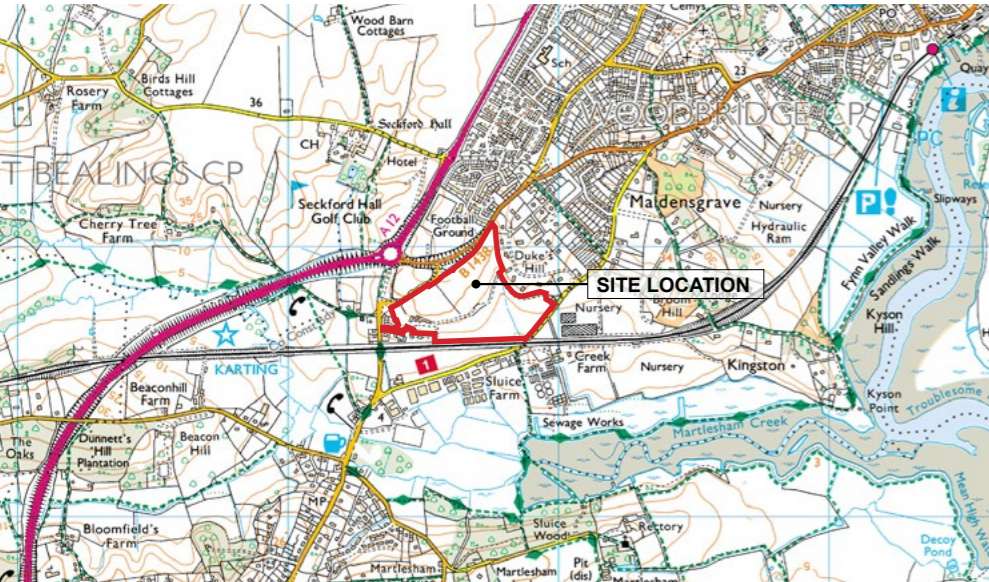


Land off Duke’s Park, Woodbridge (ES)

Non Technical Summary (NTS) of the Environmental Statement

November 2015



INTRODUCTION

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the proposed development has been undertaken and is presented in the form of an Environmental Statement (ES). This forms part of an outline planning application that has been submitted by the applicant, Gladman Developments Ltd, to Suffolk Coastal District Council (SCDC).

The planning application seeks outline permission for a new residential development on land off Duke's Park, Woodbridge. It will deliver up to 215 new homes, 400sqm. convenience store, associated site access and infrastructure and a comprehensive framework of landscape and habitat creation proposals incorporating children's play space and amenity public open space.

THE SITE

The proposed site lies to the south of Woodbridge. Woodbridge is located along the Deben Estuary approximately 12km inland from the coast and approximately 7km north east of Ipswich. The tributary of the River Deben, Martlesham Creek lies to the south of the site where it connects with the River Fynn. Adjacent to the southern boundary of the site is the Woodbridge to Ipswich Railway Line that runs east to west.

The northern extent of the development site is defined by the urban edge of Woodbridge. The A12 runs north to south and forms a strong boundary along the western edge of Woodbridge, containing the existing development of Woodbridge. The A12 bypasses the village of Martlesham, to the west of the development site. Adjacent to the north of the development site is Ipswich Road and Top Street. Ipswich Road heads north east into the centre of Woodbridge and west connecting into the A12. Top Street links into Ipswich Road adjacent to the northern boundary of the site and heads south connecting into Martlesham. The Woodbridge Town Football Club is located directly north of Ipswich Road set amongst wider sports fields. Floodlighting and an associated single storey building inform the grounds.

The properties off Duke's Park are located adjacent to the north eastern boundary of the site. Properties are a mix of single and two storey detached properties of low density. Gardens and boundaries are defined by mature trees, within wide grassed areas.

Sandy Lane is located to the south of the site and defines the boundary of the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB. The AONB extends to the south east and south of the site encompassing the River Deben, the Martlesham Estuary, Sluice Wood, Church of St Mary and Rectory, Lumber Wood and settlements south along the River Deben valley to the east of Martlesham.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The proposal has been developed to ensure that a carefully considered and sensitive development is achieved and aims to enhance the existing features of the site and the surrounding area. The overall site extends to 12.67 hectares (ha), with 7.70ha for residential land providing up to 215 new homes and a proposed convenience store. Vehicular access points are proposed off Ipswich Road and Top Street.

The Framework Plan overleaf shows the key component areas and parameters of the proposed development. The proposed development includes the provision of green infrastructure (GI). The project will create a strong GI network running through the centre of the site including new tree planting, woodland blocks, grassland and footpaths. A central public open space informs the centre of the proposals which includes footpath links, habitat enhancement and amenity space.

The GI framework will create a diverse landscape structure for the project, catering for a wide range of recreational needs, whilst delivering conservation requirements. The GI will target biodiversity enhancements in accordance with the objectives of SCDC. The framework creates a number of walking and cycling connections to existing footpaths and bus stops to the western side of the site.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

This chapter considers relevant planning policy and guidance from National Planning Policy documents, the Development Plan and other relevant statutory documents.

The Development Plan is the starting point for the determination of any planning application. This is made up of:

- Suffolk Coastal Local Plan remaining 'Saved policies' of Suffolk Coastal District Council (July 2013) and First & Second alterations.
- Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (adopted July 2013) Suffolk Coastal Local Plan

A number of Local Plan policies were saved by the Secretary of State's Direction. The majority of these remaining policies have since been superseded by the adoption of the Core Strategy. The saved policies of the Local Plan do not contain strategic policies of relevance to the application. However, a number of saved Development Control policies relating to the natural environment remain relevant to the application.

Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy

The Core Strategy was adopted in July 2013. An independent Inspector found the Core Strategy sound and capable of adoption (despite the assessed housing need being based on 2010 figures), subject to a number of main modifications. This was on the grounds that SCDC commence with a review of the housing projections by 2015, to enable additional land to be identified against updated objectively assessed housing needs, potentially to 2031, taking advantage of the full 2011 Census information.

Woodbridge is identified in the Core Strategy as a town centre. The Core Strategy does not allocate sites for development. In the short term until the adoption of the subsequent site allocations document (2015), larger housing sites will need to be brought forward to achieve a five year housing land supply. A large number of windfall sites, such as the proposals site will therefore be required to meet their full objectively assessed housing need (OAN).

The Core Strategy also identifies a number of policies which aim to protect and enhance the environment.

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework was published on 27th March 2012 to provide national guidance on planning policy. The Framework intended to guide the planning decision making process. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the Framework.

Affordable Housing

In accordance with the Council's adopted policy, the proposed development of up to 215 units will include 33.3% affordable units (up to 72 units). It is also a significant benefit of the scheme and would address the identified local housing need within Woodbridge.

SOCIO ECONOMICS

This chapter assessed the socio-economic impacts of the proposed development on the local and wider area. A socio-economic baseline was established for Woodbridge and Suffolk Coastal District, against which the effects of the proposed development were quantified. This baseline included data regarding the local population, economy and labour force.

The process of assessment involved the identification of receptors, the relative sensitivity of each receptor and the overall magnitude of the impact. Receptors included: construction sector employment, population, count of highly skilled working age residents, overall employment rate, and capacity of the local and community infrastructure. Assessment was undertaken for both construction and operational phases, as well as addressing the cumulative and residual effects of the scheme.

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Following assessment, it can be deemed that the proposed development would be generally beneficial in socio-economic terms. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will mitigate the potential adverse impacts on education and health facilities and the residual effects are therefore negligible. The positive impacts of the proposed development include job creation, increased spending in the local area, affordable housing provision and an influx of skilled workers.

CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

Alternative development scenarios and design approaches have been considered at the site over a significant period of time. The applicant and consultancy team have considered different development options and design approaches for the site. As an iterative process the design of the proposed scheme detailed in this application has undergone many changes and revisions as part of a rigorous approach to its design development.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

This chapter assesses the potential landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development on the local and wider area.

The proposed site itself has no landscape designations. The Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB and the Deben Estuary Special Protection Area are located to the south and the Special Landscape Area (SLA) to the west of the site. The development will result in an obvious and permanent change to the character of the application site, however the visual envelope of the proposed development is relatively small and limited predominantly to short sections of PRoW and glimpses from Long Distance Footpaths located due south of the site. To the south east, views are limited by intervening vegetation.

The proposal will maintain existing landscape features such as hedgerows and hedgerow trees to filter local views as well as the creation of proposed public open space. The public open space will form a spine through the middle of the site, dividing up the development areas into parcels. New areas of amenity space will be created, including parkland and woodland planting incorporating children's play and natural green space to cater for a range of recreational needs while providing opportunities for the enhancement and creation of wildlife habitats to improve local biodiversity. New structural landscape planting, in the form of tree cover and hedgerows throughout the development will help mitigate visual effects that may result from the proposed scheme.

The proposed structural planting will ensure that a buffer is maintained adjacent to the properties located along Top Street to the west and the AONB to the south, this will ensure the quality and the character of the AONB, Martlesham, riverside and the Deben Estuary are maintained. It is considered that the proposed development within the application site will result in an overall moderate effect in terms of landscape character and visual resources. The development proposals demonstrate a well-considered approach to the landscape and context of the site and appropriate development of the site has the potential to successfully integrate into the local surroundings without any unacceptable landscape or visual effects.

ECOLOGY AND NATURE CONSERVATION

One site of international nature conservation importance, Deben Estuary RAMSAR / Special Protection Area (SPA) / Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located approximately 350m south of the site and Sandlings SPA is approximately 4.2km to the east. Seven non-statutory designated County Wildlife Sites (CWS) occur between 230m and 960m from the site boundary.

Habitats within the site were generally of restricted value due to its former land-use; however some features of increased nature conservation are present and include the hedgerows, the plant common cudweed and mature trees. Species of note recorded within the site included common lizard and based on the desk study information, the site's nature and the habitats present, the site is also likely to be of local value to bats, breeding and wintering birds, offering suitable habitat to small numbers of species listed Species of Principal Importance under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006.

Development will result in the loss of grassland, scrub, tall ruderal and ephemeral / short perennial habitats supporting common cudweed. This habitat loss and the conversion of the site from an agricultural one to a predominately built environment may result in a change to the bird assemblage present, with the loss of those species associated with open farmland such as potentially skylark, linnet and yellowhammer, in addition some of the more light sensitive species of bat such as Myotis sp. may be deterred from using areas of the site by the introduction of artificial lighting. In the absence of mitigation there are also potential adverse impacts on the common lizard population. Prior to mitigation the proposals would result in potentially minor adverse impacts to these ecological receptors.

The proposed scheme retains the majority of the hedgerow and tree resource and provides a significant area of green space which extends across the centre of the site within which a range of habitats of value to wildlife including woodland planting, a wetland area and wild-flower rich grassland. The provision of these, in addition to the implementation of precautionary mitigation measures (trapping and translocation of reptiles) will ensure that there are no significant adverse impacts overall, whilst there would be long-term positive effects on a number of habitats and species, including species-rich grassland, hedgerows, trees, breeding birds and bats.

DRAINAGE

The surrounding hydrological and pre-development surface water drainage regime has been assessed to ensure both the future flood risk mitigation and the site specific solution for the control of surface water are as effective as possible. Pollution and flow control proposals are particularly important as the site ultimately outfalls into the Deben Estuary.

There is an unnamed watercourse that issues from the east of the site and runs south through the site. The Environment Agency flood maps indicate that the site is located in Flood Zone 1 and at low risk of fluvial flooding. The Environment Agency surface water floodplain map indicates that the site is predominantly at very low risk of surface water flooding, with an area at medium/ high risk associated with the onsite watercourse. The site is potentially at risk of groundwater flooding, as such, foundations need to be constructed when groundwater is suitably low (or can be controlled through dewatering) and designed such that the damp proof membrane level is raised sufficiently above peak groundwater levels.

The main impacts from the construction phase relate to the potential for increased surface water runoff, increased transportation of sediment with the potential to cause siltation and nutrient enrichment and increased pollution. Increases in surface water runoff and volume of pollutants discharged into the downstream watercourses are also potential impacts when the development is operational. Mitigation measures during the construction phase include temporary site drainage, which leads to silt traps before being discharged into the watercourse. Saturated soil requiring drying prior to disposal or reuse will be temporarily stockpiled in allocated drainage areas, and a bunding and filter drain system with a series of catchpits will prevent erosion and contamination to local watercourses. Site management will include the storage of fuel on bunded, impervious surfaces. Surface water will be managed in a sustainable manner during the operational phase, to ensure that the surface water discharge rate is equal to the runoff prior to the development. Prevention measures will be the initial means of retaining the runoff. The main form of attenuation will then take the form of detention basins that connect directly into the unnamed watercourse on the site. These basins will account for the additional surface water runoff generated by the site and prevent water levels rising in the watercourse network for the extreme events. Some removal of pollutants would also occur in a detention basin by filtration through vegetated soils. Silt is to be prevented from entering the drainage system by the use of trapped gullies, channels with silt traps or by the use of Sustainable Drainage techniques. All new drainage infrastructure will require regular maintenance in line with an approved maintenance strategy. This is to prevent blockages and build-up of silts that could cause damage to the downstream Deben Estuary. Therefore, by including onsite Sustainable Drainage Systems which reduce pollution and surface water runoff, the residual impact is considered to be “slightly significant”.

TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

The layout of the site has been designed to mitigate the impact of the development on the surrounding highway network. Footways will be provided throughout the site and at the access junction, which will tie into the existing pedestrian infrastructure on the surrounding highway network. In addition, a traffic management plan and travel plan will be developed and implemented at the site to minimise the impact of the development on the surrounding highway network.

The impact of the development in highways and transport terms has been considered in terms of severance, driver delay, pedestrian delay, pedestrian amenity, fear and intimidation, and accidents and safety. The construction of the site is anticipated to take place over an five year period. It is estimated that an average of 14 one-way construction vehicles per working day would be generated during this phase, which represents a negligible impact on the surrounding highway network compared to the existing HGV movements. Following construction, the proposed development will have a negligible impact on the surrounding highway network. The development proposals are acceptable in highways and transportation terms; there are no highways or transportation related reasons upon which a refusal of the planning application for the proposals would be justified.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Cultural Heritage chapter identifies and assesses the potential impacts of the development proposals on above ground heritage assets within the Development Site and its vicinity, in order to assess the potential impacts on the historic built environment. The Chapter identifies that the Proposed Development has the potential to affect only one such asset; the Grade II listed 1 Top Street. However it has been identified that the proposed development will result in a negligible indirect effect on the significance this asset.

AIR QUALITY

A construction phase dust assessment has been undertaken, in accordance with the most up to date guidance published by the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM), of the possible impacts of generated dust. Wardell Armstrong LLP has carried out an assessment of the impact of additional road traffic generated by the Project on local air quality. An odour assessment has been undertaken of the potential for odour from a small Sewage Treatment Works (STW), to affect proposed residential properties. The assessment uses the most recent guidance published by the IAQM.

The construction phase dust assessment has been undertaken to determine the risk and significance of dust effects from earthworks, construction activities and trackout from the Project.

The risk of dust soiling effects is classed as medium for earthworks, construction and trackout. The risk of human health effects is classed as low for earthworks, construction and trackout. The local area is considered to be of medium sensitivity to dust soiling and low sensitivity to human health effects. Site specific mitigation measures will therefore need to be implemented at the site. With site specific mitigation measures in place the significance of dust effects for earthworks, construction and trackout are considered to be ‘not significant’.

The operational phase assessment has been undertaken to determine the risk and significance of air quality impacts, from vehicle movements associated with the completed development, at existing sensitive receptors. The assessment takes into consideration local committed developments. The impact is considered to be negligible for existing residential properties. However, it may be possible to reduce the impact further with the implementation of various mitigation strategies. These strategies could include implementation of a green travel plan or installing low NOX boilers in dwellings. Air pollution concentrations within the Development Site are predicted to be well below national objective levels.

An odour assessment has been undertaken to assess the potential for odour, at the nearest proposed residential dwellings (at approximately 90m). It is likely that the majority of odour producing activities will be carried out in the open air at the sewage treatment facility. With no additional mitigation in place, the likely odour impact at the nearest receptors is classified as ‘Slight Adverse’. Therefore, the overall potential odour impact is predicted to be ‘not significant’.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

A noise and vibration assessment has been undertaken, which considers the construction and operational phases of the proposed development.

The following potential impacts have been identified and assessed:

- Noise and vibration from the earthworks and construction phase of the development;
- Changes in road traffic noise on existing and proposed sensitive receptors, due to development related traffic; and
- Existing noise sources on the proposed development, including road traffic on Ipswich Road, Top Street, Sandy Lane and the remainder of the local road network, as well as noise from the Norwich to Ipswich rail line to the south of the site.

A noise survey was undertaken to establish the baseline ambient noise levels on the site for proposed sensitive receptor locations, and prevailing noise sources at the site.

The significance of noise and vibration effects from earthworks and construction is considered to be negligible, with site specific mitigation in place. However, the construction operations may have short term, minor to moderate adverse impact at nearby sensitive receptors.

The increase in noise due to development generated road traffic at existing sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the local road network will be negligible, and some areas in the immediate vicinity of the site may experience a reduction in noise level.

Once mitigation measures detailed within the mitigation section of this chapter have been implemented, the residual impact of road traffic noise from major roads and the proposed development access roads, and noise from the Lowestoft to Ipswich rail line will meet all the required internal and external noise standards and have a negligible impact on future residents of proposed dwelling.

The potential changes in noise levels, with and without the proposed development were assessed against current guidance documents and it is concluded that the potential increase in noise levels at existing receptor locations will be negligible.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Cumulative effects arise as a result of a number of different factors and combined changes and generally fall into two categories; effects arising from a range of developments, occurring at different locations, and; effects caused by the proposed development in conjunction with other developments that occurred in the past, present or are likely to occur in the foreseeable future.

The EIA for the proposed development has considered the potential cumulative effects that could arise from other, committed development within the vicinity of the site. The succession of effects does not result in any greater likely significant adverse effects.

This assessment work confirms that there are no significant environmental issues or concerns arising from the new residential development. The development proposals have been carefully developed to address any identified

site constraints, or opportunities the site offers and, where necessary, mitigation measures have been incorporated into the proposals to address any specific issues.

Further Information

The planning application and accompanying Environmental Statement (ES) are available for inspection during normal office hours in the planning department of SCDC. Comments on the planning application should be forwarded to Planning Services at the address below:

**Planning Department
Suffolk Coastal District Council,
Melton Hill,
Woodbridge,
Suffolk IP12 1AU.**

Paper copies of the ES and the Technical Appendices can be purchased either as a paper (£400) or digital copy (CD - £10) and are available from:

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FRAMEWORK PLAN

