

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT PART 1

Land at Malmesbury Road, Cricklade

Mac Mic Strategic Land

July 2026

Carter Jonas

Date: July 2026

Client: Mac Mic Strategic Land

Client or Job Number: J0054138

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared by Carter Jonas on behalf of Mac Mic Strategic Land who have an interest in the land ("the Applicants").
- 1.2 The ES relates to the assessment of an outline planning application for "Up to 315 dwellings with associated access and infrastructure including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace. All matters are reserved except for access" at land at Malmesbury Road, Cricklade (application ref. PL/2026/02134).
- 1.3 A site location plan can be found at **Appendix 1.1**. The boundary of the Site is considered to be the maximum extent of all temporary and permanent works required to deliver the Proposed Development. The Site description and its wider environmental setting are set out in Chapter 2.
- 1.4 This ES presents the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and identifies any likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development during its construction and operation. The description of the Proposed Development is summarised below and set out in detail in Chapter 3.

The Environmental Statement

- 1.5 This ES presents the findings of an EIA undertaken in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, as amended, referred to as the 'EIA Regulations'. Chapter 2 outlines the EIA Methodology undertaken in accordance with the EIA Regulations.
- 1.6 The EIA has sought to identify any likely significant environmental effects, and to identify appropriate design and construction measures as well as apply good practice both to mitigate any significant adverse environmental effects and to maximise the environmental opportunities which might arise as a consequence of the construction and operation of the Proposed Development. The EIA has also sought to determine the residual beneficial and adverse environmental effects remaining after mitigation has been incorporated.
- 1.7 The ES comprises the following volumes:
 - Volume 1: Main Report (this document).
 - Volume 2: Technical Appendices; and
 - Non-Technical Summary

Report Structure

- 1.8 The remainder of the ES is structured as follows:

Volume 1 – Main report

- Chapter 2: Approach to Assessment;
- Chapter 3: Description of Site and surrounding area;
- Chapter 4: Summary of the Proposed Development;
- Chapter 5: Planning and Policy Context;

- Chapter 6: Traffic and Movement;
 - Chapter 7: Ecology and Biodiversity;
 - Chapter 8: Landscape
 - Chapter 9: Cumulative Impact
- 1.11 Volume 2: the Appendices – this section contains the supporting information and a collection of technical reports upon which the assessment and conclusion of the ES are based and referenced throughout the main body of the ES presented across chapters 1 to 19.
- 1.12 Volume 3: Non-Technical Summary – this provides the synopsis of the ES without the use of overtly technical language. The summary includes the description of the development, the potential environmental effects associated with the development and the measures proposed to mitigate such impacts.

Study Area

- 1.9 The geographical extent of the study area for this ES varies depending on the environmental topic and specific environmental features or receptors under consideration. For each individual topic the area of study needs to be of a sufficient size to encompass the spatial extent over which the effects relevant to the environmental parameter / receptors may occur.
- 1.10 Whilst some effects are confined within the boundaries of the development site, others for example visual effects may extend significantly beyond the development site. The geographical scope adopted for each assessment is therefore, outlined in each topic specific chapter.

Availability of the Document

- 1.11 Pursuant to regulation 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 the Environmental Statement, along with other planning submission documentation, can be viewed online through Wiltshire Council's Planning Portal: [Planning Application: PL/2026/02134](#)
- 1.12 Alternatively, copies of the Environmental Statement in hard copy, at a cost of £2000 are available upon request from:

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2. APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT

General Approach to EIA

- 2.1 EIA is defined by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) as ‘an assessment process applied to both new development proposals and changes or extensions to existing developments that are likely to have significant effects on the environment’. EIA has two main purposes, firstly to inform decision-makers of the environmental consequences of a proposed action/development and, secondly, to improve the environmental and sustainable credentials of a development through feedback into the design process and application of appropriate enhancement and mitigation measures. In essence, the EIA process should not only inform the decision-making for the project, but also comprise a design tool that is integral to the design of a project.
- 2.2 The EIA process enables assessment of the effects resulting from the development upon a range of environmental aspects, including those on natural resources such as air, water, soil, those on the natural environment including habitats and species, and those on the surrounding communities including visual effects and impacts on the local population. The effects are considered across the entire lifecycle of a project, including demolition, construction and operation through to the decommissioning of the development at the end of its ‘life’.

Legislative Background

- 2.3 The principle legislation governing EIA in England is the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, which transpose the requirements of the amended EU Directive on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.
- 2.4 The Regulations set out the requirements and procedures that should be followed in the completion of an EIA, setting out the criteria for determining to which projects EIA should be applied (contained within Schedules 1 and 2 of the Regulations), the process by which an EIA should be undertaken and the way in which it should be reported and decisions be made.
- 2.5 The Regulations require the EIA to be reported through an ES, which should accompany an application for planning permission for projects that constitute an EIA development.

The Project Team

- 2.6 The Regulations also introduce a requirement upon developers to ensure the ES is prepared by competent experts and requires a statement from the developer outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts. Neither the Regulations nor the EU Directive provide a definition of what constitutes a competent expert, and as a result the definition provided by IEMA in its best practice guidance has been adopted which considers it being demonstrated by the following:
- Full membership of a relevant professional body; and
 - Sufficient relevant experience of leading the EIA process [or topic assessment]; and
 - Evidence of recent continuing professional development relevant to maintaining expertise in the co-ordination of the EIA process, to ensure quality and completeness of data and information referred to in Annex IV, [or assessment of the relevant topic chapter].

- 2.7 The project team consists of the following:
- Carter Jonas, EIA Co-ordination,
 - Rappor – Highways and transportation,
 - Ecology Solution, Ecology, and
 - Roberts Limbrick – Landscape.
- 2.8 The team responsible for the completion of the EIA and technical assessments supporting the ES are identified in Table 2.1 below and details exhibiting their suitability as competent experts in their relevant topics is provided in the various chapters of the ES.

Name	Chapter
Nicky Brock	ES Co-ordination
Elisabeth Spencer	Traffic and Movement
Alex Banner	Ecology
Teresa Hazelwood	Landscape

Table 2.1: Project Team

EIA Procedure and Methodology

Screening

- 2.9 Regulation 5 of the EIA Regulations allows a developer to request a ‘Screening Opinion’ from the relevant Local Planning Authority to establish if an EIA is required if the Proposed Development is classed as a Schedule 2 development under the Regulations. The decision is based on the probability of significant environmental effects arising in relation to the proposed development.
- 2.10 For the purpose of this application a Screening Opinion was requested of the Secretary of State and by letter dated 16th April 2026 it was deemed that the proposed development is EIA Development. The Screening Statement helpfully scoped out those matters that were deemed necessary for assessment. A copy of the Screening Opinion can be found at **Appendix 2.1**.

EIA Methodology

- 2.11 In addition to observing and following formal EIA requirements additional guidance has been drawn from National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) to inform this statement. Specific technical guidance is also referenced within the individual technical chapters as appropriate.
- 2.12 A consistent approach has been adopted throughout the preparation of the EIA and presentation of the ES to assist the reader in understanding the technical assessments and ensure that any likely significant effects are identified and evaluated in a transparent manor.
- 2.13 Each individual technical assessment topic has therefore, adopted the following uniform approach:
- Introduction;
 - Assessment Methodology;
 - Baseline Conditions;

- Potential Effects;
- Mitigation and Enhancement;
- Residual Effects;
- Cumulative effects; and
- Summary.

Technical Scope

- 2.14 The main element of the EIA involves a series of specialist environmental studies. These have been undertaken by a team of specialist consultants. Each specialist has directly prepared their respective ES chapter, rather than writing a free-standing report. More detailed survey information is also provided as appropriate as part of the corresponding technical appendices.

Geographic Scope

- 2.15 The EIA covers, as a minimum, the physical extent of the site outlined in red on the attached Location Plan, Parameter and application Plans included at **Appendix 1.1**.
- 2.16 The nature of the current environmental conditions and the manner in which impacts are likely to be generated will mean that the influence of many potential impacts can extend beyond the immediate site boundary. Where appropriate, individual EIA topics will identify suitable study areas and provide justification for this in the ES.

Cumulative Scope

- 2.17 The potential cumulative effects of the EIA proposals in association with other existing and approved developments, both during the construction phase and following completion, are included (where relevant) as required by the EIA Regulations.
- 2.18 Schedule 4 (2) of the EIA Regulations requires that the potentially significant cumulative effects of a proposed development are included within the ES. Usually, cumulative effects are considered in three categories - incremental, accumulative and cumulative:
- 2.19 **Incremental effects** relate to small changes over time by numerous developments potentially giving rise to significant impact. This will be incorporated into the baseline and each assessment will describe whether the project will cause a significant effect or cause another incremental change.
- 2.20 **Accumulative effects** relate to multiple effects from a single development, which may give rise to a potentially significant impact upon a receptor. These will be considered by way of cross-referencing between assessments.
- 2.21 **Cumulative effects** relate to multiple developments giving rise to significant effects at a receptor. For example, a number of golf courses in proximity to each other may give rise to significant landscape and ecological effects cumulatively.
- 2.22 EIA Regulations 4 (2) indicate that cumulative effects should be considered in an ES 'as part of assessing the effects of the development. In respect of potential cumulative effects with other development, Planning Practice Guidance (28.07.2017) advises at paragraph 024 that:

- 2.23 “Each application (or request for a screening opinion) should be considered on its own merits. There are occasions, however, when other existing or approved development may be relevant in determining whether significant effects are likely as a consequence of a proposed development. The local planning authorities should always have regard to the possible cumulative effects arising from any existing or approved development.” Paragraph: 024 Reference ID: 4-024-20170728
- 2.24 Table 2.2 provides details of the identified development schemes within the zone of influence that are to be assessed as committed cumulative developments:

Site Name	No of dwellings	Planning Ref if applicable	Status
Stones Farm	140	PL/2022/02452	Approved on appeal
Land at Common Hill	49	PL/2021/10404	Application undetermined
Land south of The Forty	49	PL/2023/10331	Application undetermined
Land north-west of B4553	44	PL/2025/07863	Application undetermined

Table 2.2: Identified Residential Schemes

- 2.25 The sites set out in the cumulative assessment are set out on the plan below at Figure 2.1.

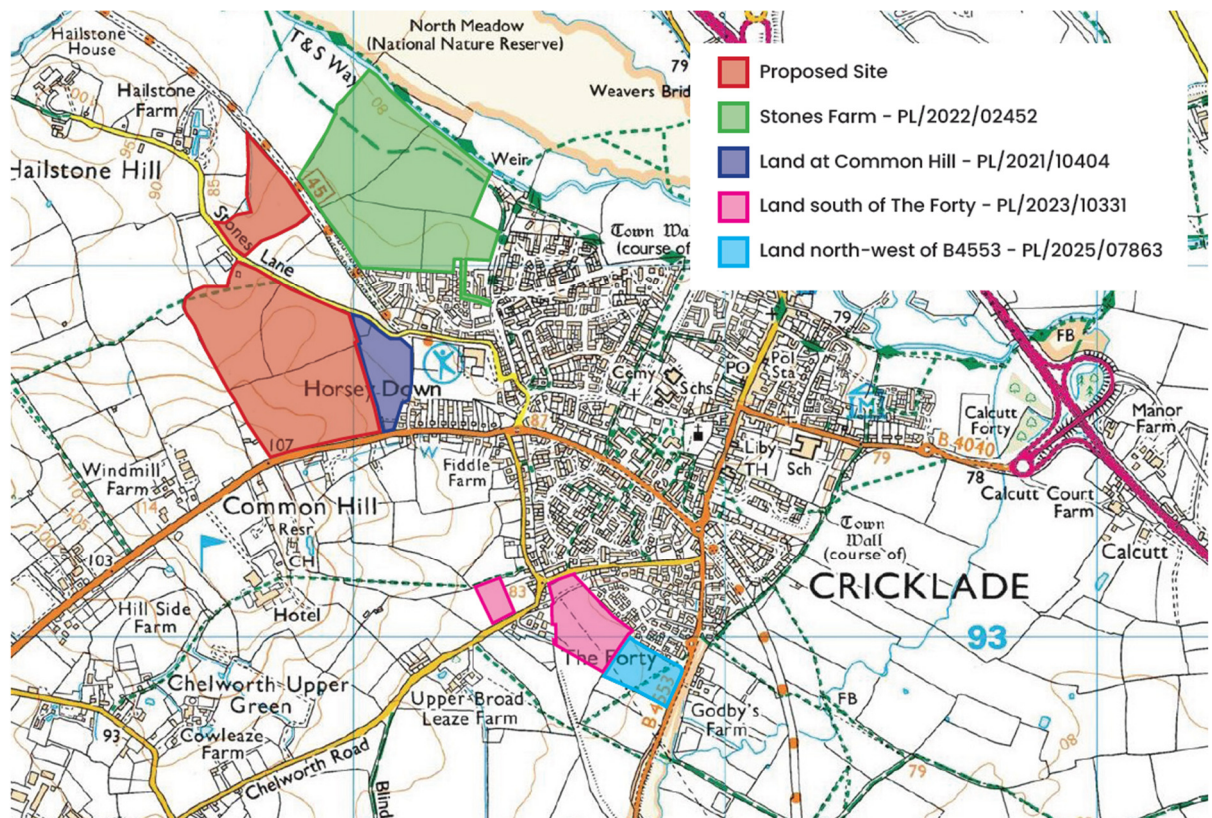


Figure 2.1: Sites included in Cumulative Impact Assessment

Temporal Scope

- 2.26 Under the current programme, the proposed development is expected to have a construction lifetime of approximately 6 years. Whilst elements will be redeveloped, replaced and renewed over time, the development is designed as a permanent provision.

The Baseline

- 2.27 The assessments presented is therefore based on the comparison of qualitative and where possible quantitative predicted impacts, compared with current or recent environmental baseline conditions which are described in detail within the following sections of this statement. Any significant changes expected in the future due to environmental trends are also described qualitatively, or in certain cases calculated as a quantitative future baseline to allow meaningful future assessments. This allows the EIA to take account of both the cumulative effects of developments not yet built but currently under consideration within the planning system. Where necessary the application of this is explained in further detail within the relevant technical chapters concerned.

EIA Terms of Reference and Methodology

- 2.28 In order for the significant environmental effects of the project to be identified and assessed, it is necessary to clearly identify all the components of the project. However, in many cases the details of the development have not yet been decided at the scoping stage and are reserved for later consideration by the applicant and the LPA. The ES therefore sets out maximum parameters against which the development can be assessed in accordance with Rochdale envelope principles.

Impact Assessment Guidance

- 2.29 A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development is a requirement of the EIA Regulations. The assessment presented in this resulting statement therefore considers the potential for significant environmental impacts to affect the baseline conditions as a direct/ indirect result of the proposed development.

EIA Regulations

- 2.30 Unless specifically stated otherwise, the assessments have been undertaken in accordance with best practice guidelines published by the relevant professional bodies. Each technical chapter considered within this report therefore provides full details of the topic specific assessment criteria and terminology used in the context of each technical discipline at sections 6-8 below.
- 2.31 Where there is no topic specific guidance available, a generic framework of assessment criteria and terminology has been developed to enable the prediction of potential effects and their subsequent presentation. The development of this framework has drawn upon Carter Jonas' experience of undertaking EIA.

Impact Identification and Significance Assessment

- 2.32 The aim of the impact assessment is to predict the potential and residual impact on the existing human, physical and natural environment of the site. The assessment process is based on baseline survey work and applies specified criteria to assess the significance of any environmental impacts.
- These criteria include:
- magnitude of the impact (local/strategic);
 - spatial extent of the impact (small-scale/large-scale);
 - duration of the impact (short term/long term);
 - reversibility of the impact (including species or habitat recoverability);
 - conservation or protected status;
 - probability of occurrence of the impact;
 - confidence in the impact prediction; and
 - the margins by which set values are exceeded (e.g., noise standards).
- 2.33 This statement therefore discusses the impacts in terms of their significance. In general, the following definitions of impact significance are used:
- no impact;
 - negligible;
 - minor adverse;
 - moderate adverse;
 - major adverse;
 - minor beneficial;
 - moderate beneficial; and
 - major beneficial.
- 2.34 Where potentially significant adverse impacts are identified, mitigation measures are described, either as part of the design, inherent mitigation, or as a measure implemented during construction or operation. Each impact assessment section also assigns a significance level to the residual impact arising following the implementation of the stated mitigation measures.

ES Assumptions and Limitations

- 2.35 The following key assumptions have also been made in preparing this ES:
- All legislative requirements will be met therefore, any standard guidance which is provided to ensure minimum legal compliance is not considered as additional mitigation in the EIA as it is assumed to be effective in avoiding potentially adverse effects.
 - The assessment of effects prior to the adoption of mitigation measures will assume that the project will be constructed in accordance with industry standard techniques. Such techniques will therefore not be considered as mitigation.
 - Where further assumptions have been made for individual topic assessments these will be identified within the relevant topic chapters.

- Any limitations or uncertainties associated with impact prediction or the sensitivity of receptors due to the absence of data or other factors will give rise to uncertainty in the assessment. Any such limitations will be referred to in the relevant technical chapters.

3. THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 3.1 This chapter describes the site context including the location of the site, a brief site history and a description of the immediate and surrounding area. The chapter also summarises the potential environmental constraints relevant to the proposed development.

Site Location and Description

- 3.2 The site comprises two parcels of land located to the north and south of Stones Lane, Cricklade. The parcels are separated north to south by Stones Lane, which is public highway.
- Northern Parcel: 3.50ha, an open flat site, bounded to the north by the National Cycle Network Route 45.
 - Southern Parcel: 17.22ha, bounded by Malmesbury Road to the south.
- The total site area is 20.72ha.
- 3.3 The southern site slopes gently from its high point in the south west corner of the site at 105m AOD, down to the north eastern corner at 90m AOD. The site is divided by and bounded by a series of hedgerows and tree belts. Within these landscaped belts are a number of Category B trees which will be retained and root protection zones respected.
- 3.4 The application site comprises pastoral land.
- 3.5 The site is not located in a conservation area. There are no designated or non designated assets on or immediately adjacent to the site.

Accessibility

- 3.6 The site lies approximately 1 km west of Cricklade town centre and benefits from good proximity to a wide range of local services, facilities, and employment opportunities. Cricklade provides a sustainable settlement location with schools, shops, leisure facilities, healthcare, and bus services within walking and cycling distance. The site also has good access to National Cycle Route 45 and wider active travel networks.
- 3.7 Public transport provision includes the Stagecoach 51 and 53 bus services, offering regular connections to Swindon, Purton and Cirencester, with onward links to Swindon Railway Station, which provides regional and national rail services.

Highways

- 3.8 Malmesbury Road / Common Hill B4040) is located to the south and is a rural B Class Road which borders the site to the south. The road is a single carriageway, two-way road of approximately 7.3m in width, which routes in a roughly east-west alignment and is subject to the National Speed Limit (60mph) along the site frontage. Approximately 35m east of the site frontage, the speed limit of the B4040 reduces to 30mph.
- 3.9 There are no existing pedestrian footways adjacent the site's immediate frontage along the B4040. The nearest footway is present at the junction of Horsey Down along the northern side of the carriageway approximately 40m east of where the speed limit reduces to 30mph upon entering

Cricklade. The footway is of approximately 1.5m width widening out to 2.0m at the roundabout of the B4040 Common Hill Road and West Mill Lane.

- 3.10 Stones Lane is a rural access land which dissects the southern and northwest parcels of the site. It takes access from West Mill Lane to the east and provides vehicular access to Cricklade Leisure Centre.
- 3.11 There are no formal footways on either side of Stones Lane, however due to the low flow of vehicles, serving a small number of existing properties and agricultural uses, it operates as a shared surface between motorised and non-motorised users.

Public Rights of Way

- 3.12 A Public Right of Way (PoOW) (CRIC30) crosses the northern section of the southern parcel. This extends westwards and joins PRow CRIC31 which links Malmesbury Road in the south and Stones Lane in the north. CRIC 34 and CRIC35 are located to the east of the northern parcel.

Landscape

- 3.13 The site itself and immediate environment is not covered by any relevant statutory or non-statutory landscape designations.

The Site is located c. 250m east of the closest designated heritage asset, the Grade II Listed Hailstone Farmhouse, and c. 600m west of the Cricklade Town Banks which forms part of a group of assets largely, though not exclusively, within Cricklade Conservation Area. This covers the majority of the eastern part of the town.
- 3.14 The Cotswolds National Landscape is located, at its closest points, c. 19km, arching to the north and west of the site. The North Wessex Downs National Landscape is located c. 23km to the south of the Cricklade.

Ecology

Statutory Sites

- 3.15 The closest statutory designation is North Meadow Cricklade National Nature Reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located approximately 0.33km north of the site at its closest point. The SSSI underpins the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Non-statutory Sites

- 3.16 There are no non-statutory designated sites within or immediately adjacent to the Application Site itself. The closest site is the River Thames or Isis Local Wildlife Site (LWS) located approximately 0.3km to the north of the Application Site.

Planning Background

- 3.17 Carter Jonas has been acting in respect of the site in Cricklade since 2025.

Planning History

- 3.18 The site itself has no planning history.

4. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 In accordance with the Regulations this chapter sets out the description of the proposed development for which planning permission is sought.
- 4.2 The proposed development is described as follows:
- “Outline planning permission for up to 315 dwellings with associated access and infrastructure including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace. All matters are reserved except for access.”
- 4.3 The southern parcel will accommodate the built development and the southern and northern sites will accommodate the Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
- 4.4 The proposed development will in summary, provide the following:
- A mix of market and affordable housing, with 40% affordable provision (Core Policy 43) in line with the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) & Cricklade Town Council Housing Needs Study,
 - Formal and information public open space including a LEAP and natural play space,
 - Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) designed to greenfield runoff rates (QBAR),
 - Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of at least 10% will be delivered on site,
 - Access to the south form Common Hill / Malmesbury Road, with pedestrian and cycle connectivity,
 - Landscape and visual impact mitigation, informed by LVIA,
 - Ecological protection and enhancement,
 - Arboricultural considerations, with tree retention and mitigation for necessary removals,
 - Provision of Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) and Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG), and
 - Building heights limited to 2 storey across the Site with key building and corners limited to 2.5 storeys.
- 4.5 The application is supported by a suite of parameter plans which set out the framework for development. The parameter plans are proposed to be approved documents against which the reserved matter applications will be assessed in the future. Detailed junction drawings have also been submitted for approved. The ES assesses the development against these maximum parameters. The parameter plans and other application plans can be found at **Appendix 1.1**.
- 4.6 The drawings comprise the following:

Landscape Masterplan 10542-RLA-XX-ZZ-DR-L-P8001 P02
 Framework Plan 10542-RL-XX-00-DR-MP-0002-P05
 Land Use 10542-RL-XX-00-DR-MP-0003-P03 PP
 Storey Heights 10542-RL-XX-00-DR-MP-0004-P03 PP
 Green Infrastructure 10542-RL-XX-00-DR-MP-0005-P05 PP
 Proposed Access Arrangements 251409-RAP-XX-XX-DR-TP-3200 P02
 Visibility Assessment 251409-RAP-XX-XX-DR-TP-3201 P02
 Proposed Emergency Access Arrangements 251409-RAP-XX-XX-DR-TP-3202 P01
 Proposed Access Arrangement Swept Path Analysis 251409-RAP-XX-XX-DR-TP-4100 P01

Illustrative Layout

- 4.7 An illustrative layout / Framework Plan (10542-RL-XX-00-DR-MP-0002-P05) has been prepared to demonstrate that up to 315 dwellings could be accommodated on site taking account of all of the constraints and requirements. It is for information purposes only. The illustrative masterplan does not form the basis for the assessment.
- 4.8 The evolution of the illustrative layout is discussed in detail in the Design and Access Statement submitted with the application but in summary the following matters have been taken into account in its preparation:
- The current landform,
 - The existing trees on and off site,
 - The existing ecology,
 - The character of the area,
 - The impact on the landscape,
 - The connections to off site footways and cycleway, and
 - The need to meet all of the various policy requirements including SUDS, open space and appropriate access for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

Highways

- 4.9 The main vehicular access into the southern parcel will be from the south via Common Hill / Malmesbury Road. An emergency access point will be provided onto Stones Lane from the southern parcel.
- 4.10 Pedestrian and cycle links will be provide to the north and south of the southern parcel and throughout the development.
- 4.11 There will be no vehicular access to the northern parcel but pedestrian access will be provided.
- 4.12 The proposals seek to provide a range of sustainable transport measures including extension of the 30mph speed limit on Common Road / Malmesbury Road together with a gateway feature entering Cricklade, as part of the site access proposals.
- 4.13 Internally, the site will provide a range of footway connections both within the site and to adjacent infrastructure, including Stones Lane, the B4400 and the adjacent Bloor Homes South West site. Furthermore the design of the site has safeguarded a future bus loop, subject to discussions with Stagecoach and Wiltshire Council, whilst a car club operator has confirmed viability for at least two car club spaces within the site to enable sustainable travel and encourage reduced car ownership and greater flexibility.
- 4.14 The public rights of way across the site will remain unaffected and will site in a landscaped part of the site.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.15 A full suite of ecology surveys have been carried out to establish the ecology baseline of the site.

- 4.16 The baseline reports that site comprises a range of common and widespread habitats. The vast majority comprises modified grassland indicative of high nutrient input and levels of disturbance.
- 4.17 There is scope for the majority of native hedgerows at the boundaries to mostly be retained as part of the proposals and extended with further native hedgerow planting. Individual trees planting, native scrub and species-rich grassland creation will aid in increasing the floral diversity of the site.

Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) & Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM)

- 4.18 To off set any additional recreation pressures on the nearby SAC and SSSI, as required by Natural England a 6.9ha area of land within the site is proposed to be designed as SANG and 1.6km circular walking route will be provided as required by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- 4.19 Arrangements will be required to manage and monitor people on the protected site.
- 4.20 The preliminary BNG Assessment indicates that the proposed development of the site could result in a net gain of 5.21 Habitat Units (17.5%) and 12.62 Hedgerow Units (18.49%) on site. The required 10% net gain can be more than achieved by delivery and improvement in the habitat on site across the site.

Landscape

- 4.21 Over 60% of the site is proposed for green infrastructure. This has provided the opportunity to set the development within a strong green framework and retain the majority of the site's existing key landscape features.
- 4.22 The landscape proposals can be split into the following key areas:

SANG & Play Space

- Area of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG), with walking routes (1.6km), wildflower meadows, native tree and scrub planting, wetland basin and new and enhanced woodland buffer planting, in line with the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC Mitigation Strategy.
- An equipped play space, naturalistic in style, sits at the entrance to the development from B4040.

Wetlands

- Creation of wetlands as part of the sustainable drainage system, which includes areas of permanent water, with footpaths, grassland and native tree planting.

Green Corridors & Natural Green Space

- Extensive green corridors and natural green space, focused around retained hedgerows, with the creation of a strong landscape buffer along the western boundary of the site, and the most visually sensitive part of the site. Will include incidental natural play opportunities which will form a play trail around the site.
- New meadow grasslands, footpaths, native tree and woodland planting are proposed.

Delivery Timescale

- 4.23 Construction is anticipated to commence on Site in 2028, subject to gaining the relevant planning permissions. The Proposed Development will be delivered in a phased manner and is subject to market demand, completion and occupation.

Mitigation and Enhancement

- 4.24 The iterative environmental, planning and design processes for the Proposed Development have been undertaken in tandem, with close dialogue maintained between the Applicant, the project team, project architect and other advisers. This has allowed an overarching suite of design features, mitigation measures and commitments to be incorporated into the Proposed Development from the outset.
- 4.25 The primary mitigation measures relied upon when assessing the effects of the Proposed Development are identified in paragraph 4.27 and within the technical assessments presented in **Chapters 6-8**, with secondary mitigation required to address any significant adverse effects discussed at paragraph 4.29 and identified through the EIA.

Primary Mitigation

- 4.26 Assessments within each topic have taken account of primary mitigation which is inherent in the scheme design which is in accordance with Regulation 18(3(c) of the EIA Regulations and guidance from the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (IEMA 2016).
- 4.27 The mitigation and enhancement measures identified to avoid, prevent and/or minimise any significant adverse environmental effects, which are an inherent part of the Proposed Development include:
- Restricting development on the higher ground,
 - Restricting vehicular access to the south,
 - Retaining the hedgerows and trees across the site, and
 - Avoiding utilities constraints by proposing open space where the high pressure oil line and 33kV EHV are located.

Secondary Mitigation

- 4.28 Measures which require further activity to be achieved, and do not form an inherent part of the Proposed Development, are referred to as Secondary mitigation.
- 4.29 For the purpose of this EIA, the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) are considered to be Secondary mitigation.

Tertiary Mitigation

- 4.30 Any measures secured through legal process or separate regulations, assumed to be an inherent part of the Proposed Development, are referred to as Tertiary mitigation.
- 4.31 Along with the Primary and Secondary mitigation, these measures are proposed to be secured through suitably worded planning conditions attached to any forthcoming consent.

Consideration of Alternatives

- 4.32 Regulation 18(3) of the 2017 EIA Regulations sets out the minimum requirements as to the content of an ES. Regulation 18(3)(d) in particular deals with the requirements as to consideration of reasonable alternatives. Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations, which sets out further information to be included in the ES' also makes reference to reasonable alternatives as follows:
- “A description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of development design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects.”
- 4.33 The consideration of alternatives in this ES complies with that requirement and has regard to the guidance in the PPG on EIA which states (similarly to the EIA Regulations):
- “Where alternative approaches to development have been considered, the Environmental Statement should include a description of the reasonable alternatives studied which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characterisation and provide an indication of the main reasons for the choice made, including a comparison of environmental effects.”
- 4.34 Alternatives should only be considered where they are feasible, realistic, and genuine. This may depend on various factors, including planning policy, land ownership, financial viability, technical feasibility, and design quality. Options which are unlikely to be acceptable or deliverable are not realistic alternatives and so do not need to be considered.
- 4.35 The following provide an outline of the reasonable alternatives considered in relation to the Proposed Development and the main reasons for choosing the Proposed Development in preference to them. A high-level comparison of environmental effects is also provided.

Do Nothing – Status Quo

- 4.36 Doing nothing would permit the agricultural land use to continue.
- 4.37 Any associated adverse effects from the proposed development would not occur however, the beneficial effects of the proposed development would also not be realised.

Alternative Sites

- 4.38 There are no sites in Cricklade that are available or is as unconstrained as the application site.

Alternative Forms of Development within the Site

- 4.39 An iterative design process has been used to take account of all relevant environmental, amenity, design quality, and commercial viability design considerations as well as to produce the finalised design of the Proposed Development. This iterative design process is explained further within the Design and Access Statement (DAS), which has been submitted as part of the planning applications supporting the Proposed Development. Design considerations related to likely environmental effects from the Proposed Development are:

- **Ecological features and habitats** – the Proposed Development has been designed to retain landscape features and habitats.
- **Drainage** – the layout of the Proposed Development and points of SuDS have considered the wettest areas of the site located to the north and development has been avoided in these areas.
- **Access** – Access options were considered taking account of the scale and types of roads surrounding the site.
- **Landscape** – Development has been restricted on the higher parts of the site to reduce landscape impact.

4.40 In summary, the finalised design of the Proposed Development has been selected as it is considered to be optimal in terms of accommodating the range of proposed uses, achieving a commercially viable development, safeguarding environmental receptors and responding to spatial and infrastructure constraints.

5. PLANNING POLICY & CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework, 2024 (NPPF)

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. Originally published on 27 March 2012, the NPPF replaced the majority of Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs), streamlining national planning policy into a single document. The most recent revision to the NPPF was published on 12 December 2024 and amended on 7 February 2025, reflecting updated priorities including mandatory housing targets, strengthened policies on sustainable development, and new guidance on Green Belt and "Grey Belt" land. The NPPF remains a material consideration in planning decisions and must be taken into account in the preparation of local development plans.
- 5.2 The Framework explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development comprises three interdependent overarching objectives which are presented in chapter 2 section 8:
- a. an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b. a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c. an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 5.3 The Government's consultation draft of the updated NPPF, published December 2025, seeks to further bolster the ambition to boost housing delivery and support development beyond settlement boundaries in the circumstance where "development which would address an evidenced unmet need."

Local Planning Policy

- 5.4 The Development Plan comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted January 2015), the saved policies from the former District Local Plans, in this case the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 (adopted June 2006), the West Wiltshire Leisure and Recreation Development Plan Document, the South Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Chippenham Site Allocations Plan, the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan, Cricklade Neighbourhood Plan (made March 2018) and minerals and waste plans prepared jointly with Swindon Borough which includes *inter alia* the Minerals Core Strategy (adopted June 2009) and the Waste Core Strategy (adopted July 2009). The Policies relevant to the consideration of the application are set out below and reproduced in full at **Appendix 5.1**.

Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted January 2015)

- 5.5 The relevant Core Strategy policies are Core Policies 1, 2, 3, 19, 41, 43, 45, 50, 51, 52, 56, 57, 58, 60, 61, and 67.

North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 (adopted June 2006) Saved Policies ("NWLP")

- 5.6 On 27 June 2009, the Secretary of State issued a direction setting out the policies within the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 that can be 'saved' beyond 27 June 2009. The relevant saved policies are policies NE14, NE18, T5, H4, CF2, CF3, and TM3.
- 5.7 The above policies will be replaced by the Wiltshire Local Plan 2020-2038 once adopted and will no longer form part of the Development Plan.

Cricklade Neighbourhood Plan (made March 2018)

- 5.8 The relevant Neighbourhood Plan policies are H1, H3, H7, H8, TT1, LAF1, LAF2, and LAF3.

Emerging Local Plan - Wiltshire Local Plan 2020-2038

- 5.9 Wiltshire Council submitted the Wiltshire Local Plan 2020-2038 to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government for independent examination on 28 November 2024. The first stage of hearings in relation to the Duty to Cooperate were held on 24 June 2025. The Stage 2 hearings that were scheduled of November 2025 did not take place but were put on hold to enable further work to be carried out. The Inspectors wrote to Wiltshire Council on 27th February 2026 and invited the Council to withdraw the Local Plan.
- 5.10 Due the early stage reached in the preparation of the Local Plan the policies are afforded very limited weight.

6. TRAFFIC AND MOVEMENT

Introduction

- 6.1 This Chapter of the ES has been prepared by Rappor. It assesses the Proposed Development described in Chapter 4 in relation to Traffic and Movement.
- 6.2 The baseline situation is considered before the likely environmental effects of the Proposed Development are identified during the Construction and Operational phases. Mitigation measures to reduce any negative environmental effects are identified as appropriate before the residual environmental effects are assessed.
- 6.3 This Chapter is supported by the following technical appendices:
 - Appendix 6.1 – Transport Assessment
 - Appendix 6.2 – Travel Plan

Authors

- 6.4 This Traffic and Movement Chapter has been prepared by Rappor, a company competent and experienced in the assessment of transport related environmental effects as part of an EIA. The Chapter has been prepared by a team of specialist transport consultants.
- 6.5 Rappor is a multi-disciplinary engineering and environmental consultancy that has numerous experts across a variety of disciplines and has been providing transportation and highways support for the Proposed Development, and as such has an in-depth knowledge of both the Site's locality and traffic conditions.
- 6.6 The primary author of this chapter, Tom Peters BSc (Hons), MSc, MSc, MCIHT, is a Principal Transport Planner with over 10 years of transportation planning experience, whose qualifications include an MSc in Transport Engineering and Planning and is a Member of the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation (CIHT). The author has extensive experience in preparing a broad suite of transport-related documents, including Transport Assessments, Environmental Chapters, and Preliminary Environmental Information Reports for various projects of differing scales, locations and uses.
- 6.7 The Traffic and Movement Chapter review and final approval has been undertaken by Elisabeth Spencer BSc (Hons) MSc, a Technical Director with over 20 years' experience in development transport planning who is a member of the CIHT, Transport Planning Society (TPS) and is a Chartered Member of the Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT).

Screening Opinion

- 6.8 A Screening Direction was requested from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) regarding whether the Proposed Development is an 'EIA development' and, as such, would require an ES. MHCLG confirmed in their response (dated 16th April 2026) that the Proposed Development was indeed an 'EIA development'.
- 6.9 As part of the Screening Direction commentary was provided on Transport which has been used to determine the scope of this assessment. Pertinent to the Proposed Development the Screening Direction states:

“While significant effects on the capacity of nearby transport routes are unlikely from the development in its own right, this matter has been further considered in cumulative terms below and cannot be ruled out at this screening stage and should be assessed through EIA.”

Policy Context

- 6.10 The assessment of the transport effects of the Proposed Development is based on policy and current best practice exemplified in several policy and guidance documents at the national and local level.
- 6.11 Chapter 5 of this ES details the relevant planning policy in the context of the wider ES, whilst the accompanying Transport Assessment details the Transport specific policy pertinent to the proposals.
- 6.12 Specific to this Traffic and Movement Chapter of the ES the relevant guidance is contained within the Environmental Assessment of Traffic and Movement (2023), and this Chapter has been produced in accordance with this guidance as appropriate.

Assessment Methodology

- 6.13 To determine the geographical boundaries of the assessment (the ‘Study Area’), consideration has been given to the IEMA Guidelines.
- 6.14 The IEMA Guidelines set out two broad rules of thumb as criteria to assist in delimiting the scale and extent of the environmental assessment:
 - Rule 1: Include highway links where traffic flows will increase by more than 30% (or the number of heavy goods vehicles will increase by more than 30%); and
 - Rule 2: Include highway links of high sensitivity where traffic flows have increased by 10% or more.
- 6.15 These rules of thumb form the starting point for the assessment of effects. In accordance with the IEMA Guidelines Ref 7 (Paragraph 2.21), consideration has also been given to any other link or location where it is felt specific environmental, or population sensitivities may occur. Any specific Air Quality, Ecology and Climate Change related potential environmental and human impacts are assessed within the relevant Chapters of this ES.

Geographical Scope

- 6.16 The study area has been defined by the considerations of the Screening Opinion received, which identifies potential environmental effects between the Site and the SRN, primarily on the basis of potential cumulative impacts between multiple sites within the study area. On this basis the Study Area comprises the following links, which are illustrated spatially on Figure 6.1.
 - Link A: Malmesbury Road
 - Link B: Common Hill
 - Link C: B4040
 - Link D: High street (South)
 - Link E: High Street (North)
 - Link F: Calcutt Street
 - Link G: A419 North

- Link H: A419 South

6.17 In addition, there is a Public Right of Way (PRoW) located within the study area. This is included as Link I within the Study Area.



Figure 6.1: Geographical Scope

Temporal Scope

6.18 The IEMA Guidelines at Paragraph 2.24 state:

"The greatest environmental change will generally be when the project traffic is at the largest proportion of the total flow. It is therefore recommended that the environmental assessment should be undertaken at the construction / decommissions phase, year of opening of the project or the first full year if its operation. For a phased development, it may be necessary to consider the first year of each phase."

6.19 The assessment of traffic and movement impacts of the Proposed Development have been undertaken for both the Construction and Operational Phase. Future year scenarios have been generated by applying traffic growth factors calculated utilising the National Trip End Model (TEMPro 8.1) database.

6.20 The assessment considers the following worst-case assessment scenarios:

- 2031 Future Year with Development (100% buildout)

- 6.21 It is noted that there will be an interim construction period prior to full buildout, however it is accepted that the amount of traffic and wider impact during the construction phase will be less than the operation phase and temporary in nature, therefore the operational phase is considered a robust worst-case scenario.
- 6.22 The above worst-case scenario, in terms of transport related impacts, in EIA terms, of the Proposed Development have been assessed and this provides a robust assessment of the Proposed Development, in EIA terms.

Transport Impacts / Assessment Criteria

Severance

- 6.23 Severance is defined in the IEMA Guidelines as:

“the perceived division that can occur within a community when it becomes separated by major transport infrastructure. The term is used to describe a complex series of factors that separate people from places and other people. Severance may result from the difficulty of crossing a heavily trafficked road or a physical barrier created by infrastructure”.

Driver Delay

- 6.24 The IEMA Guidelines suggest that traffic delays to non-development traffic can occur at several points on the network surrounding a development site including:
- At the Site entrance where there will be additional turning movements;
 - On the highways passing the development Site where there is likely to be additional traffic and the flow might be affected by additional parked cars;
 - At other key intersections along the highway which might be affected by increased traffic; and
 - At side roads where the ability to find gaps in the traffic may be reduced, thereby lengthening delays.
- 6.25 These delays are only likely to be significant when the traffic on the network surrounding the development is already at, or close to, the capacity of the system.

NMU Delay

- 6.26 Pedestrian/Non-Motorised User (NMU) delay, as per IEMA Guidelines, serves as a proxy for the delay that other modes of non-motorised users may experience when crossing roads.
- 6.27 NMU delay and severance are closely related effects but do require assessment individually. Changes in the volume, composition or speed of traffic may affect the ability of people to traverse across roads. In general, increases in traffic levels are likely to lead to greater increases in delay. Delays will also depend on the general level of NMU activity, visibility, and general physical conditions of the development Site.

NMU Amenity

- 6.28 Non-motorised user amenity is broadly defined in the IEMA Guidelines as:

“...the relative pleasantness of a journey, and is considered to be affected by traffic flow, traffic composition and pavement width / separation from traffic”.

- 6.29 The levels of pleasantness, as defined by the magnitude of impact scale, are set out in Table 6.1.

Fear and Intimidation

- 6.30 According to the IEMA Guidelines, Fear and Intimidation is:

“...the fear and intimidation created by all moving objects...and is dependent on the total volume of traffic, the heavy vehicle composition, the speed these vehicles are passing, the proximity of traffic to people – and / or the feeling of inherent lack of protection created by factors such as a narrow pavement median, a narrow path or a constraint preventing people stepping further away from moving vehicles”.

Road Safety

- 6.31 The IEMA Guidelines provide only limited information on the assessment of Road Safety, suggesting the use of existing personal injury collision rates for each receptor obtained from the highway authorities.
- 6.32 Collision data was obtained from the CrashMap Database for the latest five-year period (01/01/2020 – 31/12/2024) and is detailed within the Baseline Conditions below.
- 6.33 A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) will be independently carried out to assess the access proposals and associated active travel and sustainable travel improvements for the Proposed Development. The Stage 1 RSA will be commissioned to identify any potential road safety issues that may arise from the implementation of the proposed access strategy and associated works. The Stage 1 RSA will be undertaken in due course during the determination period and does not form part of the ES assessment at this stage.

Hazardous / Large Loads

- 6.34 The IEMA Guidelines also suggest considering dangerous or hazardous loads. However, the Proposed Development is not expected to generate any such vehicle movements and therefore, it is deemed appropriate to exclude dangerous or hazardous loads from the assessment.
- 6.35 Also excluded from the assessment are effects of dust and dirt as these are unlikely to occur at distances greater than 50m from a construction Site access and depend predominantly on the management practices during construction.

Significance Criteria

- 6.36 To record the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development, the following methodology has been adopted.
- 6.37 A magnitude of impact scale in respect of each of the specific traffic and movement related impacts has been defined. This scale is based on the thresholds identified in the IEMA Guidelines supplemented by best practice and professional judgement. This scale is identified in Table 6.1.

Assessment Criteria	Negligible	Low	Medium	High
Severance	Change in highway link traffic flow of less than 10%	Change in highway link traffic flow of 10% to <30%	Change in highway link traffic flow of 30% to <60%	Change in highway link traffic flow of over 60%
Driver Delay	No increase in journey time	Increase in journey time of less than 5 minutes	Increase in journey time of 5 to 10 minutes	Increase in journey time of more than 10 minutes
NMU Delay	No increase in journey time	Increase in journey time of less than 5 minutes	Increase in journey time of 5 to 10 minutes	Increase in journey time of more than 10 minutes
NMU Amenity	No change in pleasantness of route	Noticeable change in pleasantness of route	Considerable change in pleasantness of route	Prefer to avoid the route
Fear and Intimidation	No step change	One step change in level with, < average 400 vehicle 18hr increase, or <500 HGV increase	One step change in level with, > average 400 vehicle 18hr increase, or >500 HGV increase	Two step change in level
Road Safety	No change to personal injury accident rate	Minimal change to personal injury accident rate	Change to personal injury accident rate	Significant change to personal injury accident rate
Hazardous and Large Loads	No increase	No increase	Increase of less than 10%	Increase of more than 10%

Table 6.1: Magnitude of Impact (Based on IEMA Guidelines)

Receptors

- 6.38 The assessment has considered potential sensitive receptors within the Study Area, previously discussed. The IEMA Guidelines state at Paragraph 1.29 that defining the list of receptors to be included in the environmental assessment, i.e. those which may be sensitive to changes in traffic conditions, should be informed by consultation with the local planning and highway authorities as part of the EIA scoping process.
- 6.39 The receptors have therefore been determined based on professional judgement and are considered appropriate. The list of receptors is as follows:
- Non-motorised users, including people walking, cycling and wheeling
 - Public right of way users
 - Motorists and freight vehicles
 - Public transport
 - Emergency services

Sensitivity	Receptor Type
High	High importance or priority, with high susceptibility to change, and limited ability to adapt or switch to alternative modes or routes
Medium	Medium importance or priority, with some sensitivity to change, and some opportunity to adapt or switch to alternative modes or routes
Low	Low importance or priority, with low sensitivity to change, and some opportunity to adapt or switch to alternative modes or routes
Negligible	Negligible importance with very low / no sensitivity to change

Table 6.2: Receptor Sensitivity (Traffic and Movement)

- 6.40 The receptors and their defined sensitivity to change, taking account of the relationship with the highway environment of the highway links within the Study Area (in accordance with the guidelines outlined in **Chapter 2**, the associated descriptions from a transport perspective, as set out in Table 6.2, and the collated data and information discussed in the Baseline Conditions section of this Chapter) are summarised in Table 6.3.

	Sensitivity Receptor				
Study Area Highway Link	Non-Motorised Users	PRoW Users	Motorists and Freight	Public Transport	Emergency Services
Link A Malmesbury Road	Low-Medium	Negligible	Low	Medium	Low
Link B: Common Hil	Low-Medium	Negligible	Low	Medium	Low
Link C: B4040	Negligible-Low	Negligible	Low	Medium	Low
Link D: High Street South	Medium-High	Negligible	Low	Medium	Low
Link E: High Street North	Medium-High	Negligible	Low	Medium	Low
Link F: Calcutt Street	Medium-High	Negligible	Low	Medium	Low
Link G: A419 North	Negligible	Negligible	Low	Medium	Low
Link H: A419 South	Negligible	Negligible	Low	Medium	Low
Link I: PRoW	Medium	Medium	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Table 6.3: Receptor Sensitivity by Highway Link in the Study Area

- 6.41 Based on the information set out in Table 6.3 above, it is concluded that Links D&E (The High Street) and Link F (Calcutt Street) are considered sensitive links due to their being a high pedestrian footfall throughout with stores with road frontage as well as primary school access. These will therefore be

assessed against IEMA Rule 2, which stipulates a trigger of assessment for sensitive locations as being a 10% increase in traffic.

- 6.42 All other links are considered not to be highly sensitive in nature, and therefore IEMA's defector Rule 1, which stipulates a 30% increase as the trigger for assessment is applicable.
- 6.43 The matrix set out in Table 6.4 has then been used to identify the significance of the effects.

Receptor Sensitivity	Sensitivity Receptor			
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
High	High	Major	Major	Moderate
Medium	Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor
Low	Low	Moderate	Minor	Minor
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Table 6.4: Significance of Effect

- 6.44 For the purposes of this assessment, effects assessed as Major or Moderate are considered significant.
- 6.45 Likely effects have been recorded using the significance scale presented in Table 6.5. This scale has been developed specifically for the assessment of traffic and movement related effects and is based on the interaction between receptor sensitivity and the magnitude of impact, as defined in the Effect Significance matrix (Table 6.4) and with reference to **Chapter 2**.

Significance	Receptor Type
Major	Considerable change from baseline conditions, typically affecting receptors that are either of the highest sensitivity or have limited adaptability, tolerance, or capacity to recover.
Moderate	Noticeable change from baseline conditions, typically affecting receptors of medium to high sensitivity. While the receptor may have some capacity to adapt or tolerate the change, the impact may still lead to a material change in travel conditions, accessibility, or network operation.
Minor	Small or limited change from baseline conditions, typically affecting receptors of low to medium sensitivity, or where there is reasonable capacity to adapt or tolerate the change. Effects are unlikely to result in meaningful disruption to travel patterns, access, or safety.
Negligible	Very limited or no perceivable change from baseline conditions, with no meaningful effect on receptors, regardless of their sensitivity.

Table 6.5: Significance Scale (Traffic and Movement)

- 6.46 The significance of effects can be described as either beneficial or adverse. In addition, the likely effects have been identified as temporary or permanent, with temporary effects typically associated with the construction phase and permanent effects typically associated with the operational phase.

Assumptions and Limitations

- 6.47 Data for the Proposed Development has been taken from the accompanying Transport Assessment and therefore is robust and consistent across assessments. The ES cumulative assessment follows a comparable methodology to that applied in the Transport Assessment, relying on data taken from the respective applications, supplemented with additional inputs where relevant. Whilst this data has been extracted from the relevant application documentation, there is a reliance on third parties for the accuracy and validity of that data, and this represents a minor limitation to the approach taken.

Baseline Conditions

- 6.48 This section provides an overview of the existing (baseline) transport and accessibility conditions in the locality of the Site. Consideration has been given to the operation of the existing highway network, pedestrian and cycling facilities and their accessibility, and connectivity, to public transport services.

Site Context

- 6.49 The Site is located approximately 1km to the west of Cricklade town centre, to the north of Wiltshire.
- 6.50 Cricklade is located approximately 11km northwest of Swindon, and it 1.5km from the A419 to provide convenient access to the wider strategic highway network. The Site is bordered by the B4040 to the south, the Horsey Down Bloor Homes site to the east, with Cricklade Leisure Centre beyond, Common Hill Farm to the west and Stones Lane and the dismantled railway line (now a National Cycle Route) to the north.
- 6.51 The Site lies in the county of Wiltshire with the Unitary Authority (UA) for this area being Wiltshire Council (WC).
- 6.52 The overall Site covers an area of approximately 20.72 hectares, with the southern parcel comprising an area of approximately 17.22 hectares and the northwest parcel comprising approximately 3.5 hectares.
- 6.53 The Site location and its relationship with immediate adjoining areas is shown in Figure 6.2.

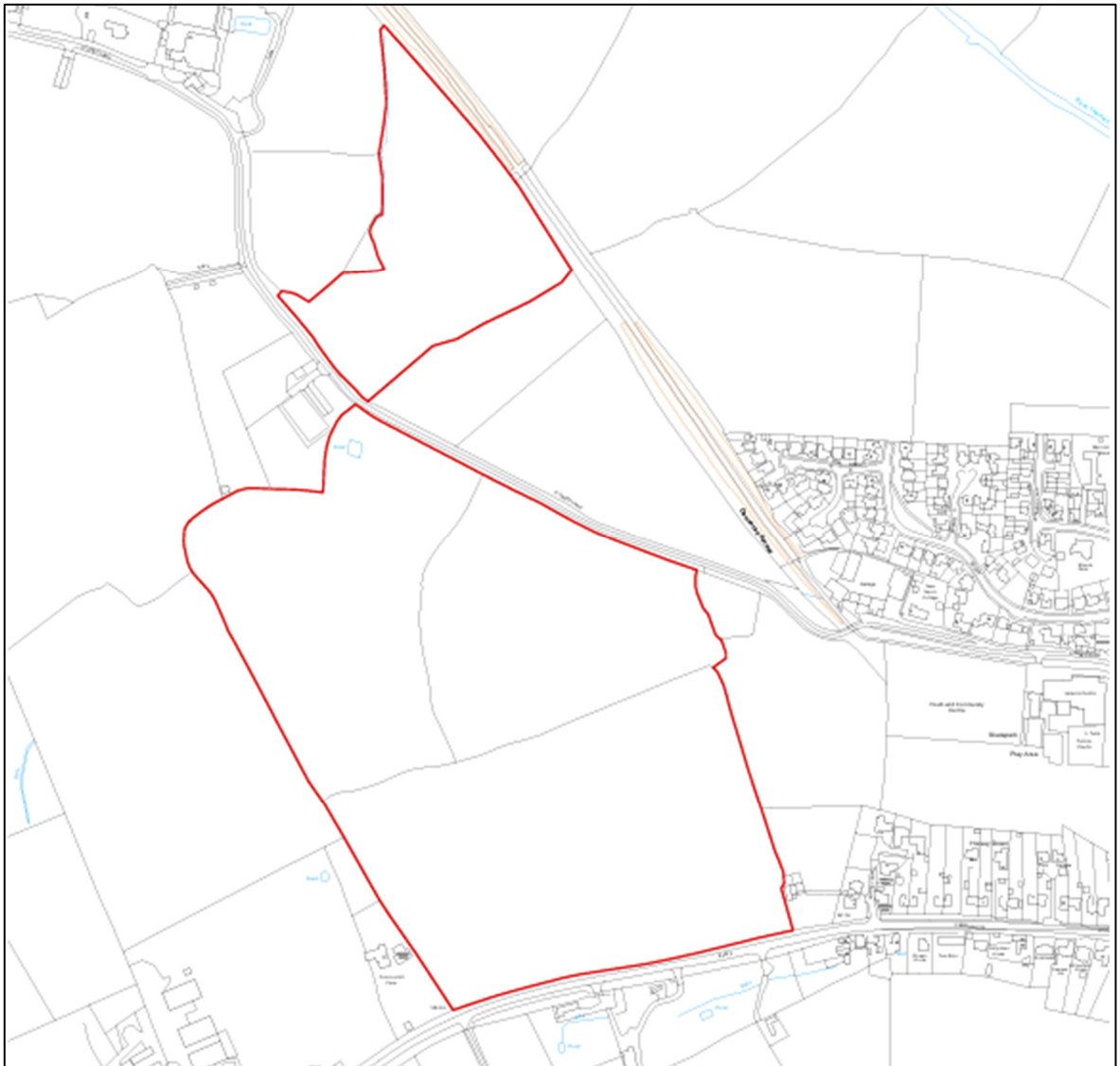


Figure 6.2: Site Location Plan

Local Highway Network

Malmesbury Road / Common Hill (B4040)

- 6.54 The B4040 is a rural B-Class Road, which borders the southern boundary of the Site. The road is a single carriageway, two-way road of approximately 7.3m in width, which routes in a roughly east-west alignment and is subject to the National Speed Limit (60mph) along the Site frontage. Approximately 35m east of the Site frontage, the speed limit of the B4040 reduces to 30mph
- 6.55 To the east, the B4040 continues into the centre of Cricklade, where it joins the B4553 and the High Street, for access towards the A419, via a mini roundabout. To the west, the B4040 continues through the villages of Minety, towards Malmesbury and Sherston.
- 6.56 There are no existing pedestrian footways adjacent the Site's immediate frontage along the B4040. The nearest footway is present at the junction of Horsey Down along the northern side of the

carriageway approximately 40m east of where the speed limit reduces to 30mph upon entering Cricklade. The footway is of approximately 1.5m width widening out to 2.0m at the roundabout of the B4040 Common Hill Road and West Mill Lane.

Local Infrastructure Proposed by Others

- 6.57 As part of the application on the adjacent site (REF: PL/2021/10404) improvements are proposed in the locality, including a proposal to extend the speed limit west in line with the eastern edge of the Site frontage. Further improvements locally include extending the footway on the northern edge of the B4040 from the junction with Horsey Down up to the adjacent application's proposed Site access.

Stones Lane

- 6.58 Stones Lane is a rural access lane, which dissects the southern and northwest parcels of the Site. It takes access from West Mill Lane to the east and provides vehicular access to Cricklade Leisure Centre.
- 6.59 There are no formal footways on either side of Stones Lane, however due to the low flow of vehicles, serving a small number of existing properties and agricultural uses, it operates as a shared surface between motorised and non-motorised users.

High Street

- 6.60 Cricklade High Street is located approximately 1km east of the Site and provides access to a range of local shops and facilities typical of a town of Cricklade's size. Cricklade High Street is subject to a 20mph speed limit with footways situated along both sides of the road and a number of zebra crossing locations.
- 6.61 Pedestrian routes from the Site to the High Street are via the B4040, or via West Mill Lane and Bath Road. However, as the footway along the B4040 is situated along the southern side of the road only, such pedestrians are more likely to utilise existing pedestrian footways along West Mill Lane and Bath Road, noting that it is also the more direct route and of higher amenity due to lower traffic volume.

A419

- 6.62 The A419 forms the main strategic route around the northern side of Cricklade, providing connections with Swindon and M4 (Junction 15) in the south and Cirencester, Cheltenham Gloucester and M5 (Junction 11A) to the north. It is part of the Strategic Road Network (SRN), managed by National Highways, and in the vicinity of Cricklade, a dual carriageway subject to a 70mph speed limit.

Walking and Cycling

- 6.63 There are no existing pedestrian footways adjacent to the Site's immediate frontage along the B4040. The nearest footway is present at the junction of Horsey Down along the northern side of the carriageway approximately 40m east of where the speed limit reduced to 30mph upon entering Cricklade. The footway is of approximately 1.5m width, widening out to 2m at the roundabout of the B4040 Common Hill Road and West Mill Lane.
- 6.64 Regarding Stones Lane, there are no formal footways on either side of the carriageway, however due to the low flow of vehicles, serving a small number of existing properties and agricultural uses, it operates as a shared surface.
- 6.65 Finally for the High Street, pedestrian routes from the Site are via the B4040, whereby the footway along the B4040 is situated along the northern side of the road only, as such pedestrians are more likely to utilise existing pedestrian footways along West Mill Lane and Bath Road.

- 6.66 National Cycle Route (NCR) 45 passes through Cricklade, providing a key link in the UK National Cycle Network (NCN) and offering cyclists an accessible and scenic route through the town. This route connects Cricklade with other nearby towns and villages, running through picturesque landscapes, including views of the Cotswolds and the River Thames. It primarily utilizes a mix of traffic-free paths, quiet roads, and some more challenging sections, catering to a range of cycling abilities. The route is well-signposted, encouraging sustainable travel options and enhancing local connectivity, while promoting cycling as an alternative transport mode within the region.
- 6.67 NCR 45 is located to the northeast of the Site and runs along a section of Stones Lane between Cricklade Leisure Centre to the High Street, via Bath Road, and continues north along the disused railway line towards Cirencester and the north of Swindon to the south.
- 6.68 In addition to the, STRAVA data, set out in detail within the accompanying Transport Assessment, that the B4040 and the NCR 45 are frequently used by cyclists using STRAVA. Alongside these routes, the town centre is frequently which demonstrates that despite the lack of formal cycle routes in some places, the carriageway is frequently used and considered suitable by cyclists.

Public Transport

Bus

- 6.69 The nearest bus stops are located along the B4040, known as the 'Bishopsfield' bus stops, which are located approximately 800m east from the centre of the Site. The eastbound stop comprises a flag and pole, shelter with seating and printed timetable information, whilst the westbound stop comprises a flag and pole only.
- 6.70 The bus stops are served by the 53 Stagecoach West bus service, which operates between Cricklade, Purton and Swindon.
- 6.71 Further bus stops are located along Cricklade High Street known as the 'High Street' bus stops which are additionally served by the 51 Stagecoach West bus service which provides access to Cirencester and Swindon.
- 6.72 A summary of the services from the 'Bishopsfield' bus stops is provided in Table 6.6.

Service	Operator	Route / Destination Served	Days	First Service	Approx Frequency.	Last Service
53	Stagecoach West	Cricklade – Purton - Swindon (towards Park North, New College)	Mon-Sat	06:22	Every hour	18:29
			Sun	08:12	Every 2 hours	16:12
		Swindon – Purton - Cricklade (towards Haydon Wick, Orbital Shopping Park)	Mon-Fri	09:39	Every hour	15:39
			Sat	09:39	Every hour	14:39
			Sun	09:39	Every 2 hours	15:39
51	Stagecoach West	Cirencester - Swindon	Mon-Fri	06:21	Every hour	20:32
			Sat	08:02	Every hour	20:31

			Sun	08:40	Every 2 hours	18:30
		Swindon - Cirencester	Mon-Fri	05:50	Every hour	18:33
			Sat	06:09	Every hour	18:33
			Sun	07:36	Every 2 hours	17:38

Table 6.6: Bus Services and Frequency

- 6.73 As demonstrated by Table 6.6, the 53 and 51 Stagecoach West bus services provide a regular service Monday to Sunday into Purton, Swindon and Cirencester, with a journey time of less than an hour to the furthest stop on these services.
- 6.74 These services are suitable for both commuters to use for work and leisure / social purposes. As these services operate at the weekend, residents would also be able to utilise it for leisure purposes outside the typical working week.

Rail Services

- 6.75 The nearest largest railway station is Swindon Railway Station which is located approximately 15km to the southeast of the Site. This is accessible via the 53-service bus to Fleming Way, Swindon which is located 450m from the railway station.
- 6.76 Swindon Railway Station is on the Great Western Main Line and lies between Didcot Parkway and Chippenham. It is managed by Great Western Railway, which operates all of the services from the station.
- 6.77 The station is served by frequent intercity trains to London Paddington eastbound, and westbound to Bristol and Cardiff. There are services to Cheltenham via Gloucester on the Golden Valley Line, and a local service to Westbury via the Wessex Main Line. Additional services run during the peak periods, and some existing services are extended further afield. Some trains are extended beyond Swansea to Carmarthen, and a number of trains are extended beyond Bristol Temple Meads to Weston-Super-Mare, Taunton, Exeter, Plymouth and Penzance.

Local Highway Safety

- 6.78 For the purposes of this assessment, Personal Injury Collision (PIC) data has been extracted from the CrashMap database (crashmap.co.uk) for the highway network contained within the Study Area, for the most recent five-year review period, ending December 2024.
- 6.79 The study area extract obtained from the CrashMap database is shown below in Figure 6.3 which indicates the number and severity of collisions. This confirms that there have been two collisions on the links within the study area.

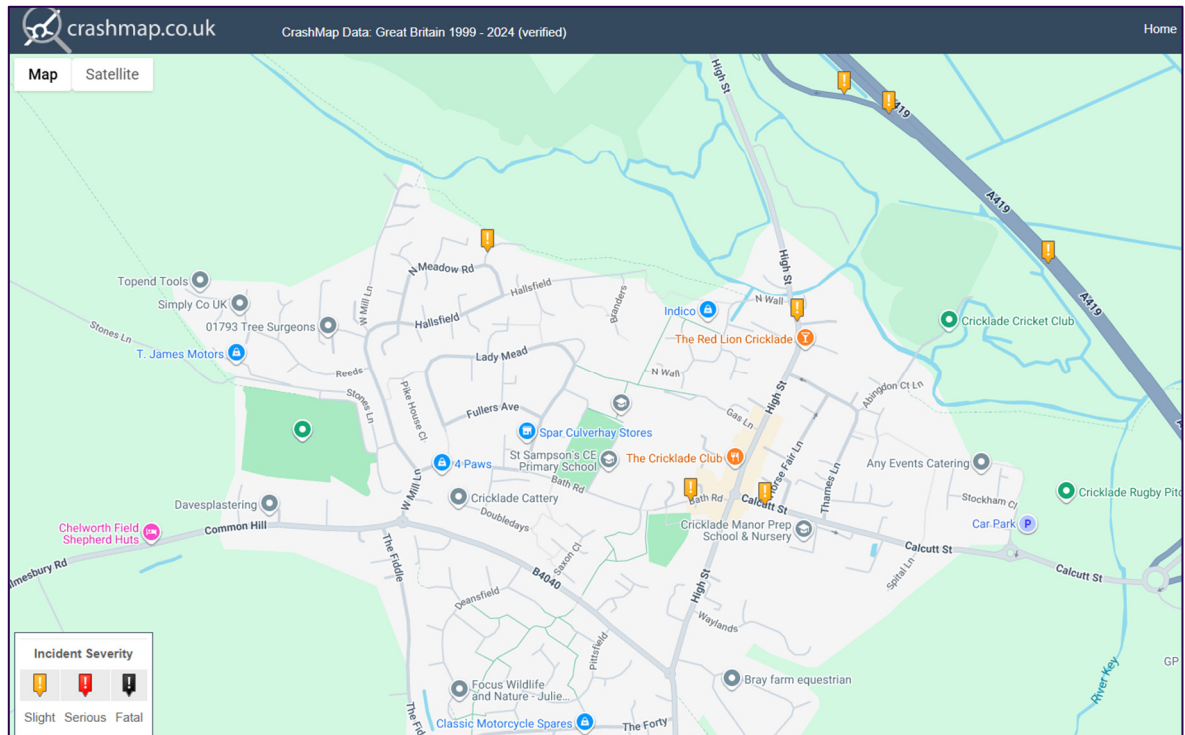


Figure 6.3: CrashMap Personal Injury Collision Data

- 6.80 Of these two collisions, one slight collision occurred on Calcutt Street and involved a motorcyclist. The second collision, also resulting in slight injury in this instance to a car passenger, occurred to the northern extent of the study area on High Street north towards the A419. Neither collision involved a pedestrian or cyclist.
- 6.81 Neither of these collisions are suggestive of a deficiency in the layout or geometry of the local highway network. Furthermore, the absence of collisions elsewhere in the network and absence of any clustering would suggest there is not an existing highway safety issue that could be exacerbated by the development proposals.
- 6.82 Therefore, it is concluded that there is no existing safety issue on the local highway network that could be exacerbated by the development proposals.

Baseline Data Collection

Traffic Surveys

- 6.83 A total of 5 Traffic surveys were undertaken to inform the assessment work contained within the Traffic and Movement Chapter of this ES, as well as supporting analysis within the accompanying Transport Assessment. Specifically, this survey work comprised one Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC) on Common Hill within the Site vicinity, and four Manual Classified Count (MCC) Turning count surveys within Cricklade. These surveys were undertaken in January 2026, outside school holiday periods. The location of these surveys is shown in Figure 6.4 below.



Figure 6.4: Survey Data Location

- 6.84 In addition to the surveys undertaken, data for the A419, which forms part of the Strategic Road Network (SRN) was taken from the DfT Count Data, utilising Data Count point: 27119, which is located in the vicinity of Cricklade, and identified in the Figure above. This data was extracted from a count undertaken in 2024 and then a growth factor applied as appropriate to produce 2031 Forecast year data.

Site Visit

- 6.85 A site visit has been undertaken to give a more accurate picture and understanding of the existing on-site conditions within the Study Area. During the site visits, network flows, junction operations, non-motorised traffic user provision and conditions were all observed to understand the baseline network operation. The site visit was undertaken on 11th December 2025.

Potential Effects

Construction Period

- 6.86 Construction activities will include the building of the residential dwellings plus the civil engineering works associated with the construction of the new infrastructure, including the new Site access junction, internal development roads, cycling and walking links, drainage attenuation features, and landscaping.

- 6.87 Construction of the Proposed Development will give rise to vehicular traffic associated with construction works accessing the Site, and deliveries of materials and products that will be transported by HGVs. In addition, the Construction Phase will require on-site operation of construction equipment and plant.
- 6.88 It is assumed for the purpose of this assessment that construction activities will typically be carried out Monday to Saturday, with no construction activity occurring on Sundays. Ultimately, the permitted construction working hours will be agreed with WC and will be set out in the approved CTMP. It is also assumed that there will be no construction deliveries during the weekday morning and evening network peak hours.
- 6.89 Construction traffic results in a temporary traffic impact as it ceases upon completion of the construction works. Thus, the effects tend to be temporary and less significant. The traffic volume will also depend heavily on the rate of delivery and the triggers for delivering parts of the infrastructure.
- 6.90 The construction traffic movements generated during the Construction Phase of the Proposed Development is considered to be less than the traffic subsequently generated by the completed development. Therefore, the significance of effects is Negligible – Minor Adverse (not significant), with the effects expected to be short term and temporary.
- 6.91 Management control mitigation measures will be implemented during construction in the form of controls imposed by planning conditions, health and safety legislation requirements and good construction Site practices. Managing the construction effects will also form part of a CTMP or similar document. The management control mitigation measures will be intended to protect the environment, amenity, and safety of residents, the public and the surroundings in the vicinity of the Proposed Development.
- 6.92 As part of any CTMP, a construction vehicle routing regime for access to the construction Site will be identified and agreed with WC to ensure that drivers of construction related vehicles do not use inappropriate routes which are unsuitable by virtue of their width, alignment, or character. The regime will aim to ensure that construction vehicles avoid residential areas and use the strategic highway network wherever possible.
- 6.93 The CTMP will likely be secured by a planning condition and be agreed with WC prior to the commencement of construction works.
- 6.94 As such, no additional mitigation measures are required to reduce the construction related effects and no further assessment is considered appropriate.

Operational Period

- 6.95 The operation of the Proposed Development refers to when it is completed and all dwellings and buildings are occupied, representing the greatest effect on the surrounding highway network.

Vehicle Movements

- 6.96 The AADT traffic data for the Forecast Year, with and without development, across the study area is set out in Table 6.7 below.

Link	2031 Forecast	Proposed Development	2031 Forecast + Proposed Development	Percentage Impact
A Malmesbury Road	3,339	333	3,672	10%
B Common Hill	3,339	1,253	4,592	38%
C B4040 East	5,811	1,253	7,064	22%
D High Street South	10,874	1,015	11,889	9%
E High street North	3,744	114	3,857	3%
F Calcutt Street	8,517	901	9,418	11%
G A419 N	23,505	428	23,934	2%
H A419 S	22,990	587	23,577	3%
I: PRow	/	/	/	/

Table 6.7: Forecast Traffic Flows

- 6.97 As can be seen from Table 6.7 above, of the links assessed, most experience an impact of 10% or less, with only Links B (Common Hill), C (B4040), and F (Calcutt Street) experiencing a greater than 10% increase.
- 6.98 It is noted that the PRow crosses the north western part of the Site (Link I), however due to the proposed layout and associated framework plans, no internal traffic corridors are proposed to cross the PRow, and a margin is provided to offset the PRow to the built form and infrastructure of the development. On this basis there is not expected to be any increase in traffic crossing the public right of way.
- 6.99 Due to the Proposed Development comprising residential dwellings, there will be no regular HGV traffic associated with the Operational Phase and thus any increase in HGV flows on the surrounding network will be none – negligible.
- 6.100 Of the links identified above, utilising the sensitivity Matrix set out in Table 6.3 above, it is determined that the High Street (Links D&E) together with Link F (Calcutt Street) comprise sensitive locations, therefore applying Rule 2 of IEMA's Guidelines, these locations should be assessed in greater detail should the increase in vehicular traffic exceed 10%. The remainder of the links are not considered sensitive, and therefore Rule 1 of IEMA's guidelines should be applied, which indicates these should be assessed where there is a greater than 30% change in traffic volume.
- 6.101 On the basis of the above it is considered that Links B (Common Hill), and F (Calcutt Street) require further assessment, and the remaining Links will experience negligible impact in the Future Baseline as a result of the Proposed Development.
- 6.102 Therefore the impacts on Links B & F are assessed further below.

Severance

- 6.103 The impact of the Proposed Development on severance is quantified through a percentage change in traffic volume, applied to the relevant sensitivity rating of the receptor.

- 6.104 For Link B, which experiences a 38% increase in traffic, this equates to a medium magnitude of impact, according to Table 6.1 set out above. In respect of severance, Link B is considered a low level receptor and therefore the resulting significance of effect is Minor Adverse (not significant).
- 6.105 Link F experiences an 11% increase in traffic, but is considered a medium-high sensitive receptor. Therefore, applying a low magnitude of impact, against a medium-high sensitivity receptor equates to a potentially Moderate-Minor Adverse effect. Severance is as a result of a complex series of factors, but in this instance ultimately occurs from the difficulty of crossing a more heavily trafficked road. However, Link F is subject to a 20mph speed limit, has active frontage and a series of crossing points along its length, including a Zebra crossing located close to the High Street, therefore ensuring permeability across Link F is maintained and severance minimised. On this basis, applying professional judgement the effect is considered Minor Adverse (not significant).

Non-Motorised Delay (NMU) Delay

- 6.106 The impact of the Proposed Development on NMU delay is quantified through a perceptible change in journey time, applied to the relevant sensitivity rating of the receptor.
- 6.107 Link B experiences a 38% increase in traffic with the Proposed Development, however this link is equipped with footway provision along the northern side, and has uncontrolled crossing facilities provided as part of the junction to the east ensuring pedestrian access will remain unchanged. Public Transport provision will not be effected by the implementation of Proposed Development, with the existing provision retained, promoted, and unimpeded by the proposals. On this basis it is not expected there will be any perceptible change to NMU journey time. Therefore applying a negligible magnitude of impact to a low sensitivity receptor equates to a Negligible effect (not significant).
- 6.108 Link F experiences an 11% increase in traffic with the Proposed Development, but has accompanying footways and priority crossing facilities near the junction with Links D&E through a Zebra crossing. Therefore the delay experienced to journey times as a result of the increase in traffic associated with the Proposed Development is anticipated to be less than 5 minutes, and therefore result in a low magnitude of impact. Applying this to a medium-high sensitive receptor this equates to a potentially Moderate-Minor Adverse effect, however the presence of priority crossing facilities enabling pedestrians right of way across the carriageway at the crossing facility will mitigate any delay experienced and therefore the resulting effect is considered to be Minor Adverse (not significant).

Non-Motorised Delay (NMU) Amenity

- 6.109 The impact of the Proposed Development on NMU Amenity is quantified through a perceptible change in pleasantness of route, applied to the relevant sensitivity rating of the receptor.
- 6.110 With respect of Link B, the provision of a new footway (either in full by the Proposed Development or split between the Proposed Development and adjacent Site) along the Site frontage to the east will change the streetscape and character of the route. This will therefore result in a negligible - low magnitude of impact in respect of non-motorised amenity. Thus, applying the significance of effect matrix, the effect would be Negligible - Minor Beneficial (not significant).
- 6.111 Link F will experience a more modest increase in traffic, although there is already existing appropriate level of footway provision. Therefore, it is considered the effects of the Proposed Development will not result in a material change in NMU amenity, and as such there will be a negligible magnitude of impact, which applying the significance of effect matrix, results in a Negligible effect (not significant) as a result of the Operational Phase.

Fear and Intimidation

- 6.112 The impact of the Proposed Development on Fear and Intimidation is quantified through a scoring system, which results in a step change in level of scoring system with corresponding increases in average flow over a 18 hour period.
- 6.113 Links B & F, in relation to low-medium & medium-high sensitive receptors respectively, currently experience a small amount of Fear and Intimidation as determined through the IEMA Guidelines, and following the implementation of the Proposed Development will continue to experience a small amount of Fear and Intimidation. Therefore, there will be no step change in Fear and Intimidation experienced, and as such the magnitude of impact is negligible. Applying the significance matrix, the effect of the Proposed Development on both Links B & F is Negligible (not significant) during the Operational Phase.

Driver Delay

- 6.114 The impact of the Proposed Development on Driver Delay is quantified through a perceptible change in journey time, applied to the relevant sensitivity rating of the receptor.
- 6.115 An assessment of Driver Delay is contained within the accompanying TA, within which junction capacity modelling has been undertaken at local junctions within the study area, including Links B & F which form the basis of this detailed assessment.
- 6.116 According to the capacity modelling undertaken in the Transport Assessment (Tables 7.3 & 7.4 of the TA), the Proposed Development will result in an increase in delay of less than 1 second per vehicle. This is considered to reflect no material change in journey time, and therefore equates to a negligible magnitude of impact. On this basis the resulting effect of the Proposed Development is Negligible (not significant) during the Operational Phase.
- 6.117 Link F was also subject to capacity modelling within the Transport Assessment (Tables 7.7 & 7.8). This capacity modelling identified delays of less than 3 seconds. This is also considered to reflect on material change in journey time, and therefore equates to a negligible magnitude of impact. Applying the significance of effect matrix the resulting effect of the Proposed Development is Negligible (not significant) during the Operational Phase.

Road Safety

- 6.118 The impact of the Proposed Development on Road Safety is quantified through a perceptible change in personal injury accident rate, applied to the relevant sensitivity rating of the receptor.
- 6.119 The collision data obtained as part of the Transport Assessment and detailed above demonstrates there is no existing highway safety issues, nor does it highlight any part of the highway network that might experience a change to the personal injury collision rate during operation. The percentage change in AADT flows resulting from the Operational Phase would result in a negligible magnitude of impact on the personal injury collision rate. Therefore, it is concluded that the effect on Road Safety, taking account of all sensitive receptors throughout the Study Area, would be Negligible (not significant) during the Operational Phase.

Mitigation and Enhancement

Embedded Design Mitigation

Site Access Junctions

- 6.120 The Proposed Development access junctions will be designed in accordance with MfS and the NPPF whereby safe and suitable access for all users will be provided. One primary vehicular access is proposed onto Common Hill to the south in the form of a simple priority junction, whilst a secondary emergency/active travel access is proposed to the north onto Stones Lane.

Internal Site Layout

- 6.121 The internal Site layout will be designed in a manner which facilitates walking and cycling, providing linkages to existing routes along Common Hill and Stones Lane.

Travel Plan

- 6.122 To further encourage prospective residents to undertake journeys via active travel or other sustainable modes, a Travel Plan has been produced and submitted with the application under separate cover. The Travel Plan sets out a detailed action plan, including hard and soft measures, to support modal shift as well as a strategy to monitor travel patterns at the development. Travel Plans are required for "All developments that will generate significant amount of movement" as per paragraph 118 of the NPPF, and therefore a Travel Plan has been prepared and submitted with the planning application. Therefore, the production of the Travel Plan is considered inherent mitigation for the Proposed Development.
- 6.123 However, it is important to note that the specific Travel Plan measures and the overarching Travel Plan strategy/action plan should be tailored to the individual development and agreed with the local highway authority. That is, the specific measures contained within the Travel Plan, including any potential reduction in vehicular trips resulting from the implementation of the Travel Plan strategy and its on-going promotion by a Travel Plan Co-ordinator to encourage travel by sustainable modes, have not been assessed at this stage. Therefore, the ES Traffic and Movement Chapter does not assess the potential impact of this additional mitigation that may arise from the finalised Travel Plan. Consequently, although not deemed to be required, the Travel Plan could deliver further benefits and result in additional beneficial impacts. i.e. the assessment is a worst case scenario.

CTMP

- 6.124 A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), or similar document, will be produced for the Proposed Development. As part of any future CTMP the following Site-specific measures would likely be implemented, which would be secured by a planning condition and be agreed with WC prior to the commencement of construction works:
- Construction vehicle routing regime for access to the construction Site will be identified and agreed with WC to ensure that drivers of construction related vehicles do not use inappropriate routes which are unsuitable by virtue of their width, alignment, or character. The regime will aim to ensure that construction vehicles avoid residential areas and use the strategic highway network wherever possible;
 - Ensure vehicles associated with the construction works can be accommodated within the Proposed Development Site to avoid spill over on to the local highway network;
 - The construction of the access will be designed, managed, and phased to minimise disturbance to users of the local highway network and local residents;

- Mitigation is provided to minimise mud and dust entering the local highway network and to reduce vibrations;
- Working hours would be set to ensure construction workers typically arrive and depart outside of weekday network peak hours, and deliveries do not occur during weekday network peak hours to minimise disturbance on the local highway network;
- Construction processes would be programmed to avoid reliance on deliveries of concrete and bituminous materials during peak hours; and
- Overall best practice will be adopted to minimise adverse effects of construction.

Construction Phase

- 6.125 Management control mitigation measures will be implemented during construction in the form of controls imposed by planning conditions, health and safety legislation requirements and good construction Site practices.
- 6.126 No additional mitigation measures beyond these standard measures are required during the Construction Phase.

Operational Phase

- 6.127 No additional mitigation measures beyond the inherent design mitigation set out above are required during the Operational Phase.
- 6.128 Although the production of a Travel Plan to support the planning application for the Proposed Development is considered an element of inherent mitigation, as previously discussed, the specific measures contained within the Travel Plan, including any potential reduction in vehicular trips resulting from the implementation of the Travel Plan strategy and its on-going promotion by a Travel Plan Co-ordinator to encourage travel by sustainable modes, have not been assessed at this stage. Therefore, the ES Traffic and Movement Chapter does not assess the potential impact of this additional mitigation that may arise from the finalised Travel Plan. Consequently, although not deemed to be required, the Travel Plan could deliver further benefits and result in additional beneficial impacts.

Residual Effects

Construction Phase

- 6.129 The construction period is short-medium term, in the context of the lifetime of the Proposed Development, and only temporary in its effects. No long-term environmental effects are therefore expected.
- 6.130 The planning conditions, health and safety legislation requirements and good construction Site practices will minimise the effect on the local environment and ensure that during the construction phase all effects on receptors will be temporary, short to medium-term, and Negligible – Minor Adverse (not significant) in EIA terms.
- 6.131 No additional mitigation measures are required during the Construction Phase and therefore the residual effects remain unchanged from the potential effects set out earlier in this Chapter.

Operational Phase

- 6.132 No additional mitigation measures are required during the Operational Phase and therefore the residual effects remain unchanged from the potential effects set out earlier in this Chapter.

Severance

- 6.133 The significance of the residual effects on Severance during the Operational Phase would be Negligible - Minor Adverse (not significant) in EIA terms.

Non-Motorised User Delay

- 6.134 The significance of the residual effects on NMU delay during the Operational Phase would be Negligible – Minor Adverse (not significant) in EIA terms.

Non-motorised User Amenity

- 6.135 The significance of the residual effects on NMU amenity during the Operational Phase would be Negligible (not significant) in EIA terms.

Fear and Intimidation

- 6.136 The significance of the residual effects on Fear and Intimidation during the Operational Phase would be Negligible (not significant) in EIA terms.

Driver Delay

- 6.137 The significance of the residual effects on Driver Delay during the Operational Phase would be Negligible (not significant) in EIA terms.

Road Safety

- 6.138 The significance of the residual effects on Road Safety during the Operational Phase would be Negligible (not significant) in EIA terms

Summary

- 6.139 In accordance with IEMA Guidelines, the following Traffic and Movement related impacts have been assessed for the potential receptors in the Study Area surrounding the Proposed Development:
- Severance of Communities;
 - Road vehicle driver and passenger delay;
 - Non-motorised user delay;
 - Non-motorised amenity;
 - Fear and Intimidation on and by road users; and
 - Road user and pedestrian safety
- 6.140 The IEMA Guidelines also suggest considering dangerous or hazardous loads. However, the Proposed Development is not expected to generate any such vehicle movements and therefore, this has been excluded from the assessment.
- 6.141 The Study Area covers the surrounding highway network and primarily comprises the B4040 as it routes through Cricklade town centre, from Malmesbury Road up to and including the A419 to the east of Cricklade.

- 6.142 The assessment of the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development presented in this Traffic and Movement Chapter demonstrates that the delivery of the Proposed Development would not result in any significant Traffic and Movement effects. Furthermore, the likely effects of the Cumulative Development sites would also not result in any significant Traffic and Movement effects.

7. ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

Introduction

- 7.1 This chapter of the ES has been prepared by Ecology Solutions Ltd and assesses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on the environment in respect of Ecology and Biodiversity.
- 7.2 The chapter is supported by the following appendices:
- **Appendix 7.1:** Ecological Impact Assessment (report 10742.EcIA.vf Parts 1 and 2);
 - **Appendix 7.2:** Shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment (report 10619.SHRA.vf); and,
 - **Appendix 7.3:** Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (report 10742.BNGREport.vf).

Assessment Methodology

Survey Area and Scope

- 7.3 In light of guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), the study area pertinent to ecology and nature conservation is based on the geographical scope of the potential for significant effects to key receptors, with a precautionary approach adopted.
- 7.4 In respect of statutory designated sites (including the qualifying features that they support), the study area extends to 10km from the Site boundary to ensure that full consideration has been afforded to potential effects which could arise.
- 7.5 The study area in relation to non-statutory designated sites extends to 2km from the Site boundary.
- 7.6 Likely significant effects in respect of Habitats of Principal Importance within England, protected / notable species are largely confined within the Site itself. The extent of the survey areas for all the species surveys is considered appropriate considering the scope of the surveys and the behaviour of the relevant species / species groups.

Consultation

- 7.7 As set out within the Screening Statement, Natural England provided a consultation response to the screening direction. Natural England specifically indicate that the Proposed Development has the potential for adverse effects on four ecological designations – Cotswold Water Park SSSI, Elmlea Meadows SSSI, North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI and North Meadow & Clattinger Farm SAC. The statement details that from the information on the Natural England's website, these designations are subject to various types of pressures, including pressures from invasive non-native species, pollution, recreational impacts, freshwater impacts, natural resources exploitation and land management. Natural England consider that due to the known pressures on these designated sites they would expect recreational impacts from the proposals to be assessed.

Determining the Baseline

- 7.8 The ecology and biodiversity baseline has been established through a combination of desktop research and field surveys (comprising habitat and faunal surveys) completed by Ecology Solutions between 2022 and 2025. These comprise:
- UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) survey;

- Badger Survey;
- Ground Level Tree Assessment;
- Bat Activity Survey (comprising manual Night-time Bat Walkovers and automated static surveys);
- Breeding Bird Surveys;
- Great Crested Newt eDNA Survey;
- Dormouse Surveys; and
- Reptile Surveys.

7.9 The surveys completed by Ecology Solutions are listed in Table 7.1. Full results of the surveys are detailed within the Ecological Impact Assessment completed by Ecology Solutions (report 10742.EclA.vf Parts 1 and 2) provided at **Appendix 7.1**.

Survey	Overview	Date of Completion
UKHab Survey	Habitat survey of Site including desk study to obtain background information relevant to assessment (designated sites and protected / notable species)	Initial survey: August 2023 Updated surveys: July 2025 (fields F1 and F2) and October 2025 (fields F3 and F4)
Badger Survey	Survey to ascertain the use of the site by badgers, including the presence of setts and other evidence to indicate activity.	Initial Survey: August 2023 Updated Surveys: July 2025 and October 2025
Ground Level Tree Assessment	Ground level assessment of trees to assess for bat roosting potential	Initial Survey: August 2023 Updated Surveys: July 2025 and October 2025
Night-time Bat Walkover Surveys (NBW)	Manual bat activity surveys to ascertain use of the Site by foraging/commuting bats.	May, July and September 2025
Automated Static Survey	Automated static detector surveys to provide quantitative data on bat usage of the site.	July, early September and late September 2023 Monthly between July and October 2025
Breeding Bird Surveys	Surveys to ascertain the breeding status of birds using the Site.	Six visits completed between April 2025 and July 2025
Great Crested Newt eDNA Survey	Surveys of ponds within 250m of the site to determine presence / absence of great crested newts	June 2022
Dormouse Survey	Surveys to ascertain use of the site by dormice	August to November 2022
Reptile Survey	Surveys of the Site to ascertain presence/absence of reptile species.	September and October 2022 July and October 2023

Table 7.1: Surveys Completed

- 7.10 The methodology for determining the baseline can be split into three areas, namely desk study, habitat surveys and faunal surveys. These are set out in detail in the Ecological Impact Assessment (**Appendix 7.1**) and are discussed below.

Desk Study

- 7.11 In order to compile background information on the Site and the surrounding area, Ecology Solutions contacted Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records (GCER) and Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) for protected species records and recognised statutory and non-statutory designated sites. Further information on designated sites from a wider search area was obtained from the online Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)¹ database, which uses information held by Natural England and other organisations.
- 7.12 The search area included:
- Habitat sites (National Site Network) within 10km;
 - UK statutory sites within 2km; and,
 - Non-statutory and records of protected/notable species and habitats within 2km.

Field Surveys

- 7.13 General faunal activity, such as birds or mammals observed visually or by call during the course of the surveys, was recorded. Specific attention was paid to the potential presence of any protected, rare, priority species or other notable faunal species. In addition, specific surveys were undertaken for badgers, bats dormouse, breeding birds, great crested newts and reptiles. Detailed methodologies for each of the field surveys completed are provided in the Ecological Impact Assessment (**Appendix 7.1**). The baseline conditions have been determined in accordance with these field surveys.

Evolution of the Baseline

- 7.14 The evolved baseline assessment has considered a 'no-change' scenario whereby the Site does not undergo development, but continues to operate in its current use, while all the identified developments as part of the cumulative assessment proceed in their entirety. This has considered the current baseline and on-site activities that take place. In particular, this assumes that the existing grazing regime in place at the Site continues in line with existing management, such that the condition and diversity of the grassland fields remain largely unchanged compared with the existing baseline.

Assumptions and Limitations

- 7.15 Ecological surveys were all undertaken with regard to standard survey techniques and during the appropriate seasons. Whilst surveys necessarily represent a 'snapshot' of time, the surveys remain relevant for the purposes of assessment and given the level of survey effort employed as outlined in detail in the Ecological Impact Assessment (**Appendix 7.1**) it is considered that a robust baseline has been established upon which potential effects may be robustly assessed.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 7.16 A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment has been undertaken that identifies and evaluates how the Proposed Development will result in a net change in biodiversity on the site. The process involves the use of a metric as a proxy for recognising the negative impacts on habitats arising from a development and calculating how much new or restored habitat, and of what type is required to deliver sufficient net gain. The metric approach provides a useful guide to demonstrate, on a quantitative basis, whether a

¹ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

net gain in biodiversity can be achieved. The approach involves comparing the baseline scenario to that of the Proposed Development.

- 7.17 The Landscape Masterplan has been used as the basis of the assessment. Detailed assessment work in relation to BNG has been completed and is detailed within the standalone BNG report submitted (**Appendix 7.3**).

Enabling / Construction and Completed Development Assessment Methodology

- 7.18 As outlined above, a suite of ecological surveys was undertaken to ascertain baseline information and establish ecological receptors present, or potentially present, within and immediately adjacent to the Site. Following the identification of the value, or potential value, of designated sites, habitats and species, and their sensitivity, qualitative assessment is undertaken in this chapter to establish the likely significant effects arising from ecological impacts associated with enabling and construction activities and effects resulting from the Proposed Development when complete and operational.

Receptors and Receptor Sensitivity

- 7.19 The CIEEM EcIA Guidelines² do not require the sensitivity of the receptor to be assessed. A receptor is instead described in terms of its ecological value / importance at a geographical scale which is determined through professional judgement and is based on factors such as quality and extent of a habitat, or the rarity of a habitat or species.
- 7.20 Whilst the sensitivity of any given receptor (or ecological feature) varies greatly with respect to habitats and species, and also with regard to their sensitivity to types of effect, it is the value of ecological importance of the ecological receptor which is key for this assessment. The following geographical frame of reference has been used in the assessment to define the level of conservation importance of ecological receptors, as appropriate and relevant to the scale and nature of the Proposed Development:
- International/European;
 - National;
 - Regional;
 - County;
 - District;
 - Local; and,
 - Site
- 7.21 For guidance, features of international importance are of the highest value. Those of site value do have immediate value on the Site but are not considered of importance in a wider context. Ecological features are included in the assessment where their importance fits within those set out in the CIEEM Guidelines. The CIEEM Guidelines advise that important ecological features can include:
- Designated Sites and Features (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Ramsar sites, Site of Special Scientific Importance (SSSI), Important Hedgerow, etc.);

² CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine version 1.3. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

- Biodiversity Value (Use of Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs), development plans and other published documents);
- Potential Value – for example, habitat in sub-optimal condition with potential to be of a higher biodiversity value when in optimal condition; and
- Secondary or Supporting Value – for example, features that support higher-value ecological features, such as a buffer zone against a woodland.

7.22 Table 7.2 details the receptor value criteria applied to this assessment.

Value	Geographic Context of Conservation Importance
High	International / European, National
Medium	Regional, County
Low	District, Local
Negligible	Zone of Influence / Site

Table 7.2: Receptor Ecological Value / Importance

Magnitude of Impact

7.23 The following definitions provide a description as to how the magnitude of impact has been determined:

- High: where the Proposed Development is likely to cause a considerable change from the baseline conditions and the receptor has limited adaptability, tolerance, or recoverability, or is of the highest sensitivity;
- Medium: where the Proposed Development is likely to cause either a considerable change from the baseline conditions for a receptor which has a degree of adaptability, tolerance or recoverability, or a less than considerable change for a receptor that has limited adaptability, tolerance or recoverability;
- Low: where the Proposed Development is likely to cause a small, but noticeable change from the baseline conditions for a receptor which has limited adaptability, tolerance or recoverability or is of the highest sensitivity; or where the Proposed Development is likely to cause a considerable change from the baseline conditions for a receptor which can adapt, is tolerant of the change or/and can recover from the change; and
- Negligible: where the Proposed Development is unlikely to cause a noticeable change for a receptor, despite its level of sensitivity or there is a considerable change for a receptor which is not considered sensitive to a change.

Defining the Effect

- 7.24 The evaluation and assessment of effects has been undertaken with due regard to the guidelines produced by CIEEM. The guidelines avoid the provision of definitions as to how to assign habitats and species different levels of value and rely on an approach that involves professional judgement and the use of available guidance and information.
- 7.25 Having identified the ecological important features likely to be affected by the Proposed Development, the current guidance promotes a transparent approach in which an impact is determined to be significant or not on the basis of a discussion of the factors that categorise it.
- 7.26 This includes characterising the nature of the likely impacts on each important feature in terms of ecological structure and function, by considering the following parameters:

- Positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse): Does the impact result in the loss or gain in biodiversity/quality of the environment?;
- Geographic Extent / Magnitude: The spatial area over which the impact may occur, the area of habitat lost, or the number of individuals/populations affected;
- Direct or Indirect: Direct impact resulting without any intervening factors or indirect impact, not directly caused or resulting from something else;
- Duration / Frequency and Timing: Is the impact temporary or permanent, frequently repeated or a one-off event? In relation to the life cycle of the ecological feature (e.g. nesting bird season);

Nature and Scale of Effect

- 7.27 Impacts and associated effects can either be adverse (negative) or beneficial (positive). If it has no discernible effect either positively or negatively, effects can also be neutral.
- 7.28 The impact assessment has then been reapplied to determine the scale of any residual impacts to each ecological receptor, after the recommended mitigation has been implemented (including additional measures such as standard measures and best practice), to determine potential residual effect. Receptors for which effects are considered significant, as well as those with 'minor adverse' effects (not significant) are carried through to the mitigation stage.

Categorising Likely Significant Effects

- 7.29 Whilst this impact assessment uses generic criteria, based on an expression of severity, to describe the significance of environmental effects, the CIEEM Guidelines encourages the expression of significance of ecological effects with reference to a geographic scale. The CIEEM Guidelines state that an effect should be determined as being significant when it *'either supports or undermines biodiversity conservation objectives for important ecological features or for biodiversity in general'*.
- 7.30 Significance is a concept related to the weight that should be afforded to effects when decisions are made, and to the consequences, in terms of legislation, policy and/or development control. So, a significant negative (adverse) effect on a feature of importance at one level would be likely to trigger related planning policies and, if permissible at all, generate the need for development control mechanisms, such as planning conditions or legal obligations, as described in those policies.
- 7.31 For ease of reference, Tabel 7.3 below provides a means of relating the two approaches and is provided in order to allow this ES chapter to be integrated into the wider EIA without compromising the CIEEM best practice approach. Moderate and Major effects are considered to be 'significant', and minor and negligible effects 'not significant'.
- 7.32 The scale attributed to each effect identified was determined by the sensitivity of the receptor and magnitude of impact arising as a result of the Proposed Development. Professional judgement, experience and guidance, where available, have been drawn upon to assess the significance of the effect.

Receptor Value	Magnitude of Impact			
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
High	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor
Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Low	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Table 7.3: Ecological Significance Criteria (Major and Moderate effects are considered significant)

Baseline Conditions

Designated Sites

Statutory Sites

- 7.33 There is one Habitat Site within 10km. North Meadow and Clattinger Farm Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located approximately 0.3km to the northwest of the Site. This SAC has been designated for its rare habitat in lowland hay meadows, as well as its large population of fritillary *Fritillaria meleagris*. This site is also designated as a National Nature Reserve (NNR).
- 7.34 Four Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are located within 2km of the Site. The closest of these is North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI which underpins the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC, located 0.3km northwest of the Site. North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI is designated on account of the traditionally managed hay meadow that supports over 250 species of higher plant species including a healthy population of fritillary.
- 7.35 Elmlea Meadows SSSI is located approximately 0.9km north of the Site. It is designated on account of the neutral alluvial meadow that it supports as well as the populations of fritillary and other rare species such as downy-fruited sedge *Carex tomentosa*.
- 7.36 Cotswold Water Park SSSI is located approximately 1km northwest of the Site. This SSSI comprises of ten lakes in an area of around 135ha. It is designated on account of the nationally important populations of breeding and non-breeding birds and multiple species of aquatic plants.
- 7.37 Upper Waterhay Meadow SSSI is located approximately 1.7km to the northwest of the Site. This SSSI is designated on account of the neutral alluvial meadow it supports as well as the population of fritillary.
- 7.38 Part of the Site falls within the Impact Risk Zones for each of the four SSSI's within 2km. Risk categories for these sites include: Residential development of 50 units or more.

Non-Statutory Sites

- 7.39 Six non-statutory nature conservation sites are located within 2km of the Site. The closest of these is the River Thames or Isis Local Wildlife Site (LWS) located approximately 0.31km north of the Site at its nearest point. The Site is hydrologically connected to this LWS via the onsite field drain.
- 7.40 The remaining five LWSs (Cotswold Water Park pits 59, 72, 78a & 78b, Cotswold Water Park pits 68a/b & 74, Cotswold Water Park pits 86, 97, 300, 301 & 303, Dance Common and Cotswold Water Park LWS (west)) are all located in excess of 800 m from the Site.
- 7.41 The locations of designated sites are shown on Figure 7.1.

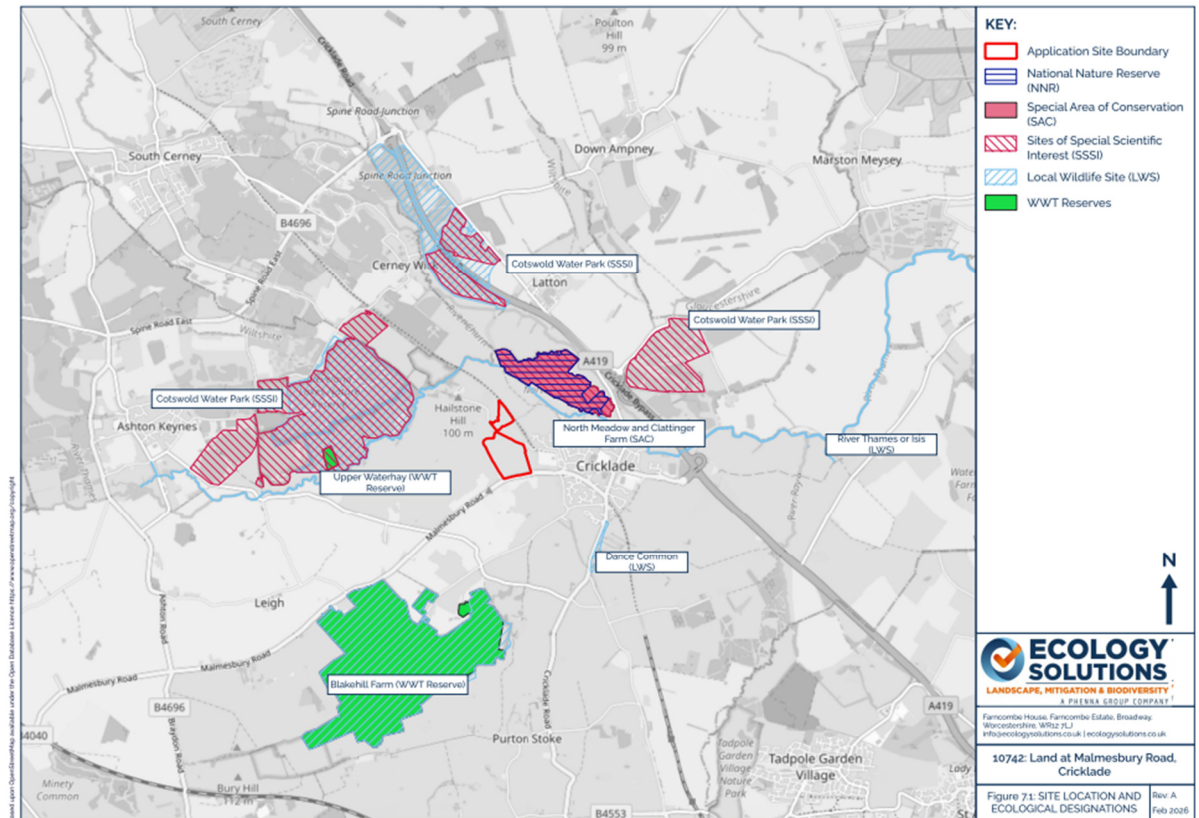


Figure 7.1: Site Location and Ecological Designations

Habitats

- 7.42 The Site supports the following habitats/vegetation types:
- Modified grassland;
 - Ruderal / ephemeral;
 - Other woodland; broadleaved;
 - Native hedgerow;
 - Native hedgerow with trees;
 - Line of trees; and,
 - Individual trees.
- 7.43 The location of these habitats is shown on the plan in Figure 7.2 and summarised below in Table 7.4. Full details relating to these habitats are provided within the Ecological Impact Assessment (**Appendix 7.1**).

Habitat	Summary
Modified grassland (UKHab code g4)	The Site comprises four modified grassland fields (hereinafter referred to as F1-F4) that are cattle grazed. The grassland is species-poor and comprises common and widespread species typical of high nutrient input and levels of disturbance. Typical species recorded included perennial rye grass <i>Lolium perenne</i> , smooth meadow grass <i>Poa pratensis</i> , creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> and white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> .
Ruderal / ephemeral (UKHab code w1f)	A small area of ruderal vegetation is found within F3. This area was previously a wooded copse although the trees had been cut down to stumps prior to the initial site visit in 2023. Species present included creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> , teasel <i>Dipsacus fullonum</i> , common sorrel <i>Rumex acetosa</i> , broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> , oxeye daisy <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i> , spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> and creeping cinquefoil <i>Potentilla reptans</i> .
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland (UKHab code w1f)	A small woodland located on the edge of F4. Species present include oak <i>Quercus</i> sp., sycamore <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> , hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , lime <i>Tilia</i> sp., field maple <i>Acer campestre</i> and Dutch elm <i>Ulmus x hollandica</i> .
Native hedgerows and native hedgerows with trees (UKHab code h2a)	A total of 17 field boundary hedgerows (hereinafter referred to as H1-H17) are present within the Site, all of which are native. The hedgerows predominantly had a limited assemblage of species with the exception of hedgerow H3 which was identified as a species-rich hedgerow. Typical species included hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> , blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> , ash <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> and bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.
Line of trees	TL1 is a line of trees present on the southern boundary of F2 located between H6 and H7. Species present include English oak <i>Quercus robur</i> , blackthorn, hawthorn and ash.
Individual trees (UKHab code g -100)	A small number of trees (hereinafter referred to as T1-T9) located within the hedgerows. Species included field maple <i>Acer campestre</i> , ash and oak.

Table 7.4: Summary of Habitats on Site

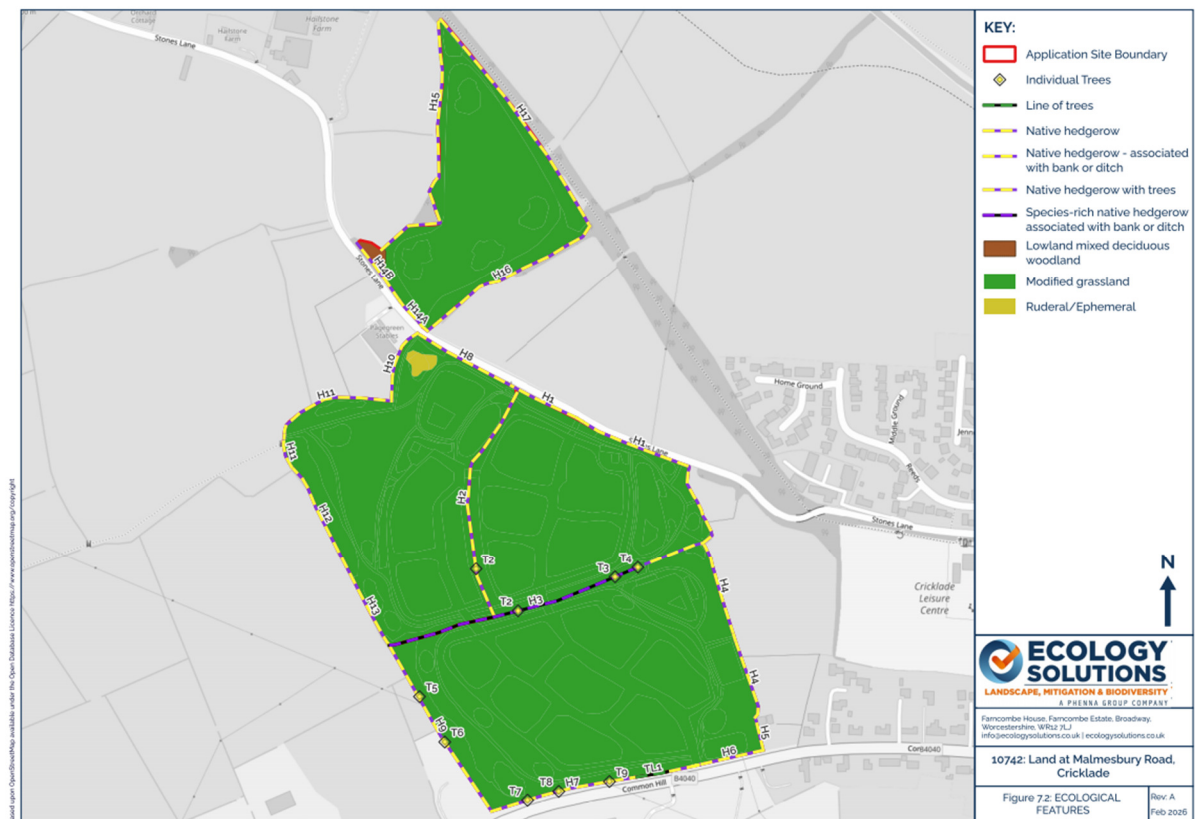


Figure 7.2: Ecological Features

Protected / Notable Species

Amphibians (great crested newt)

- 7.44 Records for great crested newt and common frog were returned in the data search. The closest located <100 m south of the Site for both great crested newt and common frog in 2017.
- 7.45 A total of six ponds were identified within 250m of the Site. Pond P1, approximately 50 m to the south, was subject to an eDNA survey in June 2022. This returned a positive result confirming the presence of great crested newts within this pond. Ponds P2 and P3 were dry at the time of the eDNA survey. Ponds P4, P5 and P6 were not included in the survey effort following a decision to pursue the Natural England District Level Licensing (DLL) strategy.
- 7.46 The areas of woodland, grassland, tall ruderal and hedgerow within the Site offer some suitable habitat for amphibians during their terrestrial phase. A single great crested newt was recorded under a reptile tin during the 2023 reptile surveys.

Badger

- 7.47 A total of five badger records were returned in the data search with the closest located approximately 1.3km south of the Site.
- 7.48 The site offers suitable sett building and foraging opportunities for badgers. No evidence of badgers (e.g setts, latrines, footprints) has been recorded within the Site during any of the survey work completed since 2023. It is however noted, that a subsidiary badger sett comprising six entrances has previously been recorded to the east of the Site as part of survey work completed by EAD Ecology for

an adjacent land parcel. This is detailed within the Ecological Impact Assessment completed by EAD Ecology (report ref: 210730_P613_HorseyDown_EcIA.docx) submitted in support of a planning application (application ref: PL/2021/10404). It is therefore likely that the Site is used in some capacity by the local badger population for foraging/commuting purposes, with potential for badgers to excavate new setts on Site in the future.

Bats

- 7.49 A large number of records for bat species were returned in the data search. Species included Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*, whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*, Brandt's bat *Myotis brandtii*, Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, Nathusius' pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*. The closest of the records was of common pipistrelle recorded within the Site.
- 7.50 Six of the trees on Site contain Potential Roost Features (PRF's) and were therefore categorised in line with the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines (Collins, 2023)³ as either PRF-M; having potential to support multiple bats for longer periods of time or PRF-L; features suitable for individual or very small numbers of bats only. Tree T4 was identified as PRF-M with trees T&, T8, T9, T10 and T11 classed as PRF-L.
- 7.51 The highest value habitats for foraging and commuting bats are the field boundary hedgerows and pocket of woodland. The grassland which makes up the majority of the site is of limited value for foraging bats.
- 7.52 Manual night-time bat walkovers and automated static detector surveys undertaken in 2023 and 2025 recorded at least 10 species of bat (common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, Nathusius' pipistrelle, Leisler's bat *Nyctalus leisleri*, noctule, Serotine *Cnephaeus serotinus*, *Myotis* sp., brown long-eared, Barbastelle and lesser horseshoe).
- 7.53 The Site was utilised mainly by the commoner and widespread species. The majority of registrations were attributed to common and soprano pipistrelles which are both common and widespread species.
- 7.54 The main habitat of interest is the southern boundary of the Site with the highest levels of activity identified here from the results of the remote surveys. The results included higher levels of activity from rarer bat species including Serotine, and low levels of activity of the rarest bat species including Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus* and lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*.
- 7.55 Based on the data obtained the boundary features of the Site/adjacent habitats are considered to be of up to Regional importance for foraging/commuting bats⁴.

Hazel Dormouse

- 7.56 No records of hazel dormouse were returned by the data search. The hedgerows with the Site provide potential habitat for hazel dormouse. However, no hazel dormouse were recorded during the surveys completed in 2022 and a search of MAGIC found no granted European Protected Species Licences from within 10km of the Site. Furthermore, the connectivity from the Site to suitable offsite woodland is

³ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London

⁴ Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.

limited with the nearest area of dense woodland to the west separated by the River Thames which would act as a barrier to dispersal for this species.

- 7.57 Hazel dormouse are therefore considered to be absent from the Site, and are therefore not discussed further within this chapter.

Hedgehogs

- 7.58 47 hedgehog records were returned by the data search with the closest located 10.11km from the Site. Several of the habitats on Site including hedgerows, tree lines and grassland offer suitable foraging and dispersal opportunities for this species.

Other Mammals (Otter and Water Vole)

- 7.59 Records of otter and water vole were returned by the data search with the closest records located approximately 0.45km west and 0.39km north of the Site respectively.
- 7.60 The Site is approximately 0.3km from the River Thames. The field drain present within the Site ultimately discharges into the River Thames, but is within a hedgerow. The ditch was heavily shaded and dry at the time of the survey in October 2025. It is therefore considered that the field drain does not provide suitable habitat for otters or water vole. These species are considered to be absent from the Site, and are therefore not discussed further within this chapter.

Birds

- 7.61 A large number of records were returned in the data search. Notable species include barn owl *Tyto alba* the most recent recording being from 2024 approximately 1.6km to the northwest of the Site, lapwing *Vanellus Vanellus* the most recent recording also in 2024 approximately 1.4km to the northwest of the Site and curlew *Numenius Arquata* the most recent recording being in 2024 found <100m to the northeast of the Site. Other notable species include ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* and yellow wagtail *Motacilla flava*.
- 7.62 The hedgerows and trees within the Site provide the greatest value for local bird species by affording both potential nesting and foraging habitat, whilst the grassland would also provide some foraging opportunities. Given the habitats present and the close proximity to the North Meadow SAC as well as the Cotswold Water Park SSSI it was considered that the Site provides potentially suitable habitat for more notable bird species. As such, further breeding bird surveys were conducted in 2025.
- 7.63 During the breeding bird surveys, 34 species were recorded within, immediately adjacent to or flying over site. Of these, 17 species are listed as Species of Principal Importance, on the UK BoCC Red and Amber lists and / or listed as a local priority species in the Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan (WBAP). These species include linnet *Linaria cannabina*, greenfinch *Chloris chloris*, house sparrow *Passer domesticus*, starling *Sturnus vulgaris*, song thrush *Turdus philomelos*, herring gull *Larus argentatus*, swallow *Hirundo rustica*, cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*, shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*, goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*, great spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*, blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*, chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*, long tailed tit *Aegithalos caudatus*, fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*, lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus* and white-throat *Curruca communis*.
- 7.64 No species were confirmed to be breeding successfully on or adjacent to the Site. However, it is considered likely that common species such as wren, dunnoek and chiffchaff nest within the hedgerows and / or field margins given the frequency of recording and behaviour during the surveys.
- 7.65 No Species of Principal Importance as listed above were noted to be / or likely to be breeding within the Site. The record of cuckoo and shelduck were both recorded flying over and on a single survey visit.

Reptiles

- 7.66 Records of slow worm and grass snake were returned by the data search with the closest records located approximately 0.4km east and 1.6km northwest of the Site respectively.
- 7.67 The majority of the grassland is of low value for reptiles due to the short sward height resulting from the heavy cattle grazing. Higher value habitats include the hedgerows and ruderal vegetation which could provide foraging, refuge and dispersal opportunities for some reptile species.
- 7.68 No reptiles were recorded on Site during the 2022 surveys (F1 and F2 only surveyed). A peak count of one female common lizard was recorded during the updated 2023 surveys which encompassed the entire site. Following the results of the surveys it is concluded that Site supports low numbers of reptiles only.

Invertebrates

- 7.69 A large number of invertebrate records were returned in the data search. Species recorded include small heath *Coenonympha pamphilus*, Norfolk hawk *Aeshan isoceles* and white admiral *Limenitis camilla* among other more notable species. The closest of these records was of a common darter *Sympetrum striolatum* approximately 0.3km to the north of the Site recorded in August 2019. The most recent of these records was recorded in October 2024 and was also a common darter recorded approximately 2.0km to the west of the Application Site.
- 7.70 12 species of high importance were returned by the data search. Species include marsh fritillary *Euphydryas aurinia*, Grizzled skipper *Pyrgus malvae*, White-letter hairstreak *Satyrion w-album*, brown hairstreak *Thecla betulae*, wall brown *Lasiommata megera*, white admiral, scarce blue-tailed damselfly *Ischnura pumilio*, Norfolk hawk, red-shanked carder bee *Bombus rudarius*, red-tailed cuckoo bee *Bombus rupestris*, forester moth *Adscita statice*, large wainscot *Rhizodra lutos*, giant water-veneer *Schoenobius gigantella*, bulrush veneer *Calamotropa paludella*.
- 7.71 Given the presence of the grassland and hedgerow habitats supporting a range of common flowering species, nectar sources and fruit bearing species, the Site likely supports an assemblage of common invertebrate species only. There is no substantial evidence to suggest that any rare or notable species would be present. As such, notable / rare invertebrates are not a notable consideration for the Proposed Development and are not considered further within this chapter.

Summary

- 7.72 Table 7.5 identifies the important ecological features within the Zone of Influence of the Site and the geographical frame of reference for which they are important. Features which have been scoped out due to falling outside the Zone of Influence, or their negligible ecological value as well as features that are considered absent from the Site (e.g dormouse, otter and water vole) are not included in this table, and are not discussed further within the assessment as effects are assessed as effects ruled out as not significant.

Receptor	Receptor Value	Nature Conservation Importance	Justification
Designated Sites			
North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC	High	International	Internationally designated site, supporting Lowland meadows (Annex 1 habitat)

North Meadow and Clattinger Farm NNR	High	National	NNR's are nationally designated sites identified for their ecological or geographical value and afforded statutory protection.
North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI	High	National	This SSSI underpins the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC.
Upper Waterhay Meadow SSSI, Cotswold Water Park SSSI and Elmlea Meadow SSSI	High	National	SSSI's are nationally designated sites identified for their ecological or geographical value and afforded statutory protection. Part of the Site falls within the IRZs for these sites. Risk categories include: Residential development of 50 units or more.
River Thames or Isis LWS	Medium	County	LWS's are non-statutory designated areas which typically support important, rare or threatened habitats and/or species at a local or regional level.
Habitats			
Modified Grassland	Low	Local	Whilst of low ecological value, this habitat is a dominant feature on Site making up the majority of the Site.
Other woodland; broadleaved	Medium	Local	Whilst limited in extent this habitat does contribute to the overall structural diversity of the Site and have potential to support notable/protected species. Habitat of Principal Importance.
Hedgerows	Medium	Local	All hedgerows qualify as Habitats of Principal Importance, provide habitat for a range of species and provide connectivity across the Site and into the wider landscape.
Trees	Low	Local	The trees on Site have intrinsic ecological value, provide habitats for a range of species and cannot be replaced in the short-medium term.
Ruderal / Ephemeral	Low	Site	Whilst this habitat has low ecological value due to its limited extent it does contribute to the overall structural diversity of the Site and have potential to support notable/protected species.
Species			
Amphibians (GCN)	High	International	Great crested newts are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Badger	High	National	Badgers are widespread in Wiltshire and are protected on the basis of welfare considerations. No setts exist on site but badgers likely use the Site in some capacity given known population in local area.
Bats	High	International	Bats are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
Hedgehogs	Medium	County	Hedgehogs are a Species of Principal Importance in England. The presence of this species on Site cannot be ruled out given the presence of suitable habitat.
Nesting birds	High	National	The hedgerows and trees provide nesting opportunities for a range of common and widespread bird species. All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
Reptiles	High	National	Site supports low numbers of common lizard, a Species of Principal Importance. All reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Table 7.5: Receptors Scoped into ES Chapter

Potential Effects

- 7.73 The initial assessment of likely significant effects takes into account avoidance by design, i.e avoidance measures that have been embedded into the design of the Proposed Development masterplan, but excludes any additional mitigation measures.
- 7.74 Embedded mitigation comprises:
- Retention of the woodland and majority of the hedgerows / trees on site with buffer zones implemented; and,
 - Allocation of parcels of land both north and south of Stones Lane as provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to mitigate for recreational pressures on North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC.

Enabling and Construction Phase

Designated Sites

Statutory

- 7.75 North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC / NNR
- 7.76 A Shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment (sHRA) has been completed by Ecology Solutions to assess the potential impact pathways, likelihood of significant effects and outline mitigation measures for this internationally designated nature conservation site. A summary of potential impacts arising

from enabling / construction activities are summaries below (for full details please refer to the sHRA in **Appendix 7.2**).

- 7.77 During enabling / construction works there is the potential for pollution events to occur through inappropriate storage of materials / chemicals. The topography of the Site could result in silt / chemicals entering the field drain in the northern parcel that discharges into the River Thames.
- 7.78 This receptor is assessed as being of High value. Magnitude of the impact is assessed to be Low. Effects arising from this impact are assessed to be localised changes to the aquatic communities and qualifying features of the SAC / NNR arising from pollution events. Duration of the impact is deemed to be temporary / medium-term, as it will be confined to the construction period only, although given the nature of pollution events and their effects on natural habitats, even if pollution events cease when construction ceases the baseline will take time to return to its original point. Effects arising from these impacts have potential to lead to a temporary decline in biodiversity in the field drain, as well as in the small section of the River Thames that receives the discharge from this drain. This is assessed as having a Moderate Adverse effect and is therefore **Significant**.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

- 7.79 Four SSSI's are located within 2km of the Site. The closest of which is North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI which underpins the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC, located approximately 0.3km to the northeast of the Site. North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI is designated on account of the traditionally managed hay meadows that supports over 250 species of higher plant species including a healthy population of fritillary. Potential impacts on this SSSI during the enabling / construction phase have been identified above when discussing the North Meadow and Cricklade Farm SAC (notably drainage and hydrological regime).
- 7.80 This receptor is assessed as being of High value. Magnitude of the impact is assessed to be Low, as they are largely identical to those identified in regard to the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC / NNR. Effects arising from this impact are assessed to be localised changes to the aquatic communities and qualifying features of the SSSI arising from the aforementioned potential pollution events. Duration of the impact is deemed to be temporary / medium term, as it will be confined to the construction period only, although given the nature of pollution events and their effects on natural habitats, even if the pollution event ceases when the construction period comes to an end, the baseline will take time to return to its original point. Effects arising from these impacts have potential to lead to a temporary decline in biodiversity in the field drain, as well as in the small section of the River Thames that receives discharge from this drain. This is assessed as having a Moderate Adverse effect and is therefore **Significant**.
- 7.81 The remaining three SSSI's (Elmlea Meadows SSSI, Cotswold Park SSSI and Upper Waterhay Meadow SSSI), are all located in excess of 0.9km from the Site. Whilst Cotswold Park SSSI appears to be hydrologically connected via the field drain that discharges into the River Thames/Isis this nature conservation site is upstream of the Site so no impacts resulting from any incidental pollution events are anticipated.
- 7.82 The sites are sufficiently distanced to avoid any impacts from enabling / construction works (e.g increases in noise, lighting, dust etc). Therefore, **no significant effects** are anticipated.

Non-Statutory

- 7.83 The closest non-statutory site is the River Thames or Isis LWS located 0.3km north of the Site at its nearest point. The Site is hydrologically connected to this LWS via the onsite field drain. As a result in the absence of mitigation, construction activities may lead to an increase in pollutants being accidentally released and making their way into the LWS.

- 7.84 This receptor is assessed as being of Medium value. Magnitude of the impact is assessed to be Low, as they are largely identical to those identified in regard to the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC / NNR and underpinning SSSI. Effects arising from this impact are assessed to be localised changes to the aquatic communities and qualifying features of the SSSI arising from the aforementioned potential pollution events. Duration of the impact is deemed to be temporary / medium term, as it will be confined to the construction period only, although given the nature of pollution events and their effects on natural habitats, even if the pollution event ceases when the construction period comes to an end, the baseline will take time to return to its original point. Effects arising from these impacts have potential to lead to a temporary decline in biodiversity in the field drain, as well as in the small section of the River Thames that receives discharge from this drain. This is assessed as having a Minor Adverse effect and is therefore **not significant**.

Habitats

- 7.85 As outlined in the Ecological Impact Assessment (**Appendix 7.1**) the Proposed Development will primarily result in impacts such as losses to habitats of lower ecological value, principally intensively grazed grassland fields and ruderal vegetation. Effects will be permanent and will include the loss of biodiversity on site.
- 7.86 These receptors (habitats of lower ecological value) are assessed as being of Negligible value. Magnitude of impact of loss is assessed to be High, where total loss of these habitats are to occur. Effects are to be permanent as habitats will be lost to the development. This is assessed as having a Minor Adverse effect which is **Not Significant**.
- 7.87 The majority of the habitats of relatively greater ecological value, including hedgerows, trees and woodland will be retained with buffer zones provided to areas of new development. However, direct impacts such as minor losses to hedgerows will be realised to facilitate access. Effects will be a loss of woody vegetation from the site. Indirect impacts include habitat fragmentation. Effects will be an overall loss of biodiversity on site and loss of value of the site as a conduit for dispersal. Effects will be permanent.
- 7.88 These receptors (habitats having relatively greater ecological value) are assessed being of Low value. Direct impacts include the loss of vegetation, which is assessed to be Low in magnitude. Indirect impacts include habitat fragmentation, which is also assessed to be Low in magnitude. Both direct and indirect impacts are assessed as having Minor adverse effects which is **Not Significant**.
- 7.89 In the absence of avoidance/ mitigation, there is also potential for adverse effects to retained habitats during the construction period such as ground works or use of operational machinery resulting in direct damage, accidental spills and dust deposition, which could adversely affect both the habitats themselves, in addition to any faunal species that they support. Effects arising are deemed to be Minor in magnitude and temporary in nature. This is assessed as having potential to have Minor adverse effects which is **Not Significant**.

Protected / Notable Species

Amphibians

- 7.90 Although the Site does not support any waterbodies, six waterbodies are present within 250m. An eDNA survey was conducted on these ponds and a positive result was returned confirming the presence of great crested newts. Furthermore, an individual great crested newt was found on Site during a reptile survey visit in October 2023.
- 7.91 Whilst there will be no loss of aquatic habitat there will be a reduction in the availability of terrestrial habitat, albeit this will largely be limited to areas of grazed grassland which has low value for

amphibians. Impacts from the enabling and construction works are the loss of habitat. Direct effects are the potential killing or injury of individual great crested newts, which would constitute a breach of wildlife legislation: the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) 2019. Indirect effects are the shrinking of the reach of the wider metapopulation of newts, following loss of terrestrial habitat. This is a permanent effect.

- 7.92 Great crested newt as a receptor is identified as being of High value, with the magnitude of the impacts being High. Effects are concluded to have Major Adverse effects which is **Significant**.

Bats

- 7.93 A number of trees were designated as PRF-I (providing suitable roosting opportunities for individual bats only) with one designated as PRF-M (providing a suitable roosting location for larger numbers of bats). All of these trees are to be retained and incorporated into buffer zones. As a result there will be no direct loss of potential roost sites and no direct impacts arising from the construction works. Potential indirect impacts are anticipated with regard to inappropriate storage of materials and plant, disturbances arising from construction noise and insensitive construction phase lighting. Effects arising from construction noise and lighting would be the disturbance of bats in roosts (if present, as features are suitable) which constitutes a breach in wildlife legislation: the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) 2019.
- 7.94 Bats are assessed to be of High value, with the magnitude of indirect impacts being assessed as being Medium. Effects arising are considered to be Major Adverse which is **Significant**.

Badger

- 7.95 No badger setts exist within the Site. However, one known badger sett categorised as a subsidiary sett by EAD Ecology is present to the east of the Site, outside of the redline boundary, underneath a barn on adjacent land. It is understood that this sett would be closed under a Natural England licence to facilitate the adjacent Development.
- 7.96 On account of its proximity to the Site, impacts to this badger sett may arise during the construction works through noise, vibration and general increase in human presence. Effects are the badgers' potential abandonment of the sett, although given the short-term nature of the proposed effects (as opposed to permanent) it is unlikely that the effect would lead to any noticeable change in the local badger population.
- 7.97 As badgers are known to be present in close proximity of the Site, their general presence on site cannot be ruled out. Badgers are curious animals and are very mobile. Impacts include the accidental injury or killing of a badger that has strayed onto Site during construction. Effects arising include a very minor reduction in the local badger population.
- 7.98 Badgers are assessed to be of High value. Magnitude of possible abandonment of the off-site sett is deemed to be Low. Magnitude of inadvertent injury/killing of badgers is assessed to be Low. Both effects constitute a breach in wildlife legislation: the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Effects arising from both impacts are assessed to be Moderate Adverse and **Significant**.

Hedgehogs

- 7.99 Habitats on Site including grassland and hedgerows may provide opportunities for foraging and dispersal of this species. Losses to both of these habitats are predicted.

- 7.100 Impacts from this vegetation loss is the reduction in suitable habitat to be used by hedgehog, and accidental killing / injury to hedgehogs during construction. Effects arising are the reduction in available habitat within their range, assessed as being Low in magnitude; and a minor reduction in the local hedgehog population, assessed to also be Low in magnitude. As the construction works are a fixed period the impacts are deemed to be temporary, and it is considered to be unlikely that this effect would lead to any noticeable change in the local population.
- 7.101 Hedgehog is assessed to of Medium value. Magnitude of these impacts are deemed to be Minor Adverse which is **Not Significant**.

Nesting Birds

- 7.102 The majority of the Site comprises short grazed grassland and is therefore of low suitability for ground nesting birds. No evidence of rare birds breeding within the Site was recorded during the suite of breeding bird surveys completed in 2025. However, the hedgerows, woodland and trees provide suitable nesting opportunities for a range of common and generalist species. The majority of these habitats will be retained with buffer zones as part of the embedded mitigation measures, which will minimise the loss of suitable nesting opportunities.
- 7.103 Impacts of vegetation clearance as part of the enabling and construction works are the accidental injury or killing of nesting birds, or destroying their nests and any eggs or chicks inside, which is also a breach of wildlife legislation: the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Effects of this is a reduction in the local nesting bird population. Impacts will be temporary, and as no evidence of rare birds breeding within the Site was identified during the survey effort, it is unlikely that any noticeable change to the local population will arise from the clearance.
- 7.104 Nesting birds are assessed to be High in value, with magnitude of the effects is assessed as being Low. Effects are deemed to be Moderate Adverse which is **Significant**.

Reptiles

- 7.105 Presence / absence surveys conducted within the Site recorded a single common lizard. Whilst the majority of the site comprises low value habitat for reptile species it is concluded that the boundary habitats likely support low numbers of common reptiles.
- 7.106 Impacts of vegetation clearance as part of the enabling and construction works are the accidental injury or killing of reptiles; this constitutes a breach in wildlife legislation: the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Direct effects of this are a reduction in the population of reptiles on site, and the reduction in local populations of reptiles. Indirect effects are the loss of habitat on site and a reduction in the dispersal opportunities.
- 7.107 Reptiles are assessed to be of High value, with magnitude of direct effects considered to be Low and of indirect effects also considered to be Low. Effects are assessed to be Moderate Adverse which is **Significant**.

Completed Development / Operational Phase

Designated Sites

Statutory

- 7.108 North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC / NNR
- 7.109 A Shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment (sHRA) has been completed by Ecology Solutions to assess the potential impact pathways, likelihood of significant effects and outline mitigation measures

for this internationally designated nature conservation site. A summary of potential impacts arising from the operational phase of the scheme are summarised below (for full details please refer to the sHRA in **Appendix 7.2**).

- 7.110 The Proposed Development falls within the Zone of Influence of this internationally designated nature conservation site. Impacts of the operational phase include an increase in recreational pressure on the SAC. The Proposed Development is for the construction of up to 315 new residential units, equating to roughly 756 residents (based on 2.4 persons per household). Recreational pressures and mitigation measures for the SAC and the SSSI which underpins it are dealt with in full in the sHRA. In summary, in line with the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm Recreational Interim Mitigation Strategy 2023 -2028 the Proposed Development will deliver on-site SANG provision in the form of allocated land both north and south of Stones Lane equating to 6.5 ha. Effects would be permanent, and would realise a reduction in the ability of the SAC/NNR to achieve its conservation objectives, specifically those that relate to limiting recreational pressures such as protection of fragile habitats.
- 7.111 The drainage strategy for the Proposed Development includes discharge of surface water to a drainage ditch that ultimately drains into the river Thames which runs along the boundary of the North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI. Impacts arising from the operational phase include an alteration in the hydrological regime and / or water quality decline on the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC during storm events where the river Thames floods the adjacent grassland. Effects would be permanent, and would see the change of aquatic floral and faunal communities present within the watercourses.
- 7.112 This receptor is of High value. Magnitude of the additional recreational pressure is assessed to be Medium; effects are assessed to be Major adverse and **Significant**.
- 7.113 Magnitude of the change in hydrological regime is assessed to be Low, resulting in a Moderate Adverse effect which is **Significant**.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

- 7.114 Potential operational phase impacts on the North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI (which underpins the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC) have been identified above when discussing the North Meadow and Cricklade Farm SAC (notably recreational pressure and hydrological regime).
- 7.115 The remaining three SSSI's (Elmlea Meadows SSSI, Cotswold Park SSSI and Upper Waterhay Meadow SSSI), are all located in excess of 0.9km from the Site. However, at least part of the Site falls within the Impact Risk Zones for each of these three SSSI's. The Proposed Development matches the risk category description of Residential: Residential development of 50 units or more which would indicate the need for Natural England to be consulted.
- 7.116 As detailed in the consultation section of this chapter, Natural England specifically indicate that the Proposed Development has the potential for adverse effects on four ecological designations – Cotswold Water Park SSSI, Elmlea Meadows SSSI, North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI and North Meadow & Clattinger Farm SAC. Natural England highlighted that due to the known pressures on these designated sites they would expect recreational impacts from the proposals to be assessed.
- 7.117 The Natural England's Designated Sites View⁵ for each of the sites highlights increased recreation as a pressure for Waterhay Meadows SSSI only as detailed below:
- 7.118 Elmlea Meadows SSSI identified pressures:

⁵ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org>

- Land Management (cutting / mowing / cultivation regime and ditch management regime); and,
 - Natural Resources Exploitation.
- 7.119 Cotswold Water Park SSSI identified pressures:
- Invasive Non-Native Species (freshwater animals and plants); and,
 - Pollution (water company discharges causing water pollution).
- 7.120 Waterhay Meadows SSSI identified pressures:
- Planning and Development Impacts (Development other).
- 7.121 Whilst there is potential for a small increase in numbers of visitors to each of these sites, recreational outdoor space has been included within the Proposed Development. The key aims of the SANG provision are to provide good quality recreational spaces to reduce pressure on surrounding greenspaces. It should also be noted that the provision of recreation space within the Proposed Development goes beyond the provision of the SANG. As detailed within the sHRA (**Appendix 7.2**), in accordance with guidance in the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm Interim Mitigation Strategy 2023 – 2028, the SANG should be a minimum of 6.048ha. The allocated SANG will be 6.5ha with a proposed SANG route of 1.6km in length, available year-round to provide opportunities for residents. This will supplement additional walking routes and open space within and around the main development footprint.
- 7.122 In addition, whilst the disused railway corridor, which lies to the immediate north of the Site, links the Site to Elmlea Meadows SSSI and to the further north, Cotswold Park SSSI, direct connectivity to this footpath from the Site has been discouraged. Limiting direct access will increase the likelihood that on-Site provisions are used as a preference. It should also be considered that whilst the Proposed Development could result in an increase of 756 new residents (based on a calculation of 2.4 residents per dwelling) it would be unrealistic to expect all residents to visit each of the sites at the same time.
- 7.123 On the basis of the on-site greenspace provision, location of each of the SSSIs and variety of alternative greenspaces in the local area it is considered that any increases in recreational pressure would be minor. However, inappropriate management of the on-site greenspaces could lead to degradation and reduced suitability as recreational resources forcing residents to turn to the alternatives in the area as a preference.
- 7.124 Effects would be permanent, and would realise a reduction in the ability of the SSSI sites to achieve their conservation objectives, specifically those that relate to limiting recreational pressures such as protection of fragile habitats.
- 7.125 These receptors are of High value. Magnitude of the additional recreational pressure is assessed to be Medium; effects are assessed to be Major adverse and **Significant**.
- 7.126 Due to the distance and lack of impact pathways (Cotswold Park SSSI, whilst potentially hydrologically linked lies upstream of the Site) no impacts arising from potential changes in the hydrological regime are anticipated on any of the SSSI's.

Non-Statutory

- 7.127 The closest non-statutory site is the River Thames or Isis LWS located 0.3km north of the Site at its nearest point. Due to the nature and scale of this LWS, with likely managed access requirements, no adverse impacts from any increases in recreational pressure are anticipated. However, the drainage strategy for the Proposed Development includes discharge of surface water to a drainage ditch that ultimately drains into the river Thames. As a result, impacts arising from the operational phase are potential alterations in hydrological regime and / or water quality impacts.

- 7.128 Effects would be permanent, and would see the change of aquatic floral and faunal communities present within the watercourses.
- 7.129 This receptor is of Medium value. Magnitude of the change in hydrological regime is assessed to be Low, resulting in a Minor Adverse effect which is **Not Significant**.

Habitats

- 7.130 Inappropriate management has the potential to result in the degradation of retained or newly created habitats. Effects arising from inappropriate management include a decline in site-wide biodiversity, as well as potential for the development of a monoculture, or dominance of a few species. Effects would be long-term, but not permanent.
- 7.131 The receptor is of Negligible value. Magnitude of the effects is deemed to be Low, resulting in a Negligible effect which is **Not Significant**.

Protected / Notable Species

Herpetofauna

- 7.132 The creation of, and appropriately and sensitively managed new habitats, suitable for herpetofauna will positively enhance the value of the Site for reptiles and amphibians, including great crested newt, increasing the carrying capacity of the Site for these faunal groups. The Proposed Development will facilitate a greater diversity of habitats across the Site increasing foraging and refuge opportunities with new breeding opportunities for amphibians potentially delivered through appropriately designed sustainable drainage systems. Effects of this impact are the increase of available habitats on site for reptiles and amphibians, encouraging colonisation and increasing the population size on site. This will be permanent.
- 7.133 Great crested newt is of High value. Magnitude of provisioning for greater numbers of amphibians on site is expected to be Low. Effects will be Moderate Beneficial which is **Significant**.
- 7.134 Reptiles are of Medium value. Magnitude of provisioning for greater numbers of reptiles on site is expected to be Medium. Effects will be Moderate Beneficial which is **Significant**.

Bats

- 7.135 Landscaping proposals for the scheme would see an improvement in the diversity of habitats across the site. This has the potential to positively enhance the value of the site for foraging / commuting bats. Effects resulting from the proposed landscaping are an increase in bat activity on site.
- 7.136 Bats are sensitive to artificial light. Insensitive installation and use will result in the effect of a reduction in bat activity on site.
- 7.137 Bats are deemed to be of High value. Magnitude of the impact of the proposed landscape scheme are Low. Effects are assessed to be Minor Beneficial which is **Not Significant**.
- 7.138 Magnitude of the inappropriate use of artificial light at night is assessed to be Low. Effects are assessed to be Minor Adverse which is not significant.

Terrestrial Mammals (Badger and Hedgehog)

- 7.139 The operational phase of the Proposed Development would see an increase in vehicles. Effects arising is the increase in potential for road related mortality to these species. However, given the residential nature of the Development, the overall increase in vehicle movements is unlikely to result in any noticeable road related injuries particularly given that the majority of boundary hedgerows will be retained providing safe passage around the Site.

- 7.140 The proposed landscaping layout provides additional new habitat suitable for badger foraging activity. Effects are expected to be an increase in badger and hedgehog activity on site.
- 7.141 Badgers are assessed to be of High value. Magnitude of the increase in vehicle traffic is Negligible, resulting in a Minor Adverse effect which is **Not Significant**. Magnitude of the increase in suitable habitat on site is assessed to be Low, resulting in a Moderate Beneficial effect which is **Significant**.
- 7.142 Hedgehogs are assessed to be of Medium value. Magnitude of the increase in traffic is Negligible, resulting in a Negligible effect which is not significant. Magnitude of the increase in suitable habitat on site is assessed to be Low, resulting in a Minor Beneficial effect, which is **Not Significant**.

Nesting Birds

- 7.143 The operational phase of the development would see an improvement in the opportunities available to nesting birds. Landscaping proposals would see an improvement in the diversity of habitat types offering new nesting opportunities for a range of species as well as new foraging opportunities, providing the newly-created habitats are appropriately managed. Effects arising are the increase in nesting bird activity on site.
- 7.144 Nesting birds are assessed to be of High value. Magnitude of the improved nesting opportunities is deemed to be Low, resulting in a Moderate Beneficial effect which is **Significant**.

Mitigation

- 7.145 Additional mitigation measures that are not embedded within the design are described in this section.

Summary of Enabling / Construction Phase Mitigation

Construction Ecological Management Plan

- 7.146 A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be prepared to outline the measures and best practices that will be implemented during construction to minimise adverse impacts on biodiversity and ensure compliance with UK wildlife legislation. The CEMP will be informed by the final site layout, and will, as a minimum, include:
- Defined buffer zones and protection measures for all retained habitats;
 - A construction programme that avoids sensitive periods, such as the bird nesting season;
 - Requirements for any pre-commencement checks (e.g for badgers and nesting birds); and
 - Vegetation clearance protocols to minimise risks to protected and notable species (e.g herpetofauna).

Natural England Protected Species Licences

- 7.147 To appropriately mitigate for impacts on GCN the Applicant has joined Natural England's District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme. Should planning permission for the Proposed Development be granted, the full licence will be applied for. Contribution to this scheme will ensure that the favourable conservation status of GCN is maintained. This will be secured through the DLL process. The Natural England counter-signed Impact and Conservation Payment Certificate (IAPCP) has been received and will be supplied as part of the planning application.

Summary of Completed Development / Operational Phase Mitigation

North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC Recreation Mitigation Strategy

- 7.148 Full details regarding the mitigation strategy for recreation impacts to North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC are detailed within the shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment (**Appendix 7.2**). The provision of a developer delivered SANG has been embedded into the scheme design.
- 7.149 In line with the mitigation strategy for large scale development in the inner ZOI, the Development Proposals will also require a SAMM contribution. This comprises a payment per dwelling of £323. As the Development Proposals are for up to 315 dwellings, the SAMM contribution will be for up to £101,745 to be secured by legal agreement i.e., s106.

Operational Drainage Strategy

- 7.150 The drainage strategy for the Proposed Development will include a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) designed to clean surface runoff to an appropriate level prior to discharge from the Site. The exact operational drainage specifications will come forward at the Reserved Matters stage and will be designed to ensure surface and waste water are appropriately managed within the scheme.

Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP)

- 7.151 A HMMP must be produced to set out the detailed establishment, long-term management, and monitoring of all on-site compensation and enhancement measures. The HMMP must cover a minimum period of 30 years from the commencement of development, including provisions for regular monitoring, adaptive management, and contingency measures to ensure delivery of the project's Biodiversity Net Gain targets. It will also detail appropriate and sensitive management prescriptions for targeted species such as badger, hedgehog and nesting birds.

Sensitive Operational Lighting Strategy

- 7.152 Any operational lighting strategy will be developed in accordance with best practice guidance to ensure that the value of sensitive habitats is maintained in perpetuity, safeguarding the value for nocturnal mammals such as bats, dormouse and badgers. The lighting strategy will be designed with input from, and approved by a suitably qualified ecologist.

Enhancements

- 7.153 A series of habitat creation proposals have been incorporated into the design of the Proposed Development. These measures include the creation of wetland basins with permanent water to part, new native tree planting, wildflower meadows and community orchard. This will increase the diversity of habitats on site and provide new opportunities for species specific enhancements such as the installation of bird and bat boxes.
- 7.154 The high level BNG assessment (Appendix 7.3) highlights that the required 10 % net gain can be achieved on Site given the indicative landscape proposals. Current figures show that the landscape strategy would result in the gain of 12.62 habitat units resulting in a percentage change of +18.49%. Additionally, there would be a net gain of 5.21 hedgerow units resulting in a percentage change of +17.51%. These figures do not consider additional species specific measures such as installation of bird boxes which are not considered as part of the Natural England metric.

Residual Effects

7.155 A summary of the mitigation / management and likely residual effects are provided in Table 7.6.

Receptor	Likely Effect before Secondary Mitigation	Mitigation / Management	Likely Residual Effect after Mitigation (Significant / Not Significant)
Enabling / Construction			
North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC	Potential for temporary habitat degradation due to accidental pollution incidents	Implementation of the CEMP	Negligible (Not Significant)
North Meadow and Clattinger Farm NNR	Potential for temporary habitat degradation due to accidental pollution incidents	Implementation of the CEMP	Negligible (Not Significant)
North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI	Potential for temporary habitat degradation due to accidental pollution incidents	Implementation of the CEMP	Negligible (Not Significant)
River Thames / Isis LWS	Potential for temporary habitat degradation due to accidental pollution incidents	Implementation of the CEMP	Negligible (Not Significant)
Hedgerows	Minor losses to hedgerows to facilitate access routes	New landscaping to include SANG. New habitats managed in line with HMMP	Negligible (Not Significant)
Retained notable habitats (hedgerows, woodland, trees)	Accidental damage / degradation of retained hedgerows, woodland, trees	Implementation of the CEMP	Negligible (Not Significant)
Amphibians (GCN)	Potential for injury or killing of individuals	Applicant has joined the Natural England DLL scheme	Negligible (Not Significant)
Badger and hedgehogs	Potential for injury or killing of individuals	Implementation of the CEMP which will include pre-works surveys	Negligible (Not Significant)
Bats	Potential for indirect impacts to retained trees identified as having bat roosting potential (e.g construction phase lighting)	Implementation of the CEMP	Negligible (Not Significant)

Nesting birds	Potential for injury or killing of individuals	Implementation of the CEMP.	Negligible (Not Significant)
Reptiles	Potential for injury or killing of individuals	Implementation of the CEMP.	Negligible (Not Significant)
Completed Development / Operational Phase			
North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC	Potential for increased recreational pressure. Potential for alteration in hydrological regime and / or water quality impacts.	SANG provision and SAMM contribution New habitats managed in line with HMMP / site management plans Operational drainage strategy	Negligible (Not Significant) Negligible (Not Significant)
North Meadow and Clattinger Farm NNR	Potential for increased recreation pressure Potential for alteration in hydrological regime and / or water quality impacts	Provision of on-site recreational greenspace New habitats managed in line with HMMP Operational drainage strategy	Negligible (Not Significant) Negligible (Not Significant)
North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI	Potential for increased recreational pressure Potential for alteration in hydrological regime and / or water quality impacts.	SANG provision and SAMM contribution Operational drainage strategy	Negligible (Not Significant)
Elmlea Meadows SSSI, Cotswold Park SSSI and Waterhay Meadows SSSI	Potential for increased recreational pressure	Provision of on-site recreational greenspace. New habitats managed in line with HMMP	Negligible (Not Significant)
River Thames / Isis LWS	Potential alterations in hydrological regime and / or water quality impacts	Operational drainage strategy	Negligible (Not Significant)
Retained / newly created habitats	Potential degradation of retained or newly created habitats as a result of inappropriate management	Habitats managed in line with HMMP	Negligible (Not Significant)
Herpetofauna	Harm from inappropriate long-term management of habitats	Provision of a greater diversity of habitats than existing. Habitats managed in line with HMMP	Moderate beneficial (Significant)
Bats	Degradation of retained / newly	Sensitive operational lighting strategy	Minor beneficial (Not Significant)

	created habitats for roosting / foraging and commuting bats through inappropriate operational lighting	Provision of a greater diversity of habitats than existing. Habitats managed in line with HMMP	
Terrestrial mammals	Potential degradation of retained or newly created habitats as a result of inappropriate management	Provision of a greater diversity of habitats than existing. Habitats managed in line with HMMP	Badger – moderate beneficial (Significant) Hedgehog - minor beneficial (Not Significant)
Nesting birds	Harm from inappropriate long-term management of habitats	Provision of a greater diversity of habitats than existing. Long-term ecological management in line with HMMP including measures to avoid harm to nesting birds	Minor beneficial (Not Significant)

Table 7.6: Summary of the Mitigation / Management and Likely Residual Effects

Summary

- 7.156 This Ecology and Biodiversity chapter has been prepared by Ecology Solutions Ltd to provide an overview of any significant effects, both adverse and beneficial, on important ecological features, which may result during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.
- 7.157 The chapter has been produced based on current best practice guidance for assessing ecological impacts, as defined by CIEEM. The ecological baseline conditions have been informed by desk-based research and ecological surveys completed by Ecology Solutions between 2022 and 2025.
- 7.158 The most notable ecological features in relation to the Proposed Development are nearby nature conservation sites (North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC/NNR, North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI, Elmlea Meadows SSSI, Cotswold Park SSSI, Waterhay Meadows SSSI and River Thames / Isis LWS) and notable on-site habitats (woodland, hedgerows and trees). Other habitats on Site which contribute to the structural and species diversity of the Site comprise modified grassland which dominates the Site and ruderal vegetation. In terms of protected and notable species the Site has been found to support reptiles, great crested newts, foraging / commuting bats and likely supports a range of nesting birds.
- 7.159 A series of avoidance measures have been embedded into the design of the Proposed Development. Most notably this includes the retention of the majority of the higher value habitats and incorporation into landscaped buffers along with the allocation of an extensive area of SANG as part of the wider landscaping strategy for the scheme.
- 7.160 Careful consideration to nature conservation sites, habitats and species were accounted for when establishing the significant effects during the enabling / construction phase and completed / development / operational phases.
- 7.161 Potential enabling / construction effects include contaminated run-off, increased noise and vibration, artificial lighting, habitat loss and potential for killing or injuring of species. Following on from the proposed mitigation measures residual effects are Negligible (Not Significant).

- 7.162 Potential completed development / operational phases include recreational pressure, degradation of habitats and potential for killing or injuring of species. Following on from the proposed mitigation measures residual effects are Negligible to Moderate Beneficial.

8. LANDSCAPE

Introduction

- 8.1 Mac Mic Strategic Land Limited have appointed Roberts Limbrick (a Landscape Institute Registered Practice) to undertake a proportionate Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) as part of this ES to accompany a planning application for residential development at a site which lies on the western edge of Cricklade, Wiltshire.
- 8.2 This ES chapter has been prepared by Teresa Hazelwood of Roberts Limbrick Limited. Teresa is a fully qualified landscape architect (BA (Hons), DipLA, CMLI) graduating from University of Sheffield in 2007 with a Diploma in Landscape Architecture. Teresa became Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute in 2010 and has over 15 years' industry experience. Teresa has prepared numerous Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments, including ES Chapters.
- 8.3 This report is based on site visits which were undertaken in summer 2022, and more recently in February 2026, together with analysis of environmental databases and relevant landscape character assessments.
- 8.4 The assessment is a proportionate LVIA that has been prepared as part of a formal Environmental Statement, and therefore 'significance' has been attached to the assessment of effects.
- 8.5 The assessment has had regard to current best practice (GLVIA3), with the assessment methodology set out within Appendix 8.2. The report assesses the potential effects resulting from the proposed development on the landscape resource, landscape character and on visual amenity and key viewpoints, with consideration given to the visual effects on settlements and residential properties.
- 8.6 It should be noted that heritage assets and settings, such as Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, are not part of the landscape assessment (refer to the separate heritage assessment as submitted with the planning application).

Site Location and Study Area

- 8.7 The site is located within Wiltshire, on the western edge of the town of Cricklade as shown on Site Location Plan within **Appendix 1.1**.
- 8.8 The study area for the LVIA is based on an approximate radius of 2km from the site. Given the scale of the site, type of proposed development and surrounding context, this radius is considered sufficient to consider the likely impacts that will be generated by the proposed development
- 8.9 Following site surveys and the visual assessment, the initial study area that has been considered is c.2km radius, the 'local area' which is actually influenced by the proposals is anticipated to be smaller, and as this report goes on to demonstrate, there are no effects greater than negligible expected beyond c.200m from the site boundary.

Site Context

Planning Policy & Designations

Local Planning Policy

- 8.10 The following policies from the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) are considered relevant to potential development of the site. These policies provide the framework against which the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development have been assessed:
- Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity, requires that any measures to restore, enhance and create habitat must be 'relevant to the local landscape character'.
 - Core Policy 51: Landscape, requires development to 'protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character.' It 'must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures.'
 - Core Policy 52: Green Infrastructure, requires development 'to make provision for the retention and enhancement of Wiltshire's green infrastructure network', and 'to ensure that suitable links to the network are provided and maintained.'
 - Core Policy 54: Cotswold Water Park, requires 'proposals for outdoor or water-based sports, leisure and recreation based development will be supported where they help transform the area to an informal recreation and leisure resource for Wiltshire residents and visitors in line with the key objectives of the Cotswold Water Park Vision and Implementation Plan.' Requirements include that proposals must 'increase or enhance public accessibility and enjoyment of the lakes and countryside,' and 'Strengthen the local landscape character and engender a sense of place.'
 - Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping, requires that developments 'make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire' by 'enhancing local distinctiveness by responding to the value of the natural and historic environment, relating positively to its landscape setting and the existing pattern of development and responding to local topography by ensuring that important views into, within and out of the site are to be retained and enhanced'
 - Through the 'retention and enhancement of existing important landscaping and natural features, (e.g. trees, hedges, banks and watercourses), in order to take opportunities to... effectively integrate the development into its setting' as well as 'responding positively to the existing townscape and landscape features'.
- 8.11 As part of the current Wiltshire Local Plan Review, Emerging Policies 91: Conserving and Enhancing Wiltshire's Landscapes, and 93: Green and Blue Infrastructure, seek to replace the aforementioned 2015 Core Policies 51 and 52.
- 8.12 Saved policies of North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 also cover the site and the key relevant landscape policies are:
- NE12: Woodland, which states 'The creation, conservation, enhancement and positive management of woodlands across the district will be supported'
 - NE14: Trees, Site Features and the Control of New Development, which states 'permission will not be granted for proposals that would result, or be likely to result, in the loss of trees, hedges, lakes/ponds or other important landscape or ecological features that could be successfully and appropriately incorporated into the design of a development.'
 - CF3: Provision of Open Space, which states 'proposals for new housing development will be required to make provision for open space on site, to provide 15m² for Local Parks and 3m² for

play areas per person.’ Although it is assumed that this has now been superseded by the Wiltshire Open Space Assessment 2020 (outlined below).

- 8.13 The Cricklade Neighbourhood Plan 2026 (made March 2018) runs until 2026. It is currently under review which will extend it to 2038. The current plan includes the following policies which are considered relevant to potential development of the site. The site lies outside the defined settlement boundary and therefore consideration of these policies will form part of the overall planning balance:
- Policy H1: The Settlement Boundary - ‘Development will not be supported outside [the] Settlement Boundary unless specifically allowed by policies in the development plan’
 - Policy H2: Visual Separation of Settlements - ‘Development will not be supported where it would reduce the visual and physical separation between Cricklade and surrounding settlements in general... and the strategic housing development at Tadpole Farm in Swindon in particular.’
 - Policy LAF2: Allotments - ‘New residential development of 10 dwellings or over should provide land for allotments on the basis of a minimum of 50m² for every 10 dwellings’
 - Policy LAF3: Provision of Public Open Space - ‘Open space required to be provided in development proposals should be of a good quality, clearly defined and accommodate any identified need for more play areas for younger and older children’
- 8.14 The Wiltshire Open Space Assessment 2020 sets out the standards of provision of open space for new developments. Based on the site’s location, the Urban Area Standards within Section 6.2.1 are considered applicable and apply to this site, with the provision of allotments, amenity green space, parks and recreation, play space (children and youth) and natural green space required.
- 8.15 The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Wiltshire 2022-2030 sets out three key themes; mitigation, adaptation and resilience to climate change; halting the loss of and improving biodiversity; and contributing to health and well-being, which form the basis for the GBI Strategy’s vision, goals and implementation.
- 8.16 The Wiltshire Design Guide 2024 provides key expectations with regard to design and integration of nature and public spaces into developments. Key aspects include designing and delivering multi-functional use of new public spaces, and the importance of integrating nature into well designed developments

Great Western Community Forest Plan

- 8.17 The site sits within the Great Western Community Forest Plan 2025 area. The plan’s key aims and objectives are to maintain and increase canopy cover, enhance biodiversity, support the health and wellbeing of communities, support education and sustain employment and the contribute to green infrastructure solutions to environmental challenges.

Cotswold Lakes Vision and Implementation Plan

- 8.18 As the site falls within the Cotswold Water Park (CWP) Boundary (see para 8.22), it is covered by the 2008 Cotswold Water Park Vision and Implementation Plan. This plan guides the future development of the CWP and sets out a sustainable and achievable vision.
- 8.19 A number of priorities are identified and include the CWP becoming a distinctive countryside, a premier site for nature conservation, offering a range of sport, leisure and recreational facilities, presenting a quality visitor destination and for the CWP to become a truly sustainable place.

Designations

- 8.20 The site itself and immediate environment is not subject to any relevant statutory or non-statutory landscape designations.

- 8.21 Included for context only as a detailed assessment is provided in the Heritage Report. The Site is located c.250m east of the closest designated heritage asset, the Grade II Listed Hailstone Farmhouse, and c.600m west of the Cricklade Town Banks which forms part of a group of assets largely, though not exclusively, within Cricklade Conservation Area. This covers the majority of the eastern part of the town.
- 8.22 The closest statutory designation is North Meadow Cricklade National Nature Reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located c.0.33km north of the site at its closest point. The SSSI underpins the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 8.23 The site sits within the Cotswold Water Park Boundary, designated under the Wiltshire Core Strategy. The Cotswold Water Park is an area of more than 140 lakes set over 40 square miles of Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. The lakes have been created from former sand and gravel extraction activities, which are still on-going. This results in a changing landscape with the creation of further lakes in the future. The policy states 'this unique landscape has evolved in response to a complex interplay of physical and human influences and will continue to change throughout the plan period. The extensive network of lakes, rights of way, recreational activities and nature study areas in the Cotswold Water Park already provides a significant green infrastructure asset.'
- 8.24 The Cotswolds National Landscape is located, at its closest points, c.19km, arching to the north and west of the site. The North Wessex Downs National Landscape is located c.23km to the south of the Cricklade.

Landscape Character

- 8.25 The landscape character of the site and its surrounding area has been assessed at a national, county and local levels through published landscape character assessments.

National Character Assessment

- 8.26 At a national level the site falls within National Character Area (NCA) 108: Upper Thames Clay Vale.
- 8.27 This NCA is described as "a broad belt of open, gently undulating lowland farmland... [with] contrasting landscapes, including enclosed pastures of the claylands with wet valleys, mixed farming, hedges, hedge trees and field trees and more settled, open, arable lands. Mature field oaks give a parkland feel in many places." (Natural England Character Area Profile 108).

Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment

- 8.28 At a county level, the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment (2005) locates the site and the surrounding area within Landscape Character Type (LCT) 12: Open Clay Vale (see Figure 8.1). This LCT occurs over two different areas of land within Wiltshire, and so is split into two landscape character areas (LCA), of which the site sits within LCA 12A: Thames Open Clay Vale.
- 8.29 The main characteristics of this landscape area are:
- Low lying area centred on the River Thames and its floodplain
 - Largely tranquil, rural landscape, predominantly level, with vertical elements of lines of willow and other wetland trees
 - Agricultural use of the area combines arable and wet pasture, with open water ditches as well as hedgerows defining boundaries

- Field patterns vary from small and irregular to larger, geometric fields often in arable use on drier or drained gravel areas
- Large extent of open water resulting from gravel extraction - now the Cotswold Lakes - with varied vegetation making them of national significance as scarce marl waters (Cotswold Water Park SSSI)
- Numerous hay meadows of high ecological interest
- Strong presence of water - rivers, tributaries, drainage ditches with frequent lines of willows and other wetland vegetation
- Sparsely populated landscape, with a few small settlements such as Ashton Keynes and the town of Cricklade, but mainly scattered isolated farmsteads; vernacular building materials are brick and stone
- The Roman Ermine Way/A419 runs through the area but most roads are minor rural routes with small bridges crossing the numerous waterways and ditches.

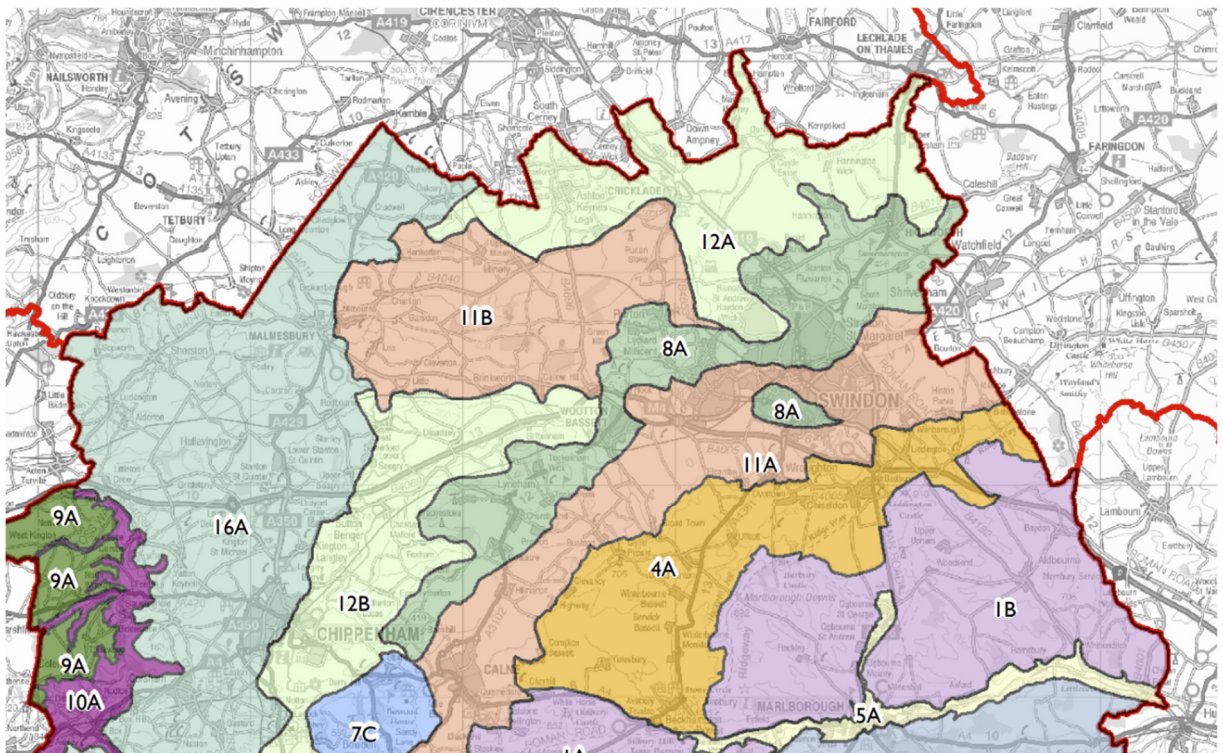


Figure 8.1: Map extract from the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment

North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment

- 8.30 At a local level the site is characterised by the North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment (2004). In this assessment, the site and its immediate surroundings are located in Landscape Character Area 2: Thames Valley Lowland (see Figure 8.2). The Landscape Character Type associated with this character area is Lowland Clay Farmland.
- 8.31 The Lowland Clay Farmland landscape character type is described as 'A gently undulating lowland landscape on heavy clay soils forming a transition between the valley bottom and higher ground.'

Mixed farming and a dispersed settlement pattern enclosed by hedges with trees. Watercourses influence lower lying areas.'

- 8.32 The main characteristics of the Thames Valley Lowland landscape character area are:
- Low, level or undulating ground at between 85m and 100m AOD, on Oxford clay or alluvial deposits
 - Wetland features on the lower ground, including open water ditches and mature willows
 - Continuous hedges with many mature oak and ash, although sparser tree cover in the east, close to the River Thames
 - Field sizes varying from small and irregular, to medium sized and regular shaped enclosures
 - Predominantly pasture, with some arable, of which some is ridge and furrow patterns
 - Dispersed or nucleated settlements on higher ground, within a largely pastoral landscape
 - Strong local character with buildings of stone and local brick, although this begins to break down in the southern approaches to Purton
 - A general absence of woodland, with the exception of a few smaller woodlands in the east of the area
 - Some wetland and meadow habitats of nature conservation interest
 - Generally contained views but with longer views and a sense of containment by high ground to the south, and some wide views over the Thames floodplain.
- 8.33 In terms of landscape sensitivity of the character area, the assessment notes "Whilst most of this area is relatively intact in its distinctive landscape elements, some areas have lost defining features such as hedgerow trees, and close to Purton, there is evidence of new land uses which are typical of the urban fringe. These two issues – the loss of hedgerows and mature trees, and encroaching urban fringe land uses – are the main threats to the character of the landscape in this area."
- 8.34 It goes on to say 'The landscape is therefore vulnerable to change either through cumulative small-scale development which over time will change the area's character or through larger scale developments which have a more obvious immediate effect. The majority of the area has an essentially rural, agricultural character within which only small-scale, sensitively designed development, appropriately associated with existing built form, could be successfully accommodated without adverse landscape impacts. The area is not highly visible, being a quiet rural hinterland, but the railway line, the A419 and local traffic on B roads through the area, open the area up to views for many'. It also highlights the importance of the continuous hedgerows and mature trees as key characteristics to conserve and enhance.

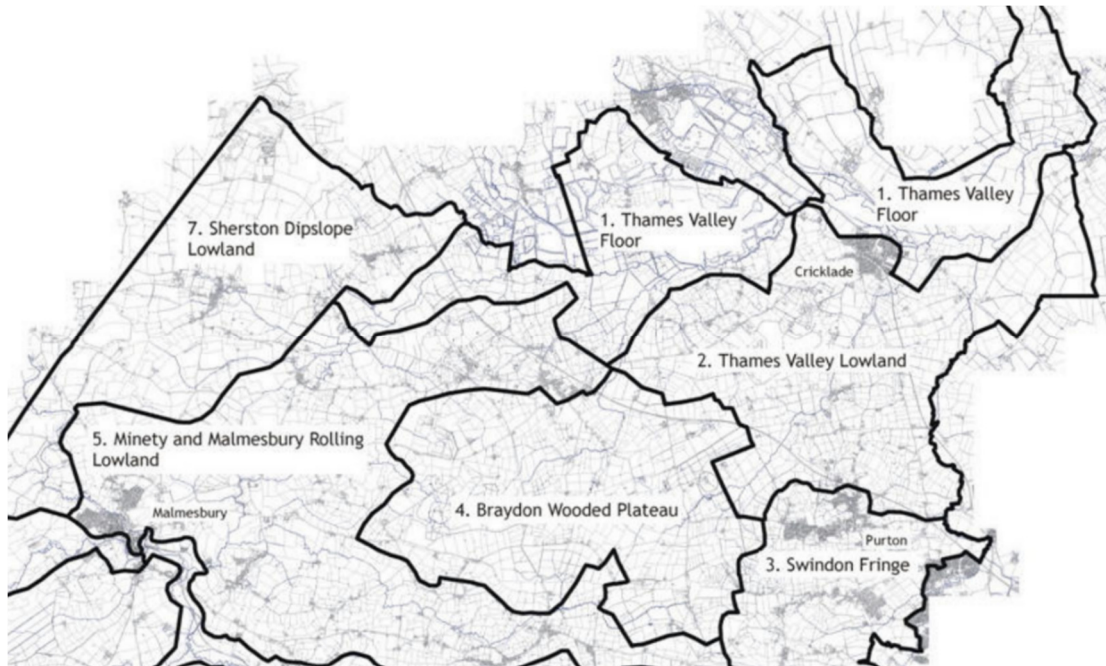


Figure 8.2: Map extract from the North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment

Cotswold Water Park Landscape Character Assessment

- 8.35 At a finer grain level the landscape character of the site and surrounding area has been assessed as part of the Cotswold Water Park Landscape Character Assessment 2009. Whilst now 17 years old, there are still relevant character descriptions, albeit should be noted that as highlighted by Core Strategy Policy 54, the Cotswold Water Park is a continuing changing landscape due to the ongoing sand and gravel extraction activities, continuing development of recreational activities and holiday accommodation.
- 8.36 The site sits within Character Area 4A; Chelworth Rolling Clay Lowland, as shown on Figure 8.3. This is a very small and localised character area, which is described as ‘a gently undulating lowland landscape on heavy clay soils. Within the study area the landscape type forms a transition between the River Basin Clay Vale and rising land to the south. The land use predominantly comprises mixed farming, enclosed by a strong hedgerow network with mature trees, and a dispersed settlement pattern.’
- 8.37 Key characteristics are;
- Gently rolling lowland underlain by Oxford Clay or alluvial deposits;
 - Wetland features on the lower ground, including small streams, open water ditches and marked by lines of mature willows;
 - Mixed arable and pastoral land use, but with a predominance of pasture, and some ridge and furrow patterns evident;
 - Variable field pattern ranging from small and irregular, to medium sized and regular shaped enclosures with a network of continuous hedgerows and mature oak and ash hedgerow trees;

- Limited woodland cover but some ancient woodland and wet woodland of high ecological value in the wider area plus scattered mature trees;
- Small number of wetland and meadows of neutral and unimproved grassland, and of nature conservation interest;
- Dispersed settlement of villages and farmsteads, generally on locally higher ground, many using vernacular materials of stone and local brick, half timber, tiles and thatch;
- Roads largely confined to minor and rural;
- Views often contained by intact hedgerows, riparian vegetation and woodland blocks with intermittent more open views to the rising slopes of the Settled Limestone Ridge and across the Upper Thames floodplain; and
- A largely peaceful, rural landscape.

- 8.38 The condition of the character area is generally considered to be good, with the features including areas of mixed pastoral and arable farmland with mainly intact hedgerows, some woodlands and hay meadows of high ecological value and towns and villages of vernacular materials. There are a some poor quality elements which include gappy and flailed hedgerow and hedgerow trees that are over-mature with few replacement young trees, and inappropriate buildings that do not accord with the local vernacular or adversely affect the overall condition and character of the settlement in some locations.
- 8.39 The strength of character of this LCA is described as a 'generally a peaceful rural landscape with intact hedgerows, intermittent woodlands and areas of hay meadows and occasional towns and small villages and dispersed farmsteads of local vernacular materials. These contribute to an overall impression of a mature and established landscape. However, within the wider area to the south of the CWP the changing pattern of the land use of mixed arable and pastoral farming, equestrian uses, and the influence of urban fringe development and busier road corridors, and the resultant noise and light pollution, reduce the overall strength of character of the type to moderate.'

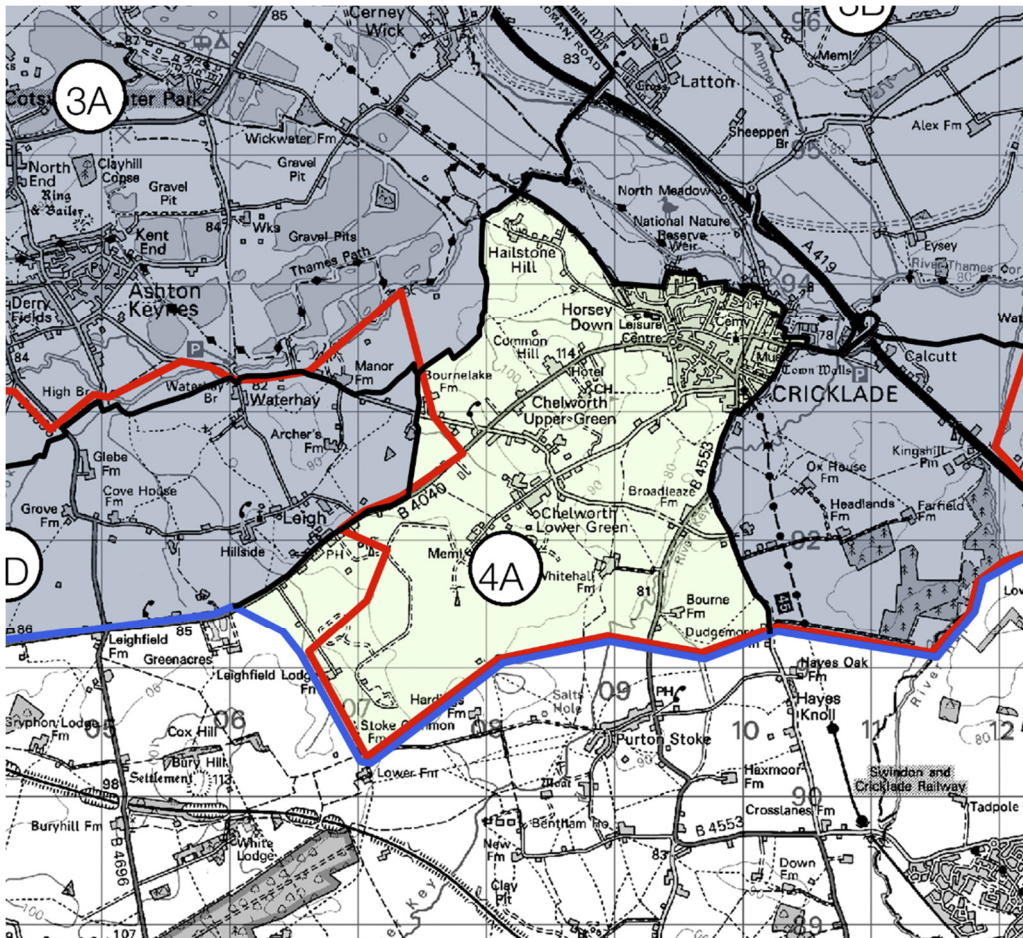


Figure 8.3: Map extract from the Cotswold Water Park Landscape Character Assessment

Local Landscape Character

- 8.40 A number of the key characteristics as identified by the North Wiltshire Character Assessment, and more specifically the Cotswold Water Park Assessment are reflected within the site and immediate surroundings. These include the low lying, undulating ground, continuous hedges, pastoral fields, and generally contained views as well as the numerous wetland features, including watercourses lined with willows, varying field sizes and shapes and a general absence of woodland.
- 8.41 The key characteristics of the local landscape are considered to be:
- low lying, flat to gently undulating, predominantly wet pasture with some arable land,
 - wetland features, including small watercourses, ditches, lined with mature willows; extensive areas of open water,
 - continuous hedges forming field boundaries and containing views to some extent, in conjunction with variations in topography,
 - small, nucleated settlements and scattered farmsteads, beyond the settlement boundary of Cricklade,

- general absence of woodland blocks; hedgerow trees at field boundaries and occasional tree belts and trees within fields.

8.42 In addition to the above characteristics, the local landscape is also characterised by the presence of the town of Cricklade, with residential properties of a variety of sizes and styles located beyond the site's eastern boundary, along with Cricklade Leisure Centre, as well as the property at the south-western corner of the site. This reflects the site's transitional role between the rural landscape and urban edge of Cricklade.

Surrounding Context

Land Use and Development

- 8.43 Mixed farmland is the primary land use within the surrounding area, particularly to the west of the site. There are large areas of open water approximately 1.5km to the north west, which are part of the Cotswold Lakes, comprising around 180 lakes with various recreational and leisure uses as well as nature reserves.
- 8.44 North Meadow, which is a National Nature Reserve (NNR), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), designated for its wildflower meadows lies c. 500m to the north east of the site.
- 8.45 As a result of the proximity of the site to the North Meadows SAC, provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG), as per Natural England requirements, and is likely to be required in accordance with Natural England guidance for any proposed residential development of the site.
- 8.46 To the north, west and south of the site the landscape comprises mainly small to medium sized, low lying, flat to gently undulating agricultural fields typically bounded by hedgerows. The landscape is punctuated by individual farmsteads, a hotel, golf course and individual and small clusters of properties.
- 8.47 Across the surrounding area are numerous smaller settlements, including Cerney Wick, Ashton Keynes, Latton, Calcutt and Purton Stoke, along with individual farms and farmsteads. The town of Cirencester is located c.14km to the north west of the site, and Swindon is located approximately 16km to the south east of the site.
- 8.48 Included for context only; detailed consideration is provided in the Heritage Report. The site is located some 250m east of the closest designated heritage asset, the Grade II Listed Hailstone Farmhouse, and some 600m west of the Cricklade Town Banks which forms part of a group of assets largely, though not exclusively, within Cricklade Conservation Area.
- 8.49 The town of Cricklade, on the edge of which the site is located, comprises primarily residential properties of a variety of styles and ages, typically two storey detached or semi-detached properties. There are several newer developments in Cricklade, such as Hitchings and Stockham Close, which are generally built in keeping with the Conservation Area.
- 8.50 Chelworth Industrial Estate sits to the south west of the site and Eysey Manor Quarry sits to the north east, across the A419.
- 8.51 Beyond the site immediately to the east, lies a small agricultural field that has a current planning application under determination, by Bloor Home Developments for up to 70 dwellings. To the east of the northern parcel of the site, across National Cycle Route 45, an application has been granted at Stones Farm for up to 140 dwellings by Newland Homes.

Access and Infrastructure

- 8.52 The larger part of the site is bound by Stones Lane to the north, and the B4040/Malmesbury Road to the south. The B4040 connects to the A429 in the west - the main route between Cirencester and Malmesbury.
- 8.53 The site and the area surrounding is crossed by numerous Public Rights of Way (PRoW), as shown on the Surrounding Context Plan within Appendix 8.1. Footpath CRIC30 runs through the site, west from Stones Lane, across the north of the larger part of the site to join footpath CRIC31. These routes form key visual receptors within the LVIA and are considered in the assessment of the visual effects.
- 8.54 Numerous footpaths pass through the surrounding area, many within the urban area of Cricklade, and include:
- footpath CRIC31 runs north from Malmesbury Road, just west of Windmill Farm, to join bridlepath CRIC32 west of Hailstone House, to the west of the site;
 - bridlepath CRIC34 runs from the northern tip of North Meadow SSSI down its east side, crosses to the west side of the River Thames and then connects into Cricklade;
 - footpath CRIC38, which forms part of the Thames Path long distance route, runs along the River Thames to the north east of the site;
 - footpath CRIC29 runs west from The Fiddle, into CRIC83 which connects just to the minor road running between Cross Roads Farm and Cowleaze Farm;
 - Sustrans route 45 runs along the disused railway to the north east of the site, passing along the site's north eastern boundary;
 - Numerous other small footpaths cover short stretches within Cricklade.

Topography

- 8.55 The topography of the site and surrounding area is generally low lying and gently undulating. However, there are two hills to the west of the site; Common Hill at 114m AOD where Windmill Farm sits, and Hailstone Hill, where Hailstone House sits at 100m AOD.
- 8.56 The land slopes down to the west of these hills towards the Cotswolds Water Park, and to the north east towards the North Meadow Nature Reserve. Both areas are characterised by large areas of standing water or seasonal flooding due to the low-lying nature of the land.
- 8.57 The town of Cricklade also sits lower than the site, following the area's general topography and sloping gently away from the two hills, at around 87m AOD at the western edge of the town to 78m AOD at the eastern edge.
- 8.58 This variation in topography influences the extent of potential visibility, with localised higher ground providing opportunities for longer-distance views, while lower-lying areas and subtle landform variations contribute to a generally contained visual envelope.

Vegetation

- 8.59 Vegetation within the area surrounding the site primarily comprises a mix of grassland, where fields are pasture land, strong hedgerow network with frequent hedgerow trees, and lines of willow/wet woodland species along watercourses and ditches. Woodland is limited to areas surrounding water bodies at the Cotswold Lakes, and more extensive areas at Farfield Lane to the south east of Cricklade.

Water Features

- 8.60 The River Thames flows just north of the site, adjacent to the North Meadow SSSI, and south of the large areas of open water at the Cotswolds Water Park to the north-west of the site. The River Key flows just south east of Cricklade, and there are numerous small tributaries and ditches across the surrounding landscape.

Site Description

- 8.61 The site is located on the western edge of the town of Cricklade in Wiltshire, to the west of Cricklade Leisure Centre, and north of Malmesbury Road/B4040.
- 8.62 The site covers c. 20.7 ha comprising four medium pastoral fields, three of which are located between Stones Lane to the north and the B4040 Common Hill / Malmesbury Road to the south, on the western edge of the town of Cricklade in North Wiltshire (see Appendix 8.1: Site Features Plan, and Appendix 8.3: Site Photos). One further field is located on the northern side of Stones Lane.
- 8.63 A disused railway sits to the north east of the site and forms Sustrans Route 45 of the National Cycle Network which runs between Chester and Salisbury via Swindon.
- 8.64 The area of Cricklade to the east of the site, with the exception of the leisure centre, is mainly residential. There is also a new build dwelling at Common Hill Farm which is located on high ground, just beyond the south western corner of the site, north of the B4040, and thus is afforded views across the site. Beyond this is a small industrial estate and livery yard to the north of Malmesbury Road, and the Cricklade House Hotel to the south.
- 8.65 The site primarily comprises pastoral grassland fields bounded by hedgerows. Continuous hedgerows with a number of hedgerow trees define the four fields of the site, other than along the north-western boundary of the northernmost field. This boundary is defined by a much denser belt of trees, associated with the former railway line. The majority of trees within and bounding the site are ash, with some oak and field maple, in varying degrees of health, with a number of the ash suffering from die-back. Hedgerows include a mix of elm, hawthorn, blackthorn, elder and rose.
- 8.66 A BS5837 tree survey has been undertaken for the site (refer to Tree Survey Report by SJA), which identifies the majority of the site's trees and hedgerows as Category C, with some Category B.
- 8.67 The site's hedgerows in conjunction with the occasional, hedgerow trees, and topography, add to the sense of enclosure of the site, particularly in the lower lying parts of the site, and help to limit the visibility of the site.
- 8.68 Within the site, the primary vegetation feature is grassland, largely used for grazing. The entire site sits on primarily Oxford Clay which typically supports permanent pasture. This is the primary land use within the surrounding farmland.
- 8.69 The site slopes gently from south west down to the north-east, with the highest part of the site being located in the south western corner of the site, at around 108m AOD. The lowest part of the site is located along the site's eastern boundary at around 85m AOD.
- 8.70 Two low voltage overhead electricity lines cross the site, one running north to south along the site's eastern edge, and one running north west to south east across the site's south-eastern corner. A gas pipeline also runs north to south along the site's eastern boundary.
- 8.71 There is vehicular access via gated field openings onto Malmesbury Road/ the B4040 and Stones Lane.

- 8.72 The CRIC30 public footpath crosses the northern tip of the larger part of the site, running east-west from Stones Lane across the site and adjacent fields to the west, until it connects to footpath CRIC31 which runs north south from Malmesbury Road to just west of Hailstone House.
- 8.73 The Sustrans Cycle Route 45, which runs along the former Swindon to Cirencester railway line, is located along the north eastern boundary of the northernmost field.
- 8.74 A small water course runs along the western edge of the northernmost field, with Hailstone Farm located just beyond.
- 8.75 Overall, the site comprises a contained parcel of agricultural land at the urban edge of Cricklade, defined by a strong hedgerow structure and limited tree cover. Its gently sloping topography and boundary vegetation contribute to a degree of visual enclosure.

Proposed Development & Landscape Strategy

Proposed Development

- 8.76 The proposed development comprises an outline planning application for up to 315 dwellings with associated access and infrastructure, including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). All matters are reserved except for access. The proposed development will deliver up to 315 new homes in a sustainable location on the western edge of Cricklade. Including:
- A mix of market and affordable housing, with 40% affordable provision
 - Formal and informal public open space including a LEAP and natural play space.
 - Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)
 - Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of at least 10% will be delivered on site.
 - Access to the south from Common Hill / Malmesbury Road, with pedestrian and cycle connectivity
 - Provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG).
- 8.77 There has been a strong landscape led approach to the development of the proposals, which has followed an iterative design process, and is set out within the separate Design and Access Statement, and the remainder of this section.
- 8.78 The Parameter Plans included at **Appendix 1.1** set out the land use and storey heights parameters upon which the landscape and visual assessment has been undertaken. The development will primarily comprise two storey dwellings with 2.5-3 storeys proposed in a small number of key locations.
- 8.79 The overall application represents a medium sized but locally contained extension to the western edge of Cricklade. Of the c.20.7ha site area, being c.60% of the site is proposed as green infrastructure, with the development area covering an area of c.7.9ha.

Landscape Constraints and Opportunities

- 8.80 Following site visits in both summer and winter, and review of the baseline information, several landscape constraints and opportunities, both in landscape character and visual amenity terms, have been identified. These are set out below and illustrated on the Landscape Constraints and Opportunities Plan within Appendix 8.1.
- 8.81 The landscape character opportunities and constraints are considered to be:

- The proximity of existing residential development indicates that the site forms part of the rural urban fringe, where built form is already a defining influence on the surrounding landscape character. The gentle increase in elevation and overall low-lying nature of the site, in conjunction with the existing trees and hedgerows, means that the site is generally well enclosed.
- The tree belts and hedgerows associated with the site should largely be maintained, conserved and enhanced, as an identified key characteristic of the site and surrounding area, and to protect the visual enclosure of the site.
- Opportunity to mitigate for the loss of trees due to ash die back with supplementary planting.
- Public footpath CRIC30 which runs through the site should be integrated into any proposals.
- The gently sloping nature of the site offers opportunities for swales and ponds as part of sustainable drainage and habitat creation, adding to the wetland character of the wider landscape.
- Opportunities to enhance the existing grassland diversity of the site.
- Opportunities for SANG creation as part of any proposed development, which would be best located within the more northern and western parts of the site, due to the increased distance from existing built form / urbanising influences, and more rural character of these parts of the site.
- Opportunities to provide a variety of recreational opportunities across the site, including new footpath routes. However, links into the Sustrans 45 route are not proposed, to avoid increasing recreational pressure on the North Meadow SAC.
- The local vernacular associated with the town of Cricklade should be considered so that any development would sit within the context of the wider landscape and developments.

8.82 The landscape opportunities and constraints of the site in terms of visual amenity are considered to be:

- The gentle increase in elevation and overall low-lying nature of the site, in conjunction with the existing trees and hedgerow network, serves to limit visibility of the site when viewed from the more open, low-lying landscape to the north east.
- The south western parts of the site are considered to be more visually sensitive due to the increased elevation, proximity of adjacent property which has direct views into the site, and views offered from Malmesbury Road/ the B4040.
- The western edge of the site is also considered to be more visually sensitive due to the surrounding context of fairly open rural land.
- Consideration will need to be given to the visual impact on views from the public footpath CRIC30 which crosses through the northern corner of the larger part of the site, from Stones Lane west towards where it joins footpath CRIC31 in an adjacent field, which also affords views of the site. This is likely to require appropriate mitigation such as additional tree and hedgerow planting and appropriate siting of the proposed development.
- Consideration of the views to St Sampsons Spire from within the site and from public footpath CRIC30.
- Development should be set back from the public footpath which crosses the site, with the footpath to be retained and set within a green corridor / open space in order to limit visual impacts.
- The parts of the site located closest to the existing residential development are considered the least visually sensitive due to visual influence of the adjacent built form, which will be heightened if the adjacent Bloor development is built out (App ref PL/2021.10404). The higher, western parts of the site are considered to be more visually sensitive so should be considered for open space,

sustainable drainage and biodiversity improvements as part of a green and blue infrastructure strategy.

- Consideration will need to be given to the boundary treatments, planting and distances of any proposed development to the existing property at the south western corner of the site, and any proposed properties located along the eastern boundary adjacent to the proposed Bloor development. Boundary treatments should also be considered where Sustrans Cycle Route 45, Stones Lane and Malmesbury Road are adjacent to site boundaries.
- The site's existing trees and hedgerows filter and soften views of the site. The hedgerows and hedgerow trees within the site would serve to break up any proposed development. These features should therefore be retained in order to limit impact on visual amenity and help assimilate any development into the landscape.
- Additional tree planting within the existing hedgerows offers the opportunity to both soften views of any proposed development, and reinforce a key landscape characteristic of the site.

- 8.83 Overall, the identified constraints and opportunities have informed a landscape-led approach that seeks to retain key landscape features, respond to variations in visual sensitivity across the site, and integrate development with a robust green infrastructure framework. These principles underpin the parameters assessed within this LVIA.

Landscape Strategy

- 8.84 Following the identification of the site's landscape and visual constraints and opportunities in the context of residential development, a landscape strategy for the site has been developed, which is presented as a Landscape Masterplan within Appendix 8.1.
- 8.85 As can be seen from the Landscape Masterplan, over 60% of the site is proposed for green infrastructure. This allows the development to be set within a strong green infrastructure framework, enabling retention of the majority of existing landscape features.
- 8.86 The landscape proposals can be split into the following key areas:

SANG

- Area of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG), with walking routes (1.6km), wildflower meadows, native tree and scrub planting, wetland basin and new and enhanced woodland buffer planting, in line with the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC Mitigation Strategy.

Wetlands

- Creation of wetlands as part of the sustainable drainage system, which includes areas of permanent water, with footpaths, grassland and native tree planting.

Green Corridors & Natural Green Space

- A network of green corridors and natural green space focused around retained hedgerows, with the creation of a substantial landscape buffer along the western boundary of the site (c.50-100m in width), an area identified as having higher visual sensitivity. Includes incidental natural play opportunities which will form a play trail around the site.
- New meadow grasslands, footpaths, native tree and woodland planting are proposed.

Amenity Space

- Provision of informal amenity space throughout the development, with a kickabout space proposed within the flatter, southeastern part of the site.

Allotments & Community Orchard

- Provision of allotments in the northern part of the site.
- Creation of a community orchard as part of the natural green space within the south western part of the site.

Play Provision

- An equipped play space, naturalistic in style, sits at the entrance to the development from B4040.
- Provision of a secondary play space in conjunction with the SANG and allotments in the northern part of the site.
- Creation of a natural play trail through the green corridors and along the recreational routes across the site.

- 8.87 The proposals meet and exceed the requirements of the Wiltshire Open Space Standards as set out below:

Type	Quality Standard (ha/1000 population)	Requirement (ha)	Provision (ha)
Allotments *	0.25	0.19	0.19
Amenity Green Space	0.9	0.68	1.9
Parks and Recreation Grounds	1.1	0.83	
Play (children)	0.25	0.19	0.42
Play (youth)	0.3	0.23	
Natural Green Space	1.8	1.36	9.9
TOTAL		3.48	12.4

*** Allotments are proposed as allotments and community orchard**

- 8.88 The key landscape and green infrastructure strategy aims for the site are summarised below:

- Retention and enhancement of the site's existing mature trees and hedgerows, as they are an important feature of the site. Their retention also serves to retain the sense of enclosure afforded to the site and help mitigate potential visual effects;
- Integration of the internal hedgerows as green corridors, offering both ecological and recreational connectivity, and serving to break up and soften views of the proposed development;
- The built form is focused on the lower parts of the site, in order to reduce effects on both landscape character and visual amenity;

- New planting proposed across the site, including new trees, woodland and native scrub in order to reinforce key landscape characteristics, soften views and help assimilate any proposed development into the landscape. Trees to be planted as heavy to extra heavy standards, and the scrub and woodland as a mix of whips, feathered and standard stock;
- New woodland buffer planting to the western site boundary to mitigate landscape impacts the more rural edge of the development;
- Introduction of new habitats, and enhancement of existing within the site, through measures such as grassland improvements, introduction of water features and new trees and scrub planting, as part of biodiversity improvements in line with the Wiltshire Biodiversity Net Gain policy;
- Integration of the existing public footpath into the proposed development, and setting it within open space in order to limit visual impacts;
- Consideration of the views to St Sampsons Church Spire from CRIC30 with the provision of a view corridor;
- Opportunities for new recreational opportunities across the site such as new footpath and cycle links, informal open space and play in line with the Wiltshire Open Space standards.

Landscape Effects

Landscape Impacts

- 8.89 In the context of the proposals described at paragraph 8.62, this section sets out an assessment of the likely physical landscape effects upon the site in respect of its component elements and features (each of which are treated as a landscape receptor in their own right) and the anticipated landscape effects upon the character of the site and the wider area as expressed in the published landscape character assessments.

Likely Causes of Effects

- 8.90 Whilst all landscapes possess some degree of inherent sensitivity, individual components within the landscape respond differently to change depending on the type and nature of the proposed development. The assessment of landscape effects has therefore been informed by an understanding of the specific changes arising from the proposals, with consideration given to how these interact with the existing landscape components and characteristics. The following section sets out the likely causes of effects which would occur in relation to the proposals for the site.

Causes of Temporary Effects During Construction

- 8.91 The temporary construction work which may give rise to effects on landscape and visual receptors are listed as follows:
- Site clearance and setting out;
 - Movement and presence of associated construction vehicles;
 - Presence of materials storage and machinery storage on site during construction;
 - Reprofiting internally for new site entrance, housing footprints, parking areas and access;
 - Tree protection measures (Heras barriers) will be erected prior to site construction works as required.
- 8.92 All of these measures are expected be temporary in nature.

Causes of Effects at Completion

- 8.93 The permanent components of the proposals which may give rise to effects on landscape and visual receptors are listed as follows;
- Construction of new residential properties;
 - Construction of new entrance, access roads and parking areas;
 - Installation of the drainage and SuDS;
 - Creation of the SANG; and
 - Implementation of planting proposals and landscaping integrated into the development proposals (e.g. trees, shrubs, grassland areas, native structural planting/hedgerow planting).
- 8.94 Effects at completion are concerned with the long-term alteration in the landscape from the current site context to the future scenario with the proposals in place. The works associated with the proposed residential scheme including planting will have been completed and will be a permanent component in the landscape.
- 8.95 In the long term, impacts will be associated with the influence of mitigation measures upon landscape character. This establishes the changes to landscape character as a result of proposed mitigation measures/ planting fully established and performing their intended function. The effects are considered to be long term and effectively permanent within the assessment timeframe.
- 8.96 In terms of physical landscape resources, changes are largely confined to the site.
- 8.97 Overall, the physical landscape impacts are considered to have no direct physical effects beyond the site boundary, and site access arrangements. There will be no additional direct impacts on the wider areas around the site or to the wider landscape context of the local character area.

Effects Upon Landscape Elements

- 8.98 This section assesses the effect of the proposals on the elements and features that currently characterise the site.
- 8.99 In accordance with the LVIA methodology, effects of moderate adverse or lower are considered to not be significant.
- 8.100 In the following paragraphs effects will be assessed at:
- Year 1 - when built form has been completed, and any earthworks and landscape has been installed (but not yet established or grown); and
 - Year 15 – When sufficient time has gone by to allow the built form elements to have weathered, and for any landscaping interventions such as trees, shrubs and grassland etc to have established, and grown sufficiently to provide any screening, filtering, landscape/ecological enhancements.
- 8.101 A growth rate of typically between 0.3m and 0.5m per annum for newly implemented shrub and hedgerow planting has been allowed for.

Landscape Resource

- 8.102 A key part of the assessment of effects on the landscape relates to the landscape features which make up, individually and jointly, part of the landscape character of the site.

- 8.103 The provision of additional landscape features, as is often the case with residential developments on greenfield sites, is likely to provide benefits to varying degrees. This is the case for this proposed development, notably with the addition of native scrub and woodland buffer planting, individual trees, improved grassland and SUDS wetland features.
- 8.104 Both the Thames Valley Lowland LCA within the North Wiltshire Character Assessment, and the Chelworth Rolling Clay Lowland LCA within the Cotswold Water Park Character Assessment notes the importance of hedgerows and mature trees to maintaining the landscape character, highlighting the significance of retaining these landscape features.
- 8.105 The site's location within the Great Western Community Forest also emphasizes the importance of improved tree cover, which includes trees, woodland, hedgerows and scrub planting.
- 8.106 The development proposals seek to retain the majority the site's existing landscape features, namely the existing trees and hedgerows, the public footpath, a large extent of the grassland in the smaller, northern parcel of land, and topography.
- 8.107 In addition, a significant amount of new planting of varying types is proposed along with the introduction of new features, such as SUDs wetland features and areas of native scrub and woodland buffer planting. These increase the landscape resource of the site, are in keeping with the characteristics of the area, responds to the aims of the published Landscape Character Assessments and the Great Western Community Forest Plan objectives including increased canopy cover, and biodiversity enhancements.
- 8.108 As demonstrated by the BNG assessment for the proposals, the landscape enhancements put forward for the site would deliver a biodiversity net gain of 18.49% in terms of habitat units and 17.51% for hedgerow units.
- 8.109 Table 8.1 below summarises the likely effects on the landscape features of the site.

Feature	Sensitivity	Change	Effect (Beneficial/ Adverse)
Topography	Medium	Gently sloping site likely to be slightly adjusted to create building platforms, roads and SUDs features. Majority of proposed residential development is located on the lower and more gently sloping / flatter parts of the site, limiting the changes needed to topography.	Neutral
Hedgerows	Medium	The majority of the site's hedgerows will be retained, with only some minor loss to facilitate road and footpath access, and incorporated into green corridors within the proposed layout. Improved management and supplementary planting would improve the current condition of the hedgerows.	Neutral
Trees	Medium	The existing trees are to be retained and incorporated into the proposed layout. In addition a significant amount of new tree planting is proposed, as scattered planting through the proposed open space along new streets.	Beneficial

Native Woodland Buffer	Medium	Proposed creation of areas of native woodland buffer planting to the western boundary, and the north eastern boundary of the northern parcel, which are locally characteristic within the lower lying part of the landscape associated with water features and former railway line.	Beneficial
Scrub	Low	Introduction of several new areas of mixed native scrub for biodiversity benefits.	Beneficial
Grassland	Low	Retention and enhancement of a large area of the site's existing grassland in the northern parcel. Variety of grassland types increased with the introduction of wildflower meadows and wetland meadows.	Beneficial
Public Access	High	Retention of the existing PROW running through the site, set within open space. Introduction of new footpath and cycle routes through the site. Additional pedestrian and cycle access points proposed.	Beneficial

Table 8.1: Effects on Landscape Features

Landscape Character

- 8.110 The sensitivity of a particular landscape to a particular type of development is derived through a judgement based upon a landscape's susceptibility i.e. "the ability of a defined landscape to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences" and the landscape's 'value' i.e. "the relative value that is attached to different landscape by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons".
- 8.111 The landscape value and landscape susceptibility to the type of development proposed is discussed below for both the North Wiltshire LCA 2: Thames Valley Lowland (as the most relevant published assessment to the proposed development), and the local landscape character, in order to help determine the landscape sensitivity.

Landscape Value

- 8.112 The Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact (GLVIA 3) sets out at Box 5.1 a range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes. These factors include:
- Landscape quality (condition);
 - Scenic quality;
 - Rarity;
 - Representativeness;
 - Conservation Interests;
 - Recreation Value;
 - Perceptual aspects; and
 - Associations.

Value of the LCA 2: Thames Valley Lowland

- 8.113 The key characteristics of this LCA as identified by the North Wiltshire Character Assessment, relevant to this study area, are the low, level or undulating land, patchwork of irregular small to medium sized fields of mainly pasture, continuous hedges with mature oaks and ash. There are many wetland features and also dispersed villages, and some detractors including power lines and transport infrastructure.
- 8.114 It is generally a well-maintained, quiet pastoral landscape influenced by urban fridge and in fair condition. There are recreational opportunities across the area with a good network of public rights of way
- 8.115 Overall the Thames Valley Lowland LCA is considered to be of **medium landscape value**.

Value of the Cotswold Water Park LCA 4A: Chelworth Rolling Clay Lowland

- 8.116 The key characteristics of this LCA as identified by the Cotswold Water Park Character Assessment, are the gently rolling, peaceful, rural landscape with intact hedgerows, intermittent woodlands and areas of meadows, with wetland features on the lower ground. Cricklade is the principle settlement, with other settlements dispersed throughout the area.
- 8.117 It is noted as being in generally good condition, with some poorer quality elements such as gappy and flailed hedgerows and over mature hedgerow trees. Within the area the changing pattern of land use of mixed arable and pastoral farming, equestrian uses, and the influence of urban fringe development and busier road corridors, and the resultant noise and light pollution have an impact on the overall rural strength of character.
- 8.118 Overall the Chelworth Rolling Clay Lowland LCA is considered to be of **medium landscape value**.

Value of the Local Landscape Character

- 8.119 The local landscape shares a number of the key characteristics identified by the published landscape character assessment, including being strongly characterised by the low, level or undulating landform, mix of small to medium scale mainly pastoral fields and strong network of hedgerows with mature trees.
- 8.120 The local landscape is well accessed via a network of local roads which link a number of small settlements, and a good network of public rights of way.
- 8.121 The local landscape has a calm and settled feel to it, with a degree of tranquillity. The landscape is pleasant but unremarkable, and is generally in good condition and well maintained.
- 8.122 The immediate environs of the site are also characterised by the town of Cricklade, which contains residential properties of a variety of sizes and styles, from the historic core of the village, to more modern developments. The properties on the western edge of the village are visible beyond the site's eastern boundary. Several farmsteads and smaller settlements are scattered through the area.
- 8.123 Overall, the local landscape is considered to be of **medium landscape value**.

Landscape Susceptibility

Susceptibility of LCA 2: Thames Valley Lowland

- 8.124 The existing varied land use of the area is noted within the LCA description, including the influence of urban fringe developments and busier road corridors. It is also noted as a peaceful and rural landscape with often contained views.
- 8.125 The scale of the landscape is considered to have a medium susceptibility to accommodate the type of development proposed, when sited in proximity to existing settlements, providing appropriate context for residential development. The influence of built form is noted within the LCA.
- 8.126 There is the potential for existing landscape elements to be retained and further enhanced.
- 8.127 Overall the Chelworth Rolling Clay Lowland LCA is considered to be of medium susceptibility to the type and scale of development proposed.

Susceptibility of the LCA 4A: Chelworth Rolling Clay Lowland

- 8.128 The existing varied land use of the area is noted within the LCA description, including the influence of urban fringe developments and busier road corridors. It is also noted as a peaceful and rural landscape with often contained views.
- 8.129 The scale of the landscape is considered to have a medium susceptibility to accommodate the type of development proposed, when sited in proximity to existing settlements, providing appropriate context for residential development. The influence of built form is noted within the LCA.
- 8.130 There is the potential for existing landscape elements to be retained and further enhanced.
- 8.131 Overall the Chelworth Rolling Clay Lowland LCA is considered to be of **medium susceptibility** to the type and scale of development proposed.

Susceptibility of the Local Landscape Character

- 8.132 The local landscape is of a medium scale with an existing presence of built form and small settlements. The strong hedgerow network with hedgerow trees provides the opportunity to site a development of an appropriate scale within a strong landscape framework whilst retaining and potentially reinforcing and enhancing the key landscape features.
- 8.133 Overall the local landscape character is considered to be of **medium susceptibility** to the type of development proposed.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 8.134 Overall, from review of the landscape value and susceptibility of the Thames Valley Lowland LCA, the Chelworth Rolling Clay Lowland LCA, and the local landscape character, all are considered to be of **medium landscape sensitivity** to the type of development proposed.

Landscape Effects

LCA 2: Thames Valley Lowland

- 8.135 In the scale and context of the LCA, the proposed development would form an extension to the town of Cricklade. The proposed development is located just beyond the existing western edge of the town, with existing residential properties located to the east of the site.

- 8.136 The proposed development would extend the built edge of Cricklade up to the western site boundary. The consented Stones Farm development to the north east of the site, would extend the presence of residential development in close proximity to the site.
- 8.137 The site forms a very small part of the wider LCA area. The main effect will be the change of part of the site (c.7.9ha of the approximately 20.7ha site area) from grassland to residential development. The site's key characteristics, the hedgerows and hedgerow trees, are to be retained. These existing key landscape features are to be reinforced and enhanced with an increased variety of grasslands, additional scattered tree planting, and the introduction of other landscape features, such as wetland areas, native woodland buffer planting and scrub, which are characteristic of the wider landscape.
- 8.138 The site is largely visually contained from the wider LCA by the surrounding existing built form, undulations in landform and vegetation. Its visibility is largely limited to its immediate context and from some middle-distance views to the north east of the site. It is considered the proposed development would be largely confined to the local context of the site and not have a wider effect on the landscape character.
- 8.139 Overall, the proposed development is considered to bring about negligible magnitude to the local landscape characteristics of the LCA which are not uncharacteristic within the surrounding landscape. Therefore, it is considered there will be a **negligible magnitude of change** on this LCA.
- 8.140 With a medium landscape sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change, the proposed development is considered to bring about a **permanent negligible adverse effect (not significant)** on the Thames Valley Lowland at completion of the development, which is considered to remain **negligible (permanent adverse, not significant)** by year 15 as the proposed planting matures.

LCA 4A: Chelworth Rolling Clay Lowland

- 8.141 The proposed development would increase the residential presence of Cricklade within the context of LCA 4A. As noted previously, c.7.9ha of the c20.7ha site is proposed for residential development, which forms a small part of the LCA, in an area already influenced by built form and the rural character reduced by the busier road corridors around Cricklade.
- 8.142 As with LCA 2: Thames Valley Lowland, views within LCA 4A are often contained by hedgerows and woodland belts, and the low lying topography. This is applicable to the site, resulting in a visually contained site which ensures the proposed residential development would not be widely visible from the wider landscape, limiting the impact on landscape character.
- 8.143 The key characteristics of the site, namely the hedgerows, hedgerow trees and the existing PRoW, are to be retained and significantly reinforced and enhanced with the proposed additional tree, woodland and grassland creation, plus the additional proposed wetland features.
- 8.144 It is noted the proposed development would locally reduce the degree of tranquillity and rural character of the site and immediate context, how the existing traffic along the B4040 and the residential edge of Cricklade already impacts the strength of rural character in the vicinity of the site.
- 8.145 The view to St Sampsons Church Spire is noted within the LCA4A character description. The importance of this is acknowledged within the proposed masterplan with a view corridor from part of CRIC30 proposed.
- 8.146 The proposed development would bring about a partial change to LCA4A which is not uncharacteristic within the surrounding landscape, and all of the key characteristics of the character area would prevail. Therefore, it is considered there will be a medium magnitude of change on the local landscape character.

- 8.147 With a medium landscape sensitivity and medium magnitude of change, the proposed development is considered to bring about a permanent moderate adverse effect (not significant) at year 1, reducing to permanent slight adverse (not significant) by year 15 as the proposed planting and landscape setting matures.

Local Landscape Character

- 8.148 The proposed development covers an area of c.20.7ha, and c. 7.9ha (c.40%) of this is proposed for built development. The remaining c.60% of the site is proposed primarily for informal recreation, landscape and biodiversity enhancements.
- 8.149 A number of the key landscape characteristics of the site and surrounding area, namely the strong hedgerow network and hedgerow trees, along with wetland features have been acknowledged, and the proposals have sought to both protect and reinforce these key characteristics.
- 8.150 The number of dwellings proposed results in a development that is considered of medium scale within the local context. To reduce the impact of the scale of the development, the areas of built form within the site have been appropriately sited so that they are located away from the western part of the site and its rural edge, closer to the existing built form of Cricklade. A landscape buffer of c.50-80m in width is proposed along the site's south western boundary, the highest part of the site, and is to be planted with new areas of woodland, which will further reduce the visibility of the development, and therefore the visual impact on the local landscape character as this planting matures.
- 8.151 The development in terms of its architectural style will be designed to respond to the character of the local context.
- 8.152 In addition to the built form, the development would introduce a degree of noise and movement into the site from the new residents, visitors and users of the open space and new recreational routes, reducing the current level of tranquillity within the site and immediate context. The proposed landscape buffers and associated planting around the periphery of the site will reduce this impact.
- 8.153 In terms of lighting effects, the residential development will be subject to a lighting scheme that is consistent with lighting schemes for this type and scale of development. Light sources already exist in areas close to the site, specifically residential lighting, with which the proposed development will be consistent. The proposed development is not considered to generate significant lighting effects on landscape character.
- 8.154 As noted by the North Wiltshire published LCA, 'small scale, sensitively designed development, appropriately associated with existing built form' could be accommodated without adverse landscape impacts. Whilst the proposed residential development is considered to be of medium scale, due to the adjacent residential land uses, and the siting of the development within a strong landscape framework on the lower parts of the site, the development will be visually well contained, limiting its influence on the character of the wider landscape. The local landscape also contains a variety of built form to the west of the site including farms, hotel and golf club, reducing the rural characteristics of the landscape.
- 8.155 The proposed development would bring about a notable change to the character of the site itself, but in the context of the local landscape, it is considered a partial alteration which is not uncharacteristic within the surrounding landscape.
- 8.156 It is considered all of the key characteristics of the local landscape will broadly remain evident. Therefore, it is considered there will be a **medium magnitude of change** on the local landscape character.

- 8.157 With a medium landscape sensitivity and medium magnitude of change, the proposed development is considered to bring about a **permanent moderate adverse effect (not significant)** at year 1, reducing to **permanent slight adverse (not significant)** by year 15 as the proposed planting and landscape setting matures.

Visual Effects

- 8.158 A visual survey was undertaken in February 2026, when there was limited leaf cover. Photographs were taken on a bright sunny day. A number of representative viewpoints were selected from publicly accessible locations, as shown on the Viewpoint Location Plan within Appendix 8.1. These were in adherence to best practice using GLVIA3. The survey is considered to represent a robust 'worst case' scenario in terms of vegetation cover.
- 8.159 The site is located within a low, flat to gently undulating landscape, with a strong network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees creating varying degrees of visual enclosure within the local landscape. Views are generally short to middle distance, with longer distance views limited by the low-lying topography and vegetation cover.
- 8.160 The presence of Cricklade, along with other urbanising influences and built form such as farmsteads, Cricklade House Hotel and golf course, and the local road network, results in a local landscape with varying degrees of visual influence from existing built form and development.
- 8.161 The site itself is partially visually enclosed by the adjacent built form of Cricklade, generally limiting views out to the east. More open views are afforded to the west and north from the site but are often filtered by intervening vegetation and topography.
- 8.162 The visibility of the site from the surrounding area varies, largely depending on the elevation and level of surrounding vegetation and topography. Typically, the views to the site from the east are limited due to the built form on the edge of Cricklade. Views from the west and north towards the site vary due to the elevation and degree of intervening landform and vegetation.
- 8.163 Consequently, the views are typically limited to short and occasional middle-distance views, either located within or immediately adjacent to the site, or from more open or elevated vantage points in the middle distance generally to the north of the site.
- 8.164 Viewpoints 1-6 and 9 demonstrate the nature of the views from short range viewpoints, located along Malmesbury Road, Stones Lane and from public footpath CRIC30 within or in close proximity to the site.
- 8.165 Viewpoints 7, 8, 10 and 11 demonstrate medium range views from several locations along roads and footpaths to the north and east of the site. Viewpoints further west of the site were assessed and tested but not included as representative viewpoints of the site due to the intervening land form and vegetation.
- 8.166 Due to the surrounding built form, undulating landform and intervening vegetation, the site was not considered to be readily discernible from longer distance viewpoints.
- 8.167 In accordance with the LVIA methodology, effects of moderate adverse or lower are considered to not be significant.
- 8.168 A detailed assessment has been undertaken for each of the representative viewpoints, which are presented within Appendix 8.4: Viewpoint Assessment and summarised in Table 8.2.

- 8.169 Visual impacts would occur during the construction period, at completion of the development and as the proposed planting matures.
- 8.170 Visual impacts arising from the temporary construction period include the initial site clearance and vehicle, plant and building activities associated with the construction of the dwellings and associated infrastructure. At completion the visual effects would be the presence of built form on former pastoral fields, along with the new planting. Post completion the visual effects would change as the proposed planting matures.
- 8.171 It is anticipated that the proposed trees would be planted as heavy to extra heavy standards, and the hedgerows, scrub and native buffer as a mix of whips, feathered and standard stock, with a growth rate of c. 0.3-0.5m per year, assuming appropriate management and maintenance.

Views from the Public Right of Way Network

- 8.172 There are a range of views afforded of the proposed development from the local public right of way network, which have a high sensitivity.
- 8.173 These include footpaths within close proximity to the site, notably CRIC30 which passes through the site (Viewpoint 2), and through fields adjacent to it (Viewpoint 3). From footpath CRIC30 views of the development will be afforded. However, the proposed development is set away from the PROW, which, in combination with the retention of the existing hedgerows, extensive green infrastructure proposals, including new scrub and scattered tree planting, as well as wetland features, will soften views and limit impacts of the proposed development. The view to St. Sampsons Church Spire has also been considered, with a view corridor designed into the layout in order to retain this notable local view.
- 8.174 The National Cycle Route 45 is also within close proximity and affords views of the site. However, because the views are into the northern parcel of the site, views of built form are likely to be limited as this parcel is not proposed for development but for the creation of the SANG.
- 8.175 From footpaths to the north and east of the site such as CRIC34 and CRIC35, as well as the Thames Path (Viewpoint 10) medium range views of the proposed development are not typically available due to the intervening vegetation and the topography.

Views from the Local Highway Network

- 8.176 There are a range of views afforded of the proposed development from the local highway network, largely those in close proximity, due to the nature of the site being bound by Stones Lane and Malmesbury Road/B4040. From Stones Lane views are limited to field openings and otherwise restricted by the hedgerow boundary. Views from Malmesbury Road/B4040 offer short-mid distance views into the site which will be filtered to some extent by the hedgerow boundary and the topography.
- 8.177 Viewpoint 8 from Stones Lane is anticipated to offer glimpsed views of built form on the site in the middle distance, limited by intervening proposed vegetation at the north of the site, the set back nature of the development and the topography. Viewpoint 1 is anticipated to offer views of proposed built form as it is a short-range view into the centre of the developed part of the site. However, this is anticipated to be filtered to some extent by proposed scattered tree planting.
- 8.178 Viewpoint 4 from the B4040 is anticipated to afford glimpsed mid-distance views of proposed built form, set against existing built form at the edge of Cricklade, and viewed in conjunction with intervening existing and proposed vegetation. Viewpoint 5 affords a short-range view into the site, with anticipated glimpsed views of built form beyond intervening proposed vegetation including scattered

tree planting surrounding SUDS features and allotments in the south eastern corner of the site. Viewpoint 6 affords glimpsed middle-distance views of the site which are likely to be filtered by proposed tree planting and viewed in conjunction with existing built form at Common Hill Farm.

Views from the Settlement Edge / Adjacent Neighbours

- 8.179 There will be views of the proposed development from the property adjacent to the site at Common Hill Farm, and also from those at the western edge of Cricklade, as well as Cricklade Leisure Centre.
- 8.180 From the property at Common Hill Farm there will be short distance views of the proposed development, although the built form will be set back from the western boundary, with native woodland buffer planting, meaning the impacts will be reduced, especially as the proposed planting matures.
- 8.181 For those properties located at the western edge of Cricklade, views of the proposed development are anticipated to be limited due to intervening existing vegetation, fencing and the topography. The proposed development sitting between these properties and the site would further limit these.
- 8.182 Views from Cricklade Leisure Centre are likely to be limited due to intervening vegetation, distance and the topography.

Summary of Visual Effects

- 8.183 Table 8.2 below summaries the viewpoint assessment contained within Appendix 8.4.

Viewpoint	Distance from Site	Direction from Site	Receptor	Value of View	Susceptibility of Receptor	Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Change	Visual Impact – Year 1	Residual Impact - Year 15
1	3m	Southwest	Road users and pedestrians	Low-medium	Medium	Medium	High	Major adverse (permanent, significant)	Moderate adverse (permanent, not significant)
2	0m	Southeast	Footpath users	Medium	High	High	High	Major adverse (permanent, significant)	Major adverse (permanent, significant)
3	125m	Southeast	Footpath users	Medium	High	High	Low	Moderate adverse (permanent, not significant)	Slight adverse (permanent, not significant)
4	53m	Northeast	Road users	Low	Low	Low	Low	Slight adverse (permanent, not significant)	Negligible adverse (permanent, not significant)
5	16m	Northwest	Road users	Low	Low	Low	High	Moderate adverse (permanent, not significant)	Moderate adverse (permanent, not significant)
6	80m	West	Road users and pedestrians	Low	Medium	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse (permanent, not significant)	Negligible adverse (permanent, not significant)
7	335m	West	Footpath & sports ground users	Low	Medium	Medium	Negligible	Negligible / neutral (permanent, not significant)	Negligible / neutral (permanent, not significant)
8	380m	South	Road users and pedestrians	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low	Slight adverse (permanent, not significant)	Negligible adverse (permanent, not significant)
9	2m	South	Foot/cycle path users	Medium	High	High	Low - negligible	Slight adverse (permanent, not significant)	Slight adverse (permanent, not significant)
10	450m	South	Footpath users	Medium	High	High	No change	None (permanent, not significant)	None (permanent, not significant)

Table 8.2: Effects on Landscape Features

- 8.184 The visual effects of the proposed development vary significantly depending on proximity to the development and the degree of screening afforded by existing landform and vegetation.
- 8.185 The greater visual effects will be from those areas in close proximity, primarily users of the local rights of way network running through the site and in the adjacent fields (Viewpoints 2 and 3). From these locations the effects range from **major adverse (permanent, significant)** for the section of footpath running through the site, to **moderate adverse (permanent, not significant)** as the footpath moves away from the site. These conclusions reflect the high sensitivity of recreational receptors and the close range nature of the viewpoints. These effects will reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.
- 8.186 Close range viewpoints from Stones Lane and Malmesbury Road/B4040 (Viewpoints 1 and 5), will experience **major adverse (permanent, significant)** effects initially, reducing to **moderate adverse (permanent, not significant)** by year 15.
- 8.187 From beyond the immediate vicinity of the site, the visual effects reduce to **slight adverse (permanent, not significant)** to **negligible (permanent, not significant)** and **neutral** as the development becomes an increasingly smaller scale feature, glimpsed through intervening vegetation. Views are often partly or fully restricted by a combination of landform and vegetation.
- 8.188 As the proposed planting matures after 15 years, the development will become increasingly well assimilated into the landscape.

Summary and Conclusion

- 8.189 This landscape and visual impact assessment has been undertaken to assess the impact of residential development on a site located on the western edge of Cricklade in Wiltshire.
- 8.190 The site itself and immediate environment are not covered by any relevant statutory or non-statutory landscape designations.
- 8.191 The site falls within the Cotswold Water Park Boundary, and within the Great Western Forest Community Area.
- 8.192 The site falls within the Thames Valley Lowland LCA as assessed by the North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment. This describes the area as a low, level or undulating landscape with a patchwork of small irregular to medium-sized fields of mainly pasture, with continuous hedges. There are wetland features, dispersed villages and farmsteads, and generally contained views. It notes that the area could potentially accommodate small scale, sensitively designed development, appropriately associated with existing built form' without adverse landscape impacts.
- 8.193 At a more detailed level the site falls within the Chelworth Rolling Clay Lowland LCA as assessed by the Cotswold Lakes Landscape Character Assessment. This smaller scale assessment describes the area as a gently rolling, peaceful, rural landscape with intact hedgerows, intermittent woodlands and areas of meadows, with wetland features on the lower ground. It is noted as being in generally good condition, with some poorer quality elements such as gappy and flailed hedgerows and over mature hedgerow trees. The varying land use pattern of mixed arable and pastoral farming, equestrian uses, and the influence of urban fringe development and busier road corridors, and associated noise and light pollution reduce the rural strength of character.
- 8.194 At a local landscape character level, the landscape shares a number of the key characteristics identified by the published landscape character assessments. These include the low lying, undulating ground, continuous hedges, varying sized pastoral fields, and generally contained views as well as the

numerous wetland features, including watercourses lined with willows, varying field sizes and shapes and a general absence of woodland.

- 8.195 The environs surrounding the site are also characterised by the settlement of Cricklade, which contains residential properties of a variety of sizes and styles, from the historic core of the town to more modern developments. Several farms are scattered through the surrounding area.
- 8.196 The site itself covers an area of c. 20.7ha. It is comprised of four medium-sized pastoral fields three of which are located between Stones Lane to the north and the B4040 Common Hill / Malmesbury Road to the south, on the western edge of the town of Cricklade in North Wiltshire. One further field is located between Stones Lane and the former Swindon to Cirencester railway line (now Sustrans Cycle Route 45). Hedgerows define the fields within the site.
- 8.197 The site slopes gently from south west down to the north east, with the highest part of the site being located in the south western corner of the site, at around 108m AOD. The lowest part of the site is located along the site's eastern boundary at around 85m AOD. Public footpath CRIC30 crosses the northern part of the larger parcel of the site. This extends through adjacent fields, along with several other footpaths which run through the surrounding area. There is vehicular access into the site via gated field openings from Malmesbury Road/ the B4040 and Stones Lane.
- 8.198 The proposed development comprises residential development of up to 315 dwellings with new site access, green infrastructure and SUDS proposals, including SANG.
- 8.199 There has been a strong landscape led approach to the scheme, with green infrastructure proposals occupying c. 60% of the site. The proposals include formal play provision, allotments, orchard, footpaths, amenity space and semi-natural green space and sustainable drainage features designed to hold permanent water. These proposals meet and exceed the requirements of the Wiltshire Open Space Standards, and seek to follow the aspirations of the Wiltshire Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy.
- 8.200 In terms of impact on landscape resource, the proposals would result in the loss of existing modified grassland across the site. This loss will be mitigated by the creation and enhancement of a variety of grassland types and new planting as part of the development.
- 8.201 In addition to the retention of existing hedgerows, the development proposes substantial areas of new tree, scrub, and native buffer planting, resulting in a BNG score of 18.49% for habitat units and 17.51% for hedgerow units. New wetland features are also proposed. The existing public footpath which crosses the site is to be retained and set within open space. Overall, as set out within Table 8.1, there are beneficial effects on the landscape resource across the site.
- 8.202 In line with the aims of the Great Western Community Forest, the site will improve canopy cover with the proposed planting of over 350 new trees, over 0.8ha of new woodland and over 0.8ha of scrub. In addition, there will be both biodiversity and recreation enhancements. In line with the aspirations of the Cotswold Water Park Vision and Implementation Plan and Wiltshire Core Policy 54, the proposals will increase public access of the countryside with the creation of an area of SANG, along with open spaces across the development, offering over 3km of new recreational footpath routes.
- 8.203 In terms of effects on the Thames Valley Lowland LCA, the proposed development is considered to bring about very little alteration to the landscape characteristics of this LCA which are not uncharacteristic within the surrounding landscape. The proposed development is considered to bring about a permanent **negligible adverse effect (not significant)** on the Thames Valley Lowland at completion of the development, which is considered to remain negligible by year 15 as the proposed planting matures.

- 8.204 The proposed development is considered to bring about a partial change to LCA4A: Chelworth Rolling Clay Lowland with the introduction of a modest residential extension to Cricklade in an area already influenced by the existing settlement and road network. The site is well contained by hedgerows and woodland, limiting wider landscape and visual effects. The existing landscape features would be retained and enhanced. Although there would be a local reduction in rural character and tranquillity the key characteristics of LCA4A would remain intact. The proposed development is considered to bring about a moderate adverse effect (permanent, not significant) on the local landscape character at completion of the development, which is considered to reduce to slight adverse (permanent, not significant) by year 15 as the proposed planting matures.
- 8.205 At a local landscape character level, a number of the key landscape characteristics of the site and surrounding area, namely the strong hedgerow network and wetland features have been acknowledged, and the proposals have sought to both protect and reinforce these key characteristics.
- 8.206 The areas of built form within the site have been appropriately sited so that they are not located within the south western part of the site, which is both the highest and most visible part of the site and adjacent to the rural edge of Cricklade. A significant landscape buffer of 50-80m, which includes new woodland planting is provided along the site's south western boundary, the highest part of the site. This buffer increases to over 100m in the north western corner. The development is expected to architecturally respond to the local character and is of an appropriate scale.
- 8.207 As noted by the North Wiltshire LCA, 'small scale, sensitively designed development, appropriately associated with existing built form' could be accommodated without adverse landscape impacts. Whilst the proposed residential development is considered to be of medium scale, due to the adjacent residential settlements, and the siting of the development within a strong landscape framework on the lower parts of the site, the development would be visually well contained, limiting its influence on the character of the wider landscape. The local landscape also contains a variety of built form to the west of the site including farms, hotel and golf club, reducing the rural characteristics of the landscape.
- 8.208 The proposed development would bring about a notable change to the character of the site itself, but in the context of the local landscape, it is considered a partial alteration which is not uncharacteristic within the surrounding landscape.
- 8.209 It is considered all the key characteristics of the local landscape would broadly remain. The proposed development is considered to bring about a **moderate adverse effect (permanent, not significant)** on the local landscape character at completion of the development, which is considered to reduce to **slight adverse (permanent, not significant)** by year 15 as the proposed planting matures.
- 8.210 The visibility of the site from the surrounding area varies, largely depending on the elevation and level of surrounding vegetation and built form. Typically, the views to the site from the east are limited due to the built form at the edge of Cricklade. Views from the west and north towards the site vary due to the elevation and degree of intervening landform and vegetation.
- 8.211 Consequently, the views are typically limited to short and occasional middle-distance views, either located within or immediately adjacent to the site, or from more elevated vantage points in the middle distance generally to the north of the site.
- 8.212 The visual effects of the proposed development vary significantly depending on proximity to the development and the degree of screening afforded by existing landform and vegetation.
- 8.213 The greater visual effects will be from those areas in close proximity, primarily users of the local rights of way network running through the site and in the adjacent fields (Viewpoints 2 and 3). From these locations the effects range from **major adverse (permanent, significant)** for the section of footpath running through the site, to **moderate adverse (permanent, not significant)** as the footpath moves

away from the site. This reflects the higher sensitivity of the footpath users and the close range nature of the viewpoints. These effects will reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.

- 8.214 Close range viewpoints from Stones Lane and Malmesbury Road/B4040 (Viewpoints 1 and 5), will experience **major adverse (permanent, significant)** effects initially, reducing to **moderate adverse (permanent, not significant)** by year 15.
- 8.215 From beyond the immediate vicinity of the site, the visual effects reduce to **slight adverse (permanent, not significant)** to **negligible adverse (permanent, not significant)** / **neutral** as the development becomes an increasingly smaller scale feature glimpsed through intervening vegetation. Views are often partly or fully restricted by a combination of landform and vegetation.
- 8.216 As the proposed planting matures, the development will become increasingly well assimilated into the landscape.
- 8.217 Overall, it is considered that the site is capable of accommodating the proposed residential development with limited impacts on the landscape resource, character and visual amenity of the site and surrounding area.

9. CUMULATIVE IMPACT

Approach

- 9.1 Cumulative effects come in two forms. The first relate to the impacts of the proposed development in conjunction with other identified developments within the study area. These developments should be existing, consented or reasonably foreseeable in terms of delivery and should be located within a realistic geographical scope where environmental effects could combine to create a more significant effect on a particular sensitive receptor. These are hereafter referred to as cumulative effects.
- 9.2 The second type of cumulative effect is that of the combination of the various types of effects from the proposed development. These are hereafter referred to as synergistic effects. It is the former cumulative effects that are considered here.
- 9.3 As set out in Table 2.2 above, the following development schemes have been identified within the zone of influence and are to be assessed alongside the Proposed Development in the cumulative assessment:
- Land at Stones Farm (Ref: PL/2022/02452) – consented residential development of 140 dwellings, a habitat support area and associated landscaping and works, with access via a natural extension of Jenners Yard which forms a priority junction arrangement off West Mill Lane.
 - Land off Common Hill, Cricklade (Ref: PL/2021/10404) – proposed residential development for up to 49 dwellings, associated infrastructure and public open space.
 - Land North-West of the B4553, Cricklade (Ref: PL/2025/07863) – the erection of 43 dwellings, including associated access, parking, open space, landscaping, drainage and other associated works.
 - Land south of The Forty and North of Chelworth Road, Cricklade, Wiltshire (PL/2023/10331) – up to 49 dwellings and associated works and provision of a cemetery together with access and associated works.

Transport

- 9.4 Due to the proximity of the identified developments and considering the various stages of the relevant applications within the process, it is prudent to consider the cumulative impact the Proposed Development may have in conjunction with the above sites.

Infrastructure Changes

- 9.5 With respect of changes to the local highway infrastructure, the key change pertinent to the Proposed Development includes the provision of a new footway along the northern side of Common Hill (B4040). As part of the application on the adjacent site (REF: PL/2021/10404) the footway to the north of the B4040 carriageway is to be extended west, providing connections into the adjacent site alongside their vehicular access. This provides a connection which the Proposed Development can connect into ensuring that pedestrian to/from the Site have continuous access to appropriate footway provision.

Construction Period

- 9.6 As with the Proposed Development, construction activities for the Cumulative Development will be associated with the building of residential dwellings plus supporting engineering works.

- 9.7 Construction of the Cumulative Development will give rise to vehicular traffic, including HGVs associated with deliveries, as well as construction workers.
- 9.8 The status of the various cumulative developments varies, with the sites at varying stages in their planning process, from outline submission, full submission to Reserved Matters submission. The resulting expectation is that the developments will be constructed in different timeframes, which will inevitably be relatively short-lived and be temporary in nature. Therefore, whilst each application/development will result in their own respective construction impact, the cumulative effects are expected to be low given the unlikelihood of all being constructed concurrently, together with likely phasing of construction work throughout the respective programs. associated with construction works accessing the Site, and deliveries of materials and products that will be transported by HGVs. In addition, the Construction Phase will require on-site operation of construction equipment and plant.
- 9.9 The construction traffic movements generated during the Construction Phase of the respective cumulative developments is also considered to be less than the traffic subsequently generated by the completed developments. Therefore, the significance of effects is Negligible – Minor Adverse (not significant), with the effects expected to be short term and temporary.

Operational Period

- 9.10 The operation of the Cumulative Development refers to when the Proposed Development alongside the other identified cumulative assessment development schemes are completed and all dwellings and buildings are occupied, representing the greatest effect on the surrounding highway network.

Vehicle Movements

- 9.11 The AADT traffic data for the Forecast Year, with and without Cumulative Development, across the study area is set out in Table 9.1 below.

Link	2031 Forecast	Cumulative Development	2031 Forecast + Cumulative Development	Percentage Impact
A Malmesbury Road	3,339	582	3,921	17%
B Common Hill	3,339	1,530	4,869	46%
C B4040 East	5,811	2,101	7,912	36%
D High Street South	10,874	1,937	12,811	18%
E High street North	3,744	267	4,010	7%
F Calcutt Street	8,517	1,661	10,178	20%
G A419 N	23,505	853	24,359	4%
H A419 S	22,990	1,139	24,129	5%
I: PRoW	/	/	/	/

Table 9.1: Forecast Traffic Flows

- 9.12 At this stage, based on the AADT flow highway impact assessment of the Proposed Development, it is considered that these are unlikely to result in significant cumulative effects.
- 9.13 As can be seen from Table 9.1 above, of the links assessed, some experience an impact of 10% or less, whilst Links A (Malmesbury Road), B (Common Hill), C (B4040), D (High Street South) and F (Calcutt Street) experience a greater than 10% increase.
- 9.14 As with the Proposed Development in isolation, the proposed Site layout, as set out within the Framework plans, means that the PRoW which crosses part of the Site (Link I) will not observe any increase in traffic movements.
- 9.15 Due to all the Cumulative Development comprising residential development, there will be no regular HGV traffic associated with the Operational Phase and thus any increase in HGV flows on the surrounding network will be none – negligible.
- 9.16 Of the links identified above, utilising the sensitivity Matrix set out in Table 6.3 above, it is determined that the High Street (Links D&E) together with Link F (Calcutt Street) comprise sensitive locations, therefore applying Rule 2 of IEMA's Guidelines, these locations should be assessed in greater detail should the increase in vehicular traffic exceed 10%. The remainder of the links are not considered sensitive, and therefore Rule 1 of IEMA's guidelines should be applied, which indicates these should be assessed where there is a greater than 30% change in traffic volume.
- 9.17 On the basis of the above it is considered Links B (Common Hill), C (B4040 East), D (High Street South) and F (Calcutt Street) require further assessment, and the remaining Links will experience Negligible effect in the cumulative scenario as a result of the Cumulative Development.
- 9.18 Therefore the impacts of the Cumulative Development on Links B, C, D & F are assessed further below.

Severance

- 9.19 Links B & C experience a 46% and 36% increase in traffic respectively, which equates to a medium magnitude of impact for Severance, according to Table 6.1. Links B & C are considered a low level receptor and therefore the resulting significance of effect on Severance is Minor Adverse (not significant).
- 9.20 Links D & F experience an 18 & 20% increases in traffic respectively, but are considered medium-high sensitive receptors. Therefore, applying a low magnitude of impact, against a medium-high sensitivity receptor equates to a potentially Moderate-Minor adverse effect. Severance is as a result of a complex series of factors, but in this instance ultimately occurs from the difficulty of crossing a more heavily trafficked road. However, Links D & F is subject to a 20mph speed limit, has active frontage and a series of crossing points along its length, including two Zebra crossings and an uncontrolled crossing and pedestrian refuse along Link D and a Zebra crossing Link F. Therefore it is considered permeability across Links D & F will be maintained and significant severance through the increase in traffic will be minimised. On this basis, applying professional judgement the effect of the Cumulative Development is considered Minor Adverse (not significant).

Non-Motorised Delay (NMU) Delay

- 9.21 Links B experiences a 46% increase in traffic, however this link is equipped with footway provision along the northern side, and has uncontrolled crossing facilities provided as part of the junction to the east ensuring pedestrian access will remain unchanged. Public Transport provision will not be affected by the implementation of Cumulative Development, with the existing provision retained, promoted, and unimpeded by the proposals. On this basis it is not expected there will be any perceptible change to

NMU journey time. Therefore, applying a negligible magnitude of impact to a low sensitivity receptor equates to a Negligible effect (not significant).

- 9.22 Link C experiences a 36% increase in traffic, however regarding NMU Delay, it is noted this is a highway link with no footway or frontage development, and pedestrian desire lines utilise an alternative route. The exception is the access to/from the bus stops which are located along the link. On this basis the receptor is considered low/negligible, and as such equates to a Negligible effect (not significant).
- 9.23 Links D & F experience increases in traffic of 18% & 20%, but have accompanying footways and priority crossing facilities including multiple Zebra crossings. Therefore, the delay experienced to journey times as a result of the increase in traffic associated with the Cumulative Development is anticipated to be less than 5 minutes, and therefore result in a minor magnitude of impact. Applied to a medium-high sensitive receptor this equates to a potentially Moderate-Minor Adverse effect, however the presence of priority crossing facilities enabling pedestrians right of way across the carriageway at the crossing facility will mitigate any delay experienced and therefore the resulting effect is considered to be Minor Adverse (not significant).

Non-Motorised Delay (NMU) Amenity

- 9.24 With respect of Link B, the addition of a modest amount of additional Cumulative Development traffic will not change the conclusions found earlier in respect of the above site. The provision of a new footway along the Proposed Development and adjacent Site's frontage will change the streetscape and character of the route. This will therefore result in a negligible - low magnitude of impact in respect of non-motorised amenity. Thus, applying the significance of effect matrix, the effect would be Negligible - Minor Beneficial (not significant).
- 9.25 As with the assessment of NMU Delay along Link C, NMU Amenity will experience a similarly Negligible effect (not significant) owing to the absence of pedestrian infrastructure along this link.
- 9.26 Links D & F will experience a more modest increase in traffic, although there is already an existing appropriate level of footway provision. Therefore, it is considered the impacts of the Cumulative Development will not result in a material change in NMU amenity, and as such there will be a negligible magnitude of impact, which applying the significance of effect matrix, results in a Negligible effect (not significant) as a result of the Operational Phase.

Fear and Intimidation

- 9.27 Links B & F, in relation to low-medium & medium-high sensitive receptors respectively, currently experience a small amount of Fear and Intimidation as determined through the IEMA Guidelines, and following the implementation of the Proposed Development will continue to experience a small amount of Fear and Intimidation. Therefore, there will be no step change in Fear and Intimidation experienced, and as such the magnitude of impact is negligible. Applying the significance matrix the effect of the Cumulative Development on both Links B & F is Negligible (not significant) during the Operational Phase.

Driver Delay

- 9.28 The accompanying Transport Assessment also assessed Driver Delay for a cumulative scenario sensitivity test which included other development schemes within the locality of the Proposed Development. It is noted that the analysis contained within the Transport Assessment did not consider the Sites 'Land North West of the B4553' and 'Land South of The Forty' because they did not meet the policy tests in planning terms to require inclusion within the Transport Assessment, however they are modest in size and traffic associated with them is equally modest, therefore the conclusions drawn

from this cumulative assessment scenario contained within the Transport Assessment is considered appropriate for analysis here.

- 9.29 On Link B, according to the capacity modelling undertaken in the Transport Assessment (Tables 7.3 & 7.4 of the TA), the Cumulative Development will result in an increase in delay of less than 1 second per vehicle. This is considered to reflect no material change in journey time, and therefore equates to a negligible magnitude of impact. On this basis the resulting effect of the Cumulative Development is Negligible (not significant) during the Operational Phase.
- 9.30 On Link C the capacity modelling undertaken in the Transport Assessment (Tables 7.5 & 7.6, demonstrates potential delay during peak times of c. 23 seconds. This reflects a small change in journey time of less than 5 minutes and so constitutes a low magnitude of impact. Therefore the resulting effect of the Cumulative Development is considered Minor Adverse (not significant).
- 9.31 Links D & F were also subject to capacity modelling within the Transport Assessment (Tables 7.7 & 7.8). This capacity modelling identified delays of less than 10 seconds on Link D, and less than 6 seconds on Arm D. A change in journey time of less than 10 seconds is considered to reflect no material change in journey time, and therefore equates to a negligible magnitude of impact. Applying the significance of effect matrix the resulting effect of the Cumulative Development is therefore Negligible (not significant) during the Operational Phase.

Road Safety

- 9.32 It is already established that there are no existing highway safety issues within the study area, nor any part of the highway network that is likely to experience a change to the personal injury collision rate during operation. The percentage change in AADT flows resulting from the Cumulative Development would result in a negligible magnitude of impact on the personal injury collision rate. Therefore, it is concluded that the effect on Road Safety, taking account of all sensitive receptors throughout the Study Area, would be Negligible (not significant) during the Operational Phase.

Landscape

- 9.33 Chapter 7 of GLVIA3 define cumulative landscape and visual effects as those that
 ‘result from additional changes to the landscape or visual amenity caused by the proposed development in conjunction with other developments (associated with or separate to it), or actions that occurred in the past, present or are likely to occur in the foreseeable future.’
- 9.34 This has been further refined by Scottish Natural Heritage (now NatureScot), with further definitions within the 2021 guidance (formerly 2012) ‘Assessing the Cumulative Landscape and Visual Impact of Onshore Wind Energy Developments,’ as;
- ‘Cumulative impacts are the combined effect of a set of developments’
 - ‘Cumulative landscape impacts can change either the physical fabric or character of the landscape, or any special values attached to it’
 - ‘Cumulative impacts on visual amenity can be caused by ‘combined visibility’ and/or ‘sequential impacts’ (NatureScot 2021).
- 9.35 Table 9.2 provides a list of the developments included in the cumulative sites’ assessment.

Site Ref.	Application No.	Distance and Direction	Proposal	Scoped-in / Scoped-out	Justification
1.	PL/2022/02452	10m at closest point (between areas of SANG / Habitat land). To the north east.	140 residential units	Scoped in	Due to close proximity to site.
2.	PL/2021/10404	Site boundaries abut. To the east.	49 residential units	Scoped in	Due to immediate proximity to site.
3.	PL/2023/10331	600m to the south east	49 residential units	Scoped out	Effects not anticipated due to distance from site and intervening landform and vegetation restricting intervisibility between the sites.
4.	PL/2025/07863	850m to the south east	40 residential units	Scoped out	Effects not anticipated due to distance from site and intervening landform and vegetation restricting intervisibility between the sites.

Table 9.2: Cumulative Sites

Likely Residual Cumulative Effects and their Significance

- 9.36 Cumulative Sites 1 and 2 lie in immediate proximity to the site, to the east. Both of these developments sit adjacent to the north western edge of Cricklade and will form small residential additions to the town.
- 9.37 Cumulative Sites 3 and 4 sit adjacent to each other and sit c.600-850m to the south west of the site. These sites sit immediately adjacent to the south western edge of Cricklade, and as with Sites 1 and 2, will form small residential additions. Due to the distance of Sites 3 and 4 from the site, and the lack of intervisibility between the sites due to intervening landform, built form and vegetation, the addition of Sites 3 and 4 would result in negligible change to this assessment. Therefore Sites 3 and 4 have been scoped out and not brought forward as part of the landscape cumulative assessment.

Landscape Character Effects

- 9.38 The addition of Site's 1 and 2 to the existing baseline in landscape character terms are not anticipated to change the key landscape characteristics as identified by the North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment. For the Landscape Character Area 4A:Chelworth Rolling Clay Lowland and the local landscape characteristics as identified by the LVIA, Sites 1 and 2 strengthen the residential characteristics and influence of built form within the area immediately adjacent to the site. All other key characteristics remain unchanged.

- 9.39 The addition of the proposed development, with Site's 1 and 2 in place, are not anticipated to change the landscape effects on the North Wiltshire Landscape Character Area LCA2: Thames Valley Lowland, and there would still be a **negligible magnitude of change** on this LCA, which would bring about a **negligible adverse effect (not significant permanent)**.
- 9.40 The addition of the proposed development, with Site's 1 and 2 in place, are not anticipated to change the landscape effects on Cotswold Water Park Landscape Character Area 4A. It is anticipated that there would still be a **medium magnitude of change** on this LCA, resulting in a **moderate adverse effect (not significant permanent)**. This is anticipated to reduce to **minor adverse effect (not significant permanent)** by year 15 as the proposed planting matures
- 9.41 At a local character level, with Site's 1 and 2 in place, despite the increase in residential development within close proximity to the site, the local landscape character is still considered that the proposed development will bring about a **medium magnitude of change** on the local landscape character, resulting in a **moderate adverse effect (not significant permanent)**. This is anticipated to reduce to **minor adverse effect (not significant permanent)** by year 15 as the proposed planting matures.

Visual Effects

- 9.42 The addition of Site's 1 and 2 to the existing baseline in visual terms would increase the visual presence of residential development in close proximity to the site.
- 9.43 From the identified viewpoints, there are limited opportunities for the proposed development to be viewed in conjunction with Cumulative Sites 1 and 2 due to a combination of intervening landform and vegetation. From Viewpoints 1, 2, 3, 8, 9 and 10 there would be no change to the baseline view from the addition of Site's 1 and 2.
- 9.44 Where visibility occurs, it would be limited and experienced as follows; from Viewpoint 4 along the B4040, the proposed development would sit in front of and screen views of Cumulative Site 2.
- 9.45 From Viewpoint 5, Cumulative Site 2 would be visible just beyond the eastern extent of the viewpoint.
- 9.46 From Viewpoint 6, Cumulative Site 2 may be visible in the foreground (subject to the extent of vegetation removal for site access), with the proposed development visible beyond.
- 9.47 From Viewpoint 7, Cumulative Site 2 is unlikely to be barely perceptible beyond the hedgerow forming the boundary to the leisure centre, with the proposed development located beyond Cumulative Site 2, and not anticipated to be visible.
- 9.48 The addition of the proposed development in conjunction with Cumulative Sites 1 and 2 is not anticipated to change any of the assessed visual effects within the viewpoint assessment.
- 9.49 From the public right of way network, due to the low-lying topography and intervening vegetation, there are considered to be limited opportunities to view the proposed development in conjunction with Cumulative Sites 1 or 2. As identified by Chapter 8, medium range views of the proposed development from the north and east, where Cumulative Site 1 would be visible, would not be afforded. From National Cycle Route 45, the proposed development would be fleetingly viewed in conjunction with Cumulative Site 2, but the two areas of the respective developments closest to the cycle route are area of SANG / habitat enhancements not of built form, and the mature vegetation along the cycle route heavily filters views.
- 9.50 From the local highway network it is anticipated that there is only the opportunity to view Cumulative Site 2 in conjunction with the proposed development from the B4040, as noted by Viewpoints 4-6.

- 9.51 The anticipated visual effects of the proposed development on adjacent residential properties including the property adjacent to the site at Common Hill Farm, and also from those at the western edge of Cricklade, as well as Cricklade Leisure Centre is anticipated to remain unchanged.
- 9.52 In summary, the addition of the proposed development with Cumulative Sites 1 and 2 is not anticipated to change any of the assessed visual effects, with the greatest visual effects remaining from those areas in close proximity, primarily users of the local rights of way network running through the site and in the adjacent fields (Viewpoints 2 and 3). From these locations the effects range from **major adverse (significant, permanent)** for the section of footpath running through the site, to **moderate adverse (not significant, permanent)** as the footpath moves away from the site. These effects will reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.
- 9.53 Close range viewpoints from Stones Lane and Malmesbury Road/B4040 (Viewpoints 1 and 5), will experience **major adverse (significant, permanent)** effects initially, reducing to **moderate adverse (not significant, permanent)**.
- 9.54 From beyond the immediate vicinity of the site, the visual effects reduce to slight adverse to none as the development becomes an increasingly smaller scale feature, glimpsed through intervening vegetation. Views are often partly or fully restricted by a combination of landform and vegetation.

Ecology

Cumulative Effects During Enabling / Construction

- 9.55 The ecological features most likely to be vulnerable to potential cumulative effects comprise:
- Nature conservation sites within close proximity to the Site and other development schemes; and,
 - Species / species groups for which a combined loss of habitat as a result of Development would significantly reduce resource in the local area.
- 9.56 Following the adoption of avoidance and mitigation measures the Proposed Development would result in a negligible residual effect to all ecological receptors during the enabling / construction works. On this basis, the Proposed Development could not contribute towards any significant cumulative effects.

Cumulative Effects Once the Proposed Development is Completed / Operational

- 9.57 The ecological features most likely to be vulnerable to potential cumulative effects comprise:
- Nature conservation sites within close proximity to the Site and other development schemes; and,
 - Species / species groups for which a combined loss of habitat as a result of Development would significantly reduce resource in the local area.
- 9.58 It is considered that the most notable concern for the completed / operational phase is increased recreational pressure to North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC/NNR and North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI, Elmlea Meadows SSSI, Cotswold Park SSSI and Waterhay Meadows SSSI.
- 9.59 All cumulative schemes comprise residential development. The Ecological Impact Assessments (EclAs) submitted with each of the planning applications has been reviewed. Each of these highlights that assuming implementation of the mitigation measures proposed (provision of on-site and/or financial contributions) the proposed developments would not lead to an adverse effect on North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC/NNR/SSSI.

- 9.60 Cricklade SSSI, Elmlea Meadows SSSI, Cotswold Park SSSI and Waterhay Meadows SSSI were also considered as part of the EclA for Land North-West of the B4553, Cricklade. This concluded that given the small scale of the proposed development (44 dwellings) and controlled management of the designated sites for public access, no significant adverse effect from recreational pressure, or other impact pathways is anticipated.
- 9.61 Elmlea Meadows SSSI and Cotswold Park SSSI were also considered as part of the EclA for Stones Farm (140 units). This concluded that mitigation would focus on managing and mitigating impacts of an increased population through the provision of a Habitat Support Area (HSA) along with a potential financial contribution concluded that the development would have no significant effect on the SSSIs.
- 9.62 As outlined above, following the adoption of avoidance and mitigation measures the Proposed Development would result in a negligible to moderate beneficial residual effect to all ecological receptors during the completed development / operational phase. On this basis, the Proposed Development could not contribute towards any significant cumulative effects.

10. MITIGATION

10.1 The Mitigation proposed in the above chapter is summarised below:

Primary (Embedded) Mitigation

- Restrict development on higher and more visually sensitive parts of the site.
- Provide main vehicular access from the south only.
- Retain the majority of existing hedgerows, trees and woodland features.
- Use utility constraint areas as open space rather than built development.
- Provide over 60% of the site as green infrastructure.

Ecology Mitigation

- Provide 6.5–6.9ha of SANG with a 1.6km walking route.
- Provide SAMM contributions to protect nearby SAC/SSSI sites.
- Retain and enhance existing habitats.
- Create wetlands, wildflower meadows, woodland, scrub and a community orchard.
- Implement sensitive lighting and a 30-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan.
- Use Natural England District Level Licensing for Great Crested Newts.

Traffic and Movement Mitigation

- Safe access junction designed to current standards.
- New pedestrian and cycle connections.
- Travel Plan promoting sustainable travel.
- Footway and crossing improvements.
- Provision for future bus service and car club spaces.

Landscape Mitigation

- 50–100m woodland and landscape buffer along the western boundary.
- Retention and enhancement of hedgerows.
- Extensive tree, scrub and woodland planting.
- Green corridors and SuDS wetland features.
- Protection and integration of the public right of way.

Construction Mitigation

- Implement a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

- Implement a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP).
- Control dust, noise, vibration, mud and construction traffic.
- Undertake ecological pre-commencement surveys and habitat protection measures.

