Moderate/Minor beneficial**[4]
Damage and degradation of habitats on the Site	N/A		
Killing/injury	N/A		
Disturbance associated with noise, lighting and other visual stimuli			Minor adverse[5]
Potential Effect Interaction	NO	NO	YES

[2] Major adverse effects and **Significant** on Site landscape character and moderate adverse effects and **Significant** on all other receptors.
[3] Major adverse and **Significant** effects on Users of PROW MELW40, MELW26, Residential Group 1 (Property Numbers 295, 294, 293, 290a, 290, 269a, 289, 288 Sandridge Common), Residential Group 2 (Blackmore Farm and Blackmore House), Residential Group 3 (1-12 Lopes Close) and Residential Group 4 (Property numbers 254 and 256). Major to moderate adverse effects and **Significant** on Users of PROW MELW41, MELW27, Users of A3102/Sandridge Common Road outside SLA, Manor Farm, Snarlton Farm and Little Snarlton Farm. Moderate adverse effects and **Significant** on PROW MELW22 and Users of A3102/Sandridge Common Road within SLA.
[4] Moderate/minor beneficial and **Significant** in the long term for habitat creation. All other effects Not Significant (negligible effects for invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, badgers, other mammals; and minor beneficial effects for birds, hazel dormouse and bats.
[5] Minor adverse effects for birds, Negligible effects for bats and otter.

Table 8.3: Matrix of Effect Interactions (Operational Stage)

	Population and Human Health	Landscape	Biodiversity
Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual			
Changes to landscape character		**Major/Moderate to Minor Adverse**[6]	
Changes to Visual Amenity of Visual Receptors within 1km of the Site	**Major to Major/Moderate Adverse** to Moderate/Minor[7]		
Chapter 7: Biodiversity			
Disturbance associated with fragmentation of habitats, noise, lighting and other visual stimuli			Minor Adverse[8]
Recreation Effects			Minor Adverse[9]
Killing/injury associated with the Proposed Development, vehicle collisions and cat predation and habitat fragmentation			Minor Adverse[10]
Potential Effect Interaction	NO	NO	YES

[6] Major/moderate adverse effects and **Significant** on Site landscape character. Moderate to minor adverse effects and **Not Significant** on all other receptors.
[7] Major adverse and **Significant** effects on Residential Group 3 (1-12 Lopes Close). Major to moderate adverse effects and **Significant** on Users of Users of Bridleway Reference MELW40, MELW26, and Residential Group 2 (Blackmore Farm and Blackmore House). All other effects are considered moderate to minor adverse and **Not Significant**.
[8] Minor adverse for bats. Negligible for badger, otter and other mammals.
[9] Minor adverse for habitats on Site and adjacent to the Site. Negligible for LWS within 2km, invertebrates and hazel dormouse.
[10] Minor adverse for hazel dormouse. Negligible for amphibians, reptiles, birds, badgers, otter and other mammals.

Step 2 – Evaluation of potential effect interactions

8.48 From **Table 8.2** and **Table 8.3**, potential effect interactions were identified for the population and human health receptor category in the construction and operational stage. The appraisal of these potential effect interactions is presented below.

Biodiversity (Construction Stage)

8.49 The residual effects relevant to biodiversity that are considered within **Table 8.2** comprise:

- Beneficial effects on habitats (hedgerows, trees, watercourses, other habitats and plants) and species (birds, hazel dormouse and bats) associated with associated with long term habitat creation; and
- Adverse effects on birds due to disturbance associated with noise, lighting and other visual stimuli.

8.50 It should be noted that construction will initially cause a temporary loss of habitat which is considered to be minor to moderate and adverse, but Not Significant.

8.51 The only common receptor is limited to birds which experience a permanent minor beneficial effect from long term changes to habitat and temporary minor to moderate adverse effects from habitat loss and minor adverse effects from disturbance associated with noise, lighting and visual stimuli from construction activities.

8.52 There is therefore potential for an effect interaction albeit temporary in nature during the initially stages of the construction period (prior to the implementation of new landscape/habitats). Overall, the residual effects would be in line with that reported in **Chapter 7: Biodiversity** (minor beneficial/minor adverse and **Not Significant**).

Biodiversity (Operational Stage)

8.53 The residual effects relevant to biodiversity that are considered within **Table 8.3** comprise:

- Adverse effects on bats associated with disturbance associated with fragmentation of habitats, noise, lighting and other visual stimuli;
- Adverse effects on habitats on Site and adjacent to the Site associated with an increase in recreational pressure; and
- Adverse effects on hazel dormouse associated with killing/injury associated with vehicle collisions and cat predation and habitat fragmentation.

8.54 The residual effects relevant to biodiversity that are considered within **Table 8.3** comprise of adverse effects associated with habitats (on Site and adjacent to the Site), bats and hazel dormouse. Whilst all effects are related to biodiversity and there is considered to be an effect interaction, the specific receptors are different and therefore the effects on bats, habitats and hazel dormouse would remain as that reported in **Chapter 7: Biodiversity** (minor adverse and **Not Significant**).

Assessment of In-combination Interactions Effects

8.55 As set out under '*Step 1- Identification of potential effect interactions*', a shortlist of Cumulative Projects for consideration has been identified (**Table 8.1** and **Figure 8.1**). These

have been considered in conjunction with / alongside the Proposed Development with respect to in-combination effects (i.e. Step 2) has been set out below on a topic-by-topic basis.

Transport and Access

8.56 As detailed within **Chapter 2: Approach to the EIA** the effects of the Proposed Development on users of the local road network are not considered to be significant in isolation but are potentially significant when considered in-combination with Cumulative Projects.

8.57 The scope of the assessment was confirmed in the EIA Scoping Report (**Appendix 2.1**) and includes an assessment of transport impacts on the A3102 Sandridge Common (west of proposed access); A3102 Sandridge Common (west of Blackmore Road) and Eastern Way (South of Skylark Road).

8.58 An assessment of in-combination effects is detailed in **Appendix 8.1** and summarised below. The assessment is informed by the **Transport Assessment (TA)**, submitted with the Application.

Assessment of Transport Effects of the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 1 during Construction

8.59 The total anticipated construction traffic equates to less than a 2% increase in AADT while HGV traffic flows would temporarily increase by up to 12.5% on Sandridge Common (west of proposed site access) and Eastern Way. On this basis, the predicted increases in flow will not exceed the above thresholds and, as such, the construction period of the Proposed Development (in-combination with Cumulative Project 1) has been scoped out.

Assessment of Transport Effects of the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 1 during Operation

8.60 The Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals(ISEP)[k] guidance[4] identifies a number of environmental impacts that could arise from changes in vehicular travel demand. The following assessment criteria which will be referred to and assessed to are:

- Community severance;
- Driver and passenger delay;
- Non-motorised user delay;
- Non-motorised user amenity;
- Fear and intimidation on and by road users; and
- Road user and pedestrian safety.

Traffic Flows

8.61 **Table A8.1.11** in **Appendix 8.1** provides 2028 Without Development Opening Year traffic flows (AADT).

[k] Guidance issued in 2023 previously published by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA).

8.62 The 2028 Without Development traffic flows have been calculated using the baseline traffic surveys which were undertaken in 2022. Adjustments have been made to the surveyed traffic flows to allow for completion of developments since the time of the surveys in 2022. In addition, the following two projects have been included in the baseline traffic flows as they have been constructed following surveys in 2022:

- Land East of Spa Road, Melksham (planning ref: 14/10461/OUT) – 450 residential dwellings, adjusted to 345 dwellings to allow for completions at the time of the traffic surveys (2022); and

- Land South of The Spa, Melksham (planning ref: 16/01123/OUT) – 235 residential dwellings adjusted to 99 dwellings to allow for completions at the time of the traffic surveys.

8.63 All Cumulative Projects (**Table 8.1**), with the exception of Cumulative Projects 8 and 13, have been excluded from the highway assessment due their negligible trip generation, or because traffic from that Cumulative Project does not affect the Study Area. This is with the exception of Cumulative Project 1.

8.64 It should be noted that Cumulative Projects 8 and 13 have been included in the (future) baseline traffic data scenarios. This is because cumulative assessment outputs form part of the baseline assessment required for evaluation within the **TA** in line with standard transport assessment practices.

8.65 The only cumulative project considered as a separate cumulative traffic scenario (outside of the baseline scenarios) is Cumulative Project 1. Given the location of Cumulative Project 1, immediately adjacent to the west of the Site and likely common receptors with the Proposed Development it is considered appropriate to assess the potential impact of this Cumulative Project separately.

Community Severance

8.66 The change in flow on Eastern Way is forecast to be less than 30% and therefore the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 1 are likely to have only a negligible effect in terms of community severance for this link. On Eastern Way, two new signal controlled crossings are proposed as part of Cumulative project 1 resulting in a moderate beneficial effect.

8.67 The sensitivity of users of Sandridge Common (west of proposed Site access and west of Blackmore Road is considered to be medium. The magnitude of change is considered to be small (as traffic flow changes over 30% and up to 60% on this road link). Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, permanent, long-term, adverse effect which is considered to be minor.

8.68 The sensitivity of users of Eastern Way is considered to be medium. Whilst there is an increase in traffic flow, with the introduction of toucan crossings the magnitude of change is considered to be medium. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, permanent, long-term, beneficial effect which is considered to be moderate.

Driver Stress and Delay

8.69 The sensitivity of users of the local road network is considered to be medium. The magnitude of change is considered to be small. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, permanent, long-term, adverse effect which is considered to be minor.

Non-Motorised User Delay

8.70 All assessed road links are forecast to experience significantly less than a 1,400 vehicles per hour change in flows as a result of the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 1 under all scenarios. The sensitivity of users of the road network is considered to be medium. The magnitude of change is considered to be negligible. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, permanent, long-term effect which is considered to be negligible .

Non-Motorised User Amenity

8.71 The ISEP Guidelines set out that traffic flow would have to half or double for the effect to be noticeable. The increase in traffic flows on the majority of links with the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 1 is well below this threshold, as follows:

- A3102 Sandridge Common west of proposed site access – 53% increase resulting in a negligible magnitude of change.
- A3102 Sandridge Common West of Blackmore Road – 34% increase resulting in a negligible magnitude of change.
- Eastern Way (South of Skylark Road) – 17% increase resulting in a negligible magnitude of change. It is noted that Eastern Way includes a shared use footway/cycleway, separated from the road by a verge and the Cumulative Development 1 includes two toucan crossings of Eastern Way.

8.72 The sensitivity of users of the above road network is considered to be medium.

8.73 On Eastern Way two new toucan crossings are proposed. On these links the magnitude of change is considered to be medium. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, permanent, long-term, beneficial effect which is considered to be moderate .

8.74 On Sandridge Common West of Blackmore Road the magnitude of change is considered to be negligible. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, permanent, long-term effect which is considered to be negligible.

Fear and Intimidation

8.75 The ISEP Guidelines suggest how to determine what the level of fear and intimidation of vehicle movements may be on vulnerable users, and the magnitude of impact that occur as a result of the Proposed Development.

8.76 The sensitivity of users of the local road network is considered to be medium. The magnitude of change is considered to be small[l] or negligible[m]. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, permanent, long-term, adverse effect which is likely to be minor or negligible.

Road Safety

8.77 The ISEP Guidelines are clear that an assessment on road safety is based on professional judgement. The **TA** confirms that there has been 6 slight and one serious injuries in the last five years and therefore is not considered to indicate an underlying issue with road safety (relating to personal injuries) on the links identified for assessment.

[l] One step change in level, with <400 vehicle increase in average 18-hour all vehicle two-way.
[m] No change in level.

8.78 The sensitivity of the assessed receptors is considered to be medium. The magnitude of change is considered to be negligible. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, permanent, long-term effect which is considered to be negligible.

Secondary Mitigation or Enhancement

8.79 A **Framework Travel Plan** (**FTP**) has been provided for the Proposed Development. This document demonstrates that the Site is in an accessible location, with genuine opportunities to make journeys on foot, by bicycle and by public transport. The **FTP** will focus on promoting sustainable lifestyles amongst new residents through reducing the need for single occupancy car travel with a range of site-specific measures. It will provide an initial framework for implementation, management and review of the Full Travel Plan.

8.80 A Framework Travel Plan promoting the use of non-car modes of transport was also submitted for Cumulative Project 1.

8.81 On Sandridge Common a footway widening scheme is proposed as part of the Proposed Development.

Residual Effect

8.82 The **FTP** seeks to reduce single car occupancy travel and increase the use of non-car modes. However for a robust assessment the residual effects are assumed to be the same as that reported in the pre-mitigation scenario.

8.83 The footway improvements on Sandridge Common will improve the pedestrian environment. However the benefits cannot be quantitatively assessed. Therefore the residual effects are assumed to be the same as that reported in the pre-mitigation scenario. This provides for a robust assessment.

Significance

8.84 The following effects are considered to be **Significant**:

- Severance – Eastern Way only; and
- Non-motorised user amenity – Sandridge Common west of proposed site access and Eastern Way.

8.85 The following effects are considered to be **Not Significant**:

- Severance – All other Receptors;
- Driver stress and delay;
- Non-motorised user delay;
- Non-motorised user amenity – All other Receptors;
- Fear / intimidation; and
- Accidents and safety.

Landscape and Visual

8.86 An assessment of the in-combination effects on landscape and visual has been undertaken and is provided in **Appendix 8.2** and a summary of the effects are provided below.

Landscape Effects

8.87 A review of the Cumulative Projects has revealed that 12 of the 13 projects have a shared landscape character receptor with the Proposed Development:

- 1-3 and 5-13 are located within LCA 12B: Avon Open Clay Vale (Wiltshire LCA 2005/LUC);
- Cumulative Projects 1,2,8,9,10,11,13 are located within C1 Melksham Open Clay Vales (West Wiltshire LCA 2006 CBA) and Area 3: Open Clay Vales; and
- Cumulative Projects 3 and 7 are located within Area 3: Open Clay Vales (JMNP 2 2025) and LCA 12B.
- Cumulative Project 1 is located within Non-Host LCA 7C Bowood Greensand Hills (Wiltshire LCA 2005 LUC)

8.88 Cumulative Project 4 has been scoped out of both landscape and visual cumulative assessment due to there being no common receptors.

Host LCA 12B: Avon Open Clay Vale (Wiltshire LCA 2005 LUC)

8.89 The effects of the Proposed Development on Host LCA 12B: Avon Open Clay Vale is assessed to be Not Significant (see **Appendix 6.1** and **Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual**). However, to ensure any in-combination effects were considered a cumulative effects assessment was undertaken. This assessment also concluded in-combination effects would remain Not Significant. Further details of the in-combination assessment are provided in **Appendix 8.2**.

Host LCA C1 Melksham Open Clay Vales (West Wiltshire LCA 2006 CBA) and Host Area 3: Open Clay Vales (JMNP1 2020)

8.90 Host LCA C1 and Area 3 are relatively small LCAs. Cumulative Projects 1-3 are within both of these LCAs and Cumulative Project 1 and 2 are within Host LCA C1: Melksham Open Clay Vales. It is considered that in combination of the Cumulative Projects with the Proposed Development that the central area of these LCAs would be changed permanently from agricultural landscape to residential areas of Melksham.

8.91 The cumulative magnitude of change during construction would remain as assessed at the Project level (medium) and the in-combination effect would remain as moderate adverse and Significant.

8.92 During operation the cumulative magnitude of change would increase from low (small) at the Project level to medium and the effect would increase from moderate to minor adverse and Not Significant to moderate adverse and Significant.

Visual Effects

8.93 There are six Cumulative Projects (1, 2, 8, 9, 10 and 13) which have been identified as sharing common visual amenity receptors. The Cumulative Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) is shown on **Figure 8.2**. The common visual amenity receptors with the Proposed Development include:

- Footpath MELW30; Residential Group 1: 288- 295 Sandridge Common; Residential Group 2: Blackmore House and Farm; and Footpath Reference BROM57/ MELW88 (3km+ to the north-west) (Within the SLA/ RPG) (Cumulative Project 1);
- Bridleway MELW40/ Prater's Lane (Cumulative Projects 1, 2, 10 and 13);
- Footpath MELW26 (Cumulative Projects 1, 2, 8, 9 and 13);
- Bridleway MELW41/ Brown's Lane (Cumulative Projects 1, 2, 9 and 13);
- Footpath MELW27 (Cumulative Projects 1 and 2);
- A3102/ Sandridge Common (Cumulative Projects 1, and 8);
- Footpath MELW22 (Cumulative Projects 2, 13);
- Eastern Way (Cumulative Projects 8 and 13); and
- Users of the PRoW network on elevated ridges to the south including Bridleway/- Footpaths on ridge to the south including SEEN6 (Cumulative Projects 9, 10 and 13).

Footpath MELW30 (Cumulative Project 1)

8.94 Effects from the Proposed Development on MELW30 are considered to be Not Significant; however during construction views towards Cumulative Project 1 will be open and it is considered that there will be an in combination and in succession[n] views for receptors moving north-west. The cumulative magnitude of change will be low, and level of cumulative effect would be medium to long-term moderate adverse and **Significant**.

8.95 By Year 15, mitigation measures will have matured resulting in a diminished magnitude of change and the cumulative level of effect would **Not Significant**.

Residential Group 1: 288- 295 Sandridge Common (Cumulative Project 1)

8.96 At Construction and Year 1, it is considered that views towards the Proposed Development from Residential Group 1 would be largely screened by construction activity and residential built form and vegetation within Cumulative Project 1. There would therefore be no cumulative effects.

Residential Group 2: Blackmore House and Farm (Cumulative Project 1)

8.97 At Construction and Year 1 it is considered that there would be a cumulative change to the southern agricultural setting of Residential Group 2, although the immediate open setting will have been retained through careful design. The cumulative magnitude of change would be very high. The cumulative level of effect would be medium to long-term, permanent, major (substantial) adverse and **Significant**. The effect of the Proposed Development was already major adverse and Significant which will remain, although the effect will be more in-combination than the Proposed Development in isolation.

[n] Where views from Cumulative Projects would occur after each other but not necessarily as the same time.

8.98 By Year 15, mitigation which includes areas of planting will have matured and will reduce the cumulative magnitude of change. The cumulative level of effect will reduce to long-term, permanent major/moderate adverse and **Significant**.

Footpath BROM57/ MELW88 (3km+ to the north-west) (Within the SLA/ RPG) (Cumulative Project 1)

8.99 It is considered that both Cumulative Project 1 and the Proposed Development would be discernible from a few limited locations along the ridges to the north-east including from Footpath Reference BROM57/ MELW8 and would be seen in combination. The cumulative magnitude of change would be imperceptible. This would give rise to a cumulative effect of long-term, permanent negligible and **Not Significant** at construction, Year 1 and Year 15. this is in line with the Proposed Development in isolation.

Bridleway MELW40/ Prater's Lane (Cumulative Projects 1, 2, 10 and 13)

8.100 At Construction, Year 1 and Year 15 it is considered that views would be screened either by construction activities and built form within the Proposed Development or by mitigation planting. Therefore, it is considered that there would be no cumulative effects on Bridleway MELW40.

Footpath MELW26 (Cumulative Projects 1, 2, 8, 9 and 13)

8.101 Limited views and/or screening from Cumulative Projects 2, 8 and 9 are not considered to change the magnitude of change as assessed at the Project level and therefore there is no in-combination effect.

8.102 However, should there be concurrent construction periods for the Proposed Development and Cumulative Projects 1 and 13, views of all three developments would be visible from this footpath (**Figure 8.3** and **8.4**) which would increase the magnitude of change, albeit the magnitude of change for the Proposed Development is already high and the level of effect major, which is considered **Significant**.

8.103 By Year 15 it is considered that planting within the areas of open space and the boundary of the Proposed Development will have established, reducing the combined visual effects. The cumulative magnitude of change would reduce to medium. The cumulative level of effect would reduce to long-term, permanent major/moderate adverse and **Significant** at Year 15, in line with those for the Proposed Development.

Bridleway MELW41/ Brown's Lane (Cumulative Projects 1, 2, 9 and 13)

8.104 Cumulative Photoviewpoints EDP 2a and 2b (**Figure 8.3** and **8.4**) are taken from MELW41 to the south of the Site. It is considered that if Cumulative Projects 1, 2, 9 and 13 were constructed concurrently there would be both succession and in-combination views of construction activity over an extensive horizontal extent. In-combination effects from Cumulative Project 9 would likely only be within winter months. The magnitude of change for the Proposed Development would increase from medium to a high cumulative magnitude of change. The cumulative level of effect would be major adverse (an increase from major/moderate at the Project level) and remain **Significant**.

8.105 By Year 15 it is considered that planting within the areas of open space within the open spaces of the Proposed Development and along the boundaries of the Site will have established, reducing the combined effects. The cumulative magnitude of change will reduce to medium. The in-combination effect will be higher than the Project level (moderate) to long-term, permanent major/moderate adverse and remain **Significant**.

Footpath Reference MELW27 (Cumulative Projects 1 and 2)

8.106 If construction was concurrent receptors may experience views in succession only. Cumulative Project 2 is located to the south and would be filtered by intervening vegetation resulting in a small addition to the cumulative situation. The cumulative magnitude of change would be in line with that for the Proposed Development in isolation: medium, resulting in a level of effect that is major/moderate adverse and **Significant**.

8.107 On completion, it is considered that views towards the Proposed Development from Footpath Reference MELW27 would be largely screened by residential built form and vegetation within Cumulative Project 1. Therefore, the effect remains as assessed at the Project level (moderate adverse) and **Significant**.

A3102/ Sandridge Common (Cumulative Projects 1, and 8)

8.108 If constructed concurrently, it is considered that there would be as a worst-case scenario in combination, in succession and sequential views of construction activities which would impact on road users in both directions. The cumulative magnitude of change would at worst be very high resulting in a major/moderate adverse effect which remains **Significant**.

8.109 By Year 15, mitigation measures will have matured resulting in a diminished cumulative magnitude of change on receptors. The cumulative level of effect would be in line with those reported for the Proposed Development in isolation: long-term, permanent moderate/minor adverse and **Not Significant** at Year 15.

Footpath MELW22 (Cumulative Projects 2, 13)

8.110 If constructed concurrently there will be views with Cumulative Project 2 closer to the receptor than the Proposed Development and there will be open views of construction activities where receptors cross Cumulative Project 13. The cumulative magnitude of change would therefore be high, resulting in major adverse level of effect, which is higher than the Proposed Development (moderate adverse). The effects will remain **Significant**.

8.111 At Year 15, the Proposed Development (and Cumulative Projects) would become more filtered as a result of boundary enhancements. The cumulative magnitude of change would therefore be low resulting in long-term, permanent moderate adverse levels of effect that are **Significant** and higher than the Proposed Development in isolation (moderate/minor and Not Significant).

Eastern Way (Cumulative Projects 8 and 13)

8.112 It is possible that receptors using Eastern Way would experience views of construction activities within Cumulative Project 8 and the Proposed Development in succession only when moving north. Views from Cumulative Project 13 are considered to be oblique and fleeting. The localised cumulative magnitude of change would be high and the effect would be moderate adverse and **Significant**, which is higher than that reported for the Proposed Development in isolation (Not Significant).

8.113 With regards to Cumulative Project 13, views towards the Proposed Development will be screened for those travelling north by development. The landscape proposals along both Cumulative Project 8 and the Proposed Development would have matured assisting in assimilating the proposals into the surrounding context. The cumulative magnitude of change and level of effect would reduce in line with that reported for Cumulative Project 8 in

isolation: long term, permanent, minor adverse and **Not Significant** at Year 15. This is higher than for the Proposed Development in isolation although remains Not Significant.

Users of the PRoW network on elevated ridges to the south including Bridleway / Footpaths on ridge to the south including SEEN6 (Cumulative Projects 9, 10 and 13)

8.114 There are considered to be no discernible change to the visual context from Cumulative Project 13, and the development will be perceived as part of the settled landscape resulting in a minimal cumulative effect.

8.115 Views towards Cumulative Project 9 and 10 (1.8km) are at some distance and are physically separated from the Proposed Development but may be glimpsed in occasional oblique views from Bridleway/Footpath SEEN6 represented by PVP EDP 15 (**Figure 8.3** and **8.4**). The overall cumulative magnitude of change would be low at Construction resulting in medium to long-term, permanent moderate adverse level of effects which is **Significant**. This is higher than the Proposed Development in isolation (Not Significant).

8.116 During operation as mitigation proposals take effect the cumulative magnitude of change would reduce to low resulting in long-term, permanent moderate/minor adverse level of effects at Year 15 which is **Not Significant**. This is higher than the Proposed Development in isolation although remains Not Significant.

Biodiversity

8.117 Common receptors have been identified between the Proposed Development and all Cumulative Projects, with the exception of Cumulative Project 2, which has therefore been scoped out of further assessment.

Cumulative Project 1

8.118 Common receptors between the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 1 include the Bristol Avon River LWS, invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles, birds, bats, dormouse, badger, otter, other mammals.

8.119 The ES Biodiversity Chapter for Cumulative Project 1[5] concluded that loss of habitats during the construction phase would be minor adverse in the medium-term, changing to minor beneficial in the long-term, as habitat creation and enhancements mature. It also concluded that residual effects of construction on invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians, birds, and hazel dormouse would be minor adverse in the medium-term, becoming negligible to minor beneficial in the long-term. Effects on bats, badger, otter, hedgehog and brown hare were concluded to be minor adverse in the long-term.

8.120 If the construction programmes of Cumulative Project 1 and the Proposed Development overlap or occur close together, there is potential for an in-combination habitat loss effect in the medium-term. This would be moderate adverse and **Significant** (a change from minor to moderate adverse and Not Significant at the Project Level). In the long-term, the minor to moderate beneficial effect at the Project Level would become a moderate beneficial effect and remain **Significant**.

8.121 Similarly, there would be medium-term in-combination habitat loss/fragmentation effects on reptiles and amphibians, birds, hazel dormouse, bats and other mammals. However, these effects would still be negligible to minor adverse and **Not Significant**. In the long-term, the

in-combination effects would (change from negligible to minor and) become minor beneficial; but still **Not Significant**.

Cumulative Project 3

8.122 Common receptors between the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 3 include bats, birds, reptiles.

8.123 Cumulative Project 3comprises two large arable fields on the south side of Melksham. The Ecological Appraisal[6] indicated that all potential ecological effects could be mitigated. Given the location and nature of the project , it is predicted that any residual effects would not be sufficient to result in a significant in-combination effect with the Proposed Development.

Cumulative Project 4

8.124 Common receptors between the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 4 include bats, badger, dormouse, birds, reptiles.

8.125 Cumulative Project 4 is located to the north west of Melksham and is dominated by modified grassland and developed land. There is limited potential for overlap between the populations of the identified common receptors (particularly badger, dormouse and reptiles) within the respective zones of influence of this project and the Proposed Development. The EcIA[7] concluded that there would be no significant residual effects. Given the location of Cumulative Project 4, it is predicted that any residual effects would not be sufficient to result in a significant in-combination effect with the Proposed Development.

Cumulative Project 5

8.126 Common receptors between the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 5 include reptiles, birds, hedgehog.

8.127 Cumulative Project 5 is located to the west of Melksham and comprises a single arable field with boundary hedgerows. There is limited potential for overlap between the populations of the identified common receptors (particularly reptiles and hedgehog) within the respective zones of influence of this project and the Proposed Development. The Preliminary Environmental Appraisal (PEA)[8] identified measures to mitigate impacts on the identified receptors. Given the scale, nature and location of Cumulative Project 5, it is predicted that any residual effects would not be sufficient to result in a significant in-combination effect with the Proposed Development.

Cumulative Project 6

8.128 Common receptors between the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 6 include habitats, badger, bats, birds, reptiles, hedgehog.

8.129 Cumulative Project 6 is located to the west of Melksham (adjacent to Cumulative Project 5) and comprises a single arable field with boundary hedgerows. There is limited potential for overlap between the populations of the identified common receptors (particularly badger, reptiles and hedgehog) within the respective zones of influence of Cumulative Project 6 and the Proposed Development. The EcIA[9] identified no residual effects and concluded that there was no potential for cumulative effects. Therefore, no in-combination effects are predicted.

Cumulative Project 7

8.130 Common receptors between the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 7 include habitats, bats, badger, birds, otter, reptiles.

8.131 Cumulative Project 7 is located to the west of Melksham. There is limited potential for overlap between the populations of the identified common receptors (particularly badger and reptiles) within the respective zones of influence of this project and the Proposed Development. The EcIA[10] concluded that there would be no significant residual effects. Given the location of Cumulative Project 7, it is predicted that any residual effects would not be sufficient to result in a significant in-combination effect with the Proposed Development.

Cumulative Project 8

8.132 Common receptors between the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 8 include the Bristol Avon River LWS, habitats, invertebrates, badger, bats, birds, dormouse, otter, hedgehog.

8.133 The EcIA[11] concluded that effects on all the common receptors would be negligible or beneficial. Therefore, no adverse in-combination effects are predicted and the in-combination effects would be no greater than those identified for the Proposed Development .

Cumulative Project 9

8.134 Common receptors between the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 9 include habitats, bats, badger, birds, reptiles, dormouse.

8.135 The PEA[12] concluded that, with implementation of the avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures recommended in the report, there would be no significant adverse effects to any of the identified receptors. It also concluded that, through habitat enhancement and creation, the project will mitigate for losses and deliver enhancements compared to the existing situation. It is predicted that any residual effects would not be sufficient to result in a significant in-combination effect with the Proposed Development.

Cumulative Project 10

8.136 Common receptors between the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 10 include habitats, bats, birds, hedgehog.

8.137 The EcIA[13] indicated that effects would be negligible or potentially positive. Therefore, no adverse in-combination effects are predicted.

Cumulative Project 11

8.138 Common receptors between the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 11 include habitats, bats, birds, hedgehog.

8.139 The Ecological Appraisal[14] concluded that, with recommended mitigation measures in place, there would be no significant effects. Given the scale, nature and location of Cumulative Project 11, it is predicted that any residual effects would not be sufficient to result in a significant in-combination effect with the Proposed Development.

Cumulative Project 12

8.140 Common receptors between the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 12 include hedgerows, bats, hedgehog, reptiles, common toad.

8.141 Cumulative Project 12 is located to the west of Melksham and therefore there is limited potential for overlap between the populations of the identified common receptors (particularly hedgehog, reptiles and common toad) within the respective zones of influence

of this project and the Proposed Development. The Ecological Appraisal[15] concluded that, with implementation of appropriate avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures, there would be no significant harm to biodiversity. Given the scale, nature and location of Cumulative Project 12, it is predicted that any residual effects would not be sufficient to result in a significant in-combination effect with the Proposed Development.

Cumulative Project 13

8.142 Common receptors between the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 13 include hedgerows, bats, hazel dormouse, badger, otter, other mammals, birds, reptiles.

8.143 The EcIA[16] concluded that, with recommended mitigation measures in place, there would be no significant effects. Given that this project is located predominantly within large arable fields and would retain the only habitats of any notable ecological value (including the Clackers Brook corridor and two ponds), it is predicted that any residual effects would not be sufficient to result in a significant in-combination effect with the Proposed Development.

Assumptions and Limitations

8.144 To ensure transparency within the EIA process, the following limitations and assumptions have been identified.

- Where information on Cumulative Projects is limited, assumptions on likely effects have been made using professional judgement; and
- Assessment of in-combination effects is based on the assumption of the implementation of secondary mitigation outlined in **Chapters 6 – 7** and **Appendix 8.1**.

Summary of Assessment of Cumulative Effects

8.145 An assessment of cumulative effects has been completed considering both effect interactions and in-combination cumulative effects. A summary of the outputs of the assessment for each type of cumulative effect is set out below.

Assessment of Effect Interactions

8.146 Effect interactions consider multiple effects generated by the Proposed Development impacting upon the same receptor / receptor category. These are assessed under 'factors', essentially broad environmental topics in accordance with the EIA Regulations.

8.147 During construction, there is one effect interaction, which is considered to be Not Significant.

- **Biodiversity (birds)** – associated with the interaction of permanent minor beneficial effects from long term changes to habitats and temporary minor adverse effects associated with noise, lighting and visual stimuli from construction activities. However, the effect interaction is not considered to change the level of effect as that reported in **Chapter 7: Biodiversity**.

8.148 During operation, there is a single effect interaction, which is considered to be Not Significant.

- **Biodiversity (habitats, bats and hazel dormouse)** – adverse effects associated with habitats (on Site and adjacent to the Site), bats and hazel dormouse. Whilst all effects

are related to biodiversity and there is considered to be an effect interaction, the specific receptors are different and therefore the level of effect would remain as that reported in **Chapter 7: Biodiversity.**

Assessment of In-combination Effects

8.149 The assessment of in-combination effects considered thirteen Cumulative Projects on an environmental topic-by-topic basis.

8.150 A summary of the evaluation of in-combination effects with those Cumulative Projects for which an application development has been submitted is provided in **Table 8.4**, which outlines:

- Whether in-combination effects were less than that identified at the project-level – denoted by <;
- Whether in-combination effects were the same as that identified at the project-level – denoted by =; and
- Whether in-combination effects were greater than that identified at the project-level – denoted by >.

8.151 An overarching commentary is provided alongside the above symbols.

Table 8.4: Summary of in-combination effects

Environmental topic	In-combination effects	
Landscape and Views	>	There are considered to be in-combination landscape and visual effects during the construction and operational stages. During construction landscape effects remain largely as assessed, albeit only because conclusions at the project level were already moderate to major adverse and Significant. During operation the magnitude of change on two landscape receptors (LCA 1 Melksham Open Clay Vale and Host Area 3 Open Clay Vales) is considered to increase from low (small) at the Project level to medium and the effect would increase from moderate to minor to moderate adverse. The effect at the Project level is considered to be Not Significant but Significant in combination with of Cumulative Projects. Twelve common visual receptors to the Proposed Development and one or more Cumulative Projects were identified. In-combination effects for 3 receptors (Footpath MELW30, Eastern Way and Users of the PRoW network on elevated ridges to the south including Bridleway/- Footpaths on ridge to the south including SEEN6) assessed as Not Significant in relation to the Proposed Development were considered to be Significant in-combination with one or more Cumulative Project during the construction stage.

		During operation, whilst the in-combination effects were found to increase the magnitude of change, no further effects were assessed to be Significant, than those considered at the Project level.
Biodiversity	>	On the understanding similar tertiary mitigation measures (as detailed in **Chapter 7: Biodiversity**) are provided for each Cumulative Project, in-combination effects were considered to be the same as that identified at the project-level. This is with the exception of Cumulative Project 1. During construction it is considered that there is potential for a medium term, temporary in-combination effect on habitat loss, greater than that assessed at the Project Level. The Proposed Development was assessed as minor to moderate adverse effect which is considered Not Significant. This would increase to a moderate adverse effect which is considered to be **Significant** in-combination with Cumulative Project 1. In the long-term, the minor to moderate beneficial effect at the Project Level would become a moderate beneficial effect and remain **Significant**. Similarly, there would be medium-term in-combination effects on reptiles and amphibians, birds, hazel dormouse, bats and other mammals. However, these effects would still be negligible to minor adverse and **Not Significant**. In the long-term, the in-combination effects would be greater than that assessed at the Project Level (change from negligible to minor to minor beneficial); but still **Not Significant**.
Transport and Access	>	The effects of the Proposed Development in isolation are considered to be Not Significant. The in-combination effects of the Proposed Development and Cumulative Project 1 would be greater than that for the Proposed Development. In-combination effects which are considered **Significant** include effects of severance on Eastern Way only and non-motorised user amenity on Sandridge Common west of proposed site access and Eastern Way.

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