

Agenda Item 78.

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
172934	11 May 2018	Wokingham Without/ Wokingham	Wokingham Without/ Wescott

Applicant	Wokingham Borough Council
Site Address	"Eastern Gateway", land at Waterloo Road
Proposal	Full application for construction of 420m single carriageway road (with a total width of 15m) and accompanying footways/ cycleways. This route will connect the Montague Park residential development (William Heelas Way) to a new junction with Waterloo road, a 4-arm roundabout, via a new bridge over the Reading-Waterloo Railway Line (Second Phase of South Wokingham Distributor Road).
Type	Full
PS Category	1
Officer	Emy Circuit
Reason for determination by committee	Major application Applicant is Wokingham Borough Council

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on Wednesday 14 February 2018
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Delivery and Infrastructure

SUMMARY
<p>Wokingham Borough Core Strategy establishes the need to deliver over 13,000 new homes in borough in the period up to 2026, the majority in four Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) (Core Strategy policy CP17). Of these 2,500 are to be in an urban extension at South Wokingham. Core Strategy Policy CP21, amplified by Appendix 7 and two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – the <i>South Wokingham South Wokingham Strategic Development Location SPD</i> and the <i>Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD</i> – set out the Council’s expectations in terms of the comprehensive delivery of these dwellings together with the infrastructure required to support them. A key element of the infrastructure is the Southern Distributor Road (SDR); a continuous new route running through the SDL, south of the existing settlement connecting the A329 London Road in the north to the A321 Finchampstead Road in the south. The new road will provide access to the new development as well as providing some traffic relief in the historic town centre.</p> <p>The first section of the SDR – from London Road south to the Reading-Waterloo railway line - has already been delivered as part of the first phase of the SDL, a development of 636 new homes at Montague Park (formerly Buckhurst Farm) and is called William Heelas Way. The current application is for the second stage of the road and will extend William Heelas Way over the railway line to connect into the existing highway network at Waterloo Road. The proposal is described in more detail in the “description of development” section of the appraisal. The works include closure of the Waterloo level crossing (the reasons for this are explained in paragraphs 2 and 83-88) and the associated Stopping Up Order in being progressed separately.</p> <p>Screening, in accordance with Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations, identified the scheme as EIA Development and accordingly the application is supported by an Environmental Statement (ES) informed by a Scoping Opinion.</p>

If approved, construction is intended to start in early 2019 for opening in late 2020. An application for the remainder of the SDR from Waterloo Road west to Finchampstead Road, including associated improvements in the Finchampstead Road corridor is expected during 2019.

It has been necessary to re-consult on the application due to minor extensions to the 'red line' application site boundary, to include the full extent of the works proposed at Clay Lane, Britton's Farm and William Heelas Way. There is no material change to what is proposed at Clay Lane and Britton's Farm. The amendment at William Heelas Way consists of the inclusion of a pedestrian crossing island. The consultation period ends on the day of committee and any new, substantive planning issues arising will be reported at the meeting.

The application before the Planning Committee because it is a major development proposal and a council application.

PLANNING STATUS

- Strategic Development Location (SDL) (Core Strategy Policy CP21)
- Major Development Location (Core Strategy policy CP9 and MDDLDP policy CC02)
- Countryside (Core Strategy policy CP11)
- Special Protection Area (SPA) 5km linear protection zone (Core Strategy policy CP08)
- allocated SANG (to the south and east) (MDDLDP SAL05)
- TPOs 1340/2010 & TPO1376/2011 include trees along Waterloo Road (MDDLDP CC03)
- TPO TPO1336/2010 includes trees along Clay Lane (MDDLDP CC03)
- Public Rights of Way: Clay Lane is a Restricted Byway/Byway (WOKI RB26 / WOKI BW26) & Wokingham Without Footpath 5 (WOKW FP5)
- Area of High Archaeological Potential (MDDLDP TB25)
- Flood Zone 1 (Core Strategy policy CP1 and MDDLDP CC09)
- West of Waterloo Road some land falls within Flood Zones 2 & 3
- The risk of flooding from surface water is also low-high along the Emmbrook Corridor
- Mineral consultation area

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee resolve to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions and informatives:

Conditions:

Timescale

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Approved Drawings

2. This permission is in respect of the drawings listed below and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

PLANNING_100_005_Rev H Redline application boundary

PLANNING_LOC_001_Rev A Location Plan

PLANNING_LOC_002_Rev A Aerial Location Plan

Digital Utility Overview Plan A

PLANNING_100_001_Rev D Overall Highway Arrangement

PLANNING_100_002_Rev B Eastern Bridge Alignment General Arrangement Sheet 1 of 2

PLANNING_100_003_Rev C Waterloo Road Roundabout General Arrangement Sheet 2 of 2

PLANNING_100_004_Rev C Waterloo Road Stopping Up General Arrangement

PLANNING_1400_001 Rev A Proposed Street Lighting Arrangement

PLANNING_LDS_001 Landscape Mitigation Plan Sheet 1 of 2 Rev 1

PLANNING_LDS_001 Landscape Mitigation Plan Sheet 2 of 2 Rev 1

PLANNING_LS_001_Rev A Longitudinal Section CH0.0 to CH315.8

PLANNING-CS-001_REV A Typical Cross Section CH50

PLANNING-CS-002_REV A Typical Cross Section CH 180

PLANNING-CS-003_REV A Typical Cross Section CH 300

UA007216-97-ECV-DRG-ARC-1022_A01 SWDR Eastern Gateway Proposed General Arrangement Sheet 3 of 3 Bridge design

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

Highway construction Details

3. Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the construction of roads and footways, including levels, widths, construction materials, depths of construction, surface water drainage, road signage (including signage, measures to prevent access off unused arms of roundabout) and lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the road hereby approved is brought into use.

Reason: To ensure that roads and footpaths are constructed to a standard that would be suitable for adoption as publicly maintainable highway, in the interests of providing a functional, accessible, safe and high-quality development. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6

Visibility splays

4. Prior to the commencement of the development there shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, details of the proposed vehicular

accesses to Britton's Farm and Waterloo Road wetland area to include visibility splays. The access shall be formed as so-approved and the visibility splays shall be cleared of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height prior to the occupation of the development. The access shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and used for no other purpose and the land within the visibility splays shall be maintained clear of any visual obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

5. Prior to the commencement of development there shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority full details of the Waterloo Road roundabout, including visibility splays, landscaping and levels. The roundabout shall be formed as so-approved and the visibility splays shall be cleared of any obstruction prior to the first use. The roundabout shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and used for no other purpose and the land within the approved visibility splays shall be maintained clear of any visual obstruction at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Alternative route for non-motorised users

6. Before closure of the Waterloo Road level crossing, an alternative route across the Reading-Waterloo railway line for non-motorised users shall be provided in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The details shall include improvements to Clay Lane to make it fit for the intended use with a connection into the foot and cycleway network within Montague Park and a direct pedestrian and cycle connection from Phase 7 of Montague Park to William Heelas Way in the vicinity of the pedestrian crossing which is to be constructed at the foot of the north side of the new bridge as part of the approved scheme.

Reason: To ensure access across the railway line is maintained in the interests of sustainable travel and recreation whilst avoiding harm to the character of the area in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP4, CP6, CP21 and Appendix 7; Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC03 and the guidance in the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document.

Design of Britton's Farm access

7. Before the existing access to Britton's Farm is closed an alternative access shall be provided in accordance with either the approved details or an alternative scheme that has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: to ensure that appropriate vehicular access to the property is maintained in the interests of highway safety and convenience, in accordance with Core Strategy policy CP6.

Access to agricultural land

8. Before stopping up of the section of highway between the Waterloo Level Crossing and suitable access to the adjacent fields shall be provided in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: to ensure appropriate access is provided to allow agricultural use of the land to continue until such time as the land is brought forward for development in accordance with Core Strategy policy CP6.

Potential highway mitigation schemes

9. No development shall take place until proposals for off-site highway works in locations identified by the Transport Assessment as potentially requiring improvement as a consequence of the proposed development, including details of the sequence a of works in relation to delivery of the Eastern Gateway, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the approved schemes shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details. The junctions that may require improvement are:

- Old Wokingham Road/ Waterloo Road/ Peacock Lane
- Easthampstead Road/ Old Wokingham Road/ West Road
- Nine Mile Ride/ Old Wokingham Road
- Old Wokingham Road/ Hatch Ride
- Heathlands Road/Easthampstead Road
- Murdoch Road/ Easthampstead Rd

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1, CP6, CP10 & CP21.

Levels and earth mounding and contouring

10. No development shall take place until a measured survey of the site and a plan prepared to scale of not less than 1:500 showing details of existing and proposed finished ground levels (in relation to a fixed datum point) and earthworks, including grading and mounding of land, contours to be formed, the heights of embankments and retaining walls and the relationship between proposed mounding, existing vegetation and surrounding landform shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented prior to the new road being brought into use.

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory form of development relative to surrounding buildings and landscape. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21 and the guidance in the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document.

External materials

11. Before construction of the bridge and retaining walls hereby permitted is commenced, samples and details of the materials to be used in its construction shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the so-approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the bridge is satisfactory. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and the guidance in the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document.

Landscaping

12. Prior to the commencement of the development, full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include, as appropriate, proposed finished floor levels or contours, means of enclosure, car parking layouts, other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas, hard surfacing materials and minor artefacts and structure (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, lighting, external services, etc). Soft landscaping details shall include planting plan, specification (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment), schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate, and implementation timetable.

All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a timetable approved in writing by the local planning authority. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of species, size and number as originally approved and permanently retained.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and securing appropriate compensation for Priority Habitat loss. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, TB21 and TB23 and the guidance in the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document.

Retention of trees and shrubs

13. No trees, shrubs or hedges within the site which are shown as being retained on the approved plans shall be felled, uprooted wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed without previous written consent of the local planning authority; any trees, shrubs or hedges removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years from the completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that development is being carried out, of trees, shrubs and hedges growing within the site which are of amenity and habitat value. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, TB21 and TB23 and the guidance in the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document.

Protection of trees

14. a) No development or other operation shall commence on site until a scheme which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (the

Approved Scheme); the tree protection measures approved shall be implemented in complete accordance with the Approved Scheme for the duration of the development (including, unless otherwise provided by the Approved Scheme) demolition, all site preparation work, tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery.

- b) No development (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) shall commence until the local planning authority has been provided (by way of a written notice) with a period of no less than 7 working days to inspect the implementation of the measures identified in the Approved Scheme on-site.
- c) No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.
- d) The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity and habitat value, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence. In the interests of visual amenity and securing appropriate compensation for Priority Habitat loss. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, TB21 and TB23 and the guidance in the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document.

Landscape management

15. Prior to the commencement of the development a landscape management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, other than privately owned, domestic gardens, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: In order to ensure that provision is made to allow satisfactory maintenance of the landscaping hereby approved. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

Lighting

16. Prior to commencement of the development, a Lighting Scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Scheme shall:

- i) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their resting places or along important routes used to access key area of their territory, for example for foraging; and
- ii) Specify the type of lighting to be used and how and where it will be installed in order to
- iii) provide for the safe operation of the Eastern Gateway;
- iv) minimise the impact on the setting of heritage assets; and
- v) demonstrate that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

The lighting scheme shall be implemented as approved before Eastern Gateway comes into use and be retained and operated in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

Reason: to ensure adequate lighting is provided for highway safety and convenience whilst protecting visual amenity including setting of heritage assets and to maintain favourable conservation status of the site for protected species and species of principal importance. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP6 and CP7, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, TB21, TB23 and TB24 and the guidance in the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document.

Drainage

17. No development shall take place until drainage details including:

- i) a drainage strategy plan, with invert levels, indicating how runoff from the road feeds into the attenuation basin and subsequently discharges to the drainage ditch;
- ii) sections showing the profile of the attenuation basin and swales; and
- iii) Micro-drainage calculations demonstration that the pond will cater for the 1 in 100 flood event with a 40% allowance for climate change

have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the Eastern Gateway is brought into use.

Reason: To prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

Construction Environmental Management Plan

18. No development, including any works of demolition, shall take place, until a Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Plan should include amongst other things:

- i) phasing of development;
- ii) a Construction Traffic Management Plan;
- iii) vehicle parking for site operatives and visitors;
- iv) provision for loading, unloading and storage of plant and materials;
- v) measures to prevent queueing outside the site;
- vi) wheel washing or other measures to prevent deposit of mud on the highway;
- vii) measures for the control of dust and dirt during construction in accordance with the Environmental Statement., in particular Chapter 4, *Air Quality*;
- viii) measures for the control of noise during construction in accordance with the Environmental Statement, in particular Chapter 10, *Noise and Vibration*;
- ix) measures to mitigate the impact on protected species and habitats (in particular precautionary mitigation measures for reptiles) during construction in accordance with the Environmental Statement., in particular Chapter 4, *Air Quality* and Chapter 7, *Nature Conservation*;
- x) security hoarding including facilities for public viewing, where appropriate;
- xi) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works;
- xii) any temporary lighting; and
- xiii) procedures for liaising with the local community including a hotline number for reporting and responding to complaints.

The Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details throughout the construction period.

Reason: to safeguard the amenities of people living and working in the area, protected species and habitats and highway safety and convenience in accordance with Core Strategy CP1, CP3, CP6 & CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC06 & TB23.

Hours of work

19. No work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than:

- i) between the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday; and
- ii) 08:00-13:00 on Saturday; and
- iii) at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays; except for
- iv) individual operations which cannot reasonably be undertaken within the construction working hours defined above and have been notified to the Local Planning Authority (including details of the nature extent and timetable for the works) at least two weeks in advance and agreed in writing (by exchange of letter).

Where works are agreed by the LPA under iv) above, residential properties within an identified zone that has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority shall be given written notice at least one week in advance of the works taking place. The notification shall include details of the nature,

extent and timetable for the works and telephone number that the party responsible the works can be contacted on for the duration of the works.

Reason: To protect the occupiers of neighbouring properties from noise and disturbance outside the permitted hours during the construction period in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06 whilst providing the flexibility to avoid excessive disruption to the functioning of the town centre.

Contamination

20. Should any unforeseen contamination be encountered during the development works on the affected part of the site shall cease and the developer shall inform the Local Planning Authority immediately. Work shall not recommence until details of the contamination and proposals for investigation, remediation and protective works as necessary have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

If no contamination is encountered during the development, a letter confirming this fact shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority upon completion of the development and before the road is brought into use.

Reason: In order to ensure the site is suitable for use once developed. Relevant Policies: Core Strategy policy CP1.

Ecology

21. Development shall be in accordance with the ecological mitigation measures set out in Chapter 7 of the Environmental Statement, *Nature Conservation*, including removal of vegetation outside the primary bird nesting season (March – August inclusive) and inspection of trees T8 and T11 (which have been identified as having the potential to support roosting bats) before any works to them (T8 is to be felled and T11 retained).

Reason: To mitigate the risk to protected species during development in accordance with national guidance (ODPM Circular 06/2005), Core Strategy Policy CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy TB23.

22. No development (including site clearance) shall take place until a reptile mitigation strategy and contingency plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Work shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure appropriate protection of protected reptiles during development in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy TB23.

Archaeology

23. No development shall commence until a programme of archaeological work (which may comprise more than one phase of work) has been implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: The site is identified as being of archaeological potential. Investigation is required to allow preservation and recording of any archaeological features or artefacts before disturbance by the development. Relevant policy: National Planning Policy Framework Section 12 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB25.

Employment and Skills Plan

24. No development shall take place until an Employment and Skills Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to provide employment and training opportunities for local people in accordance with Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy TB12.

Informatives:

1. The development accords with the policies contained within the adopted / development plan and there are no material considerations that warrant a different decision being taken.
2. Bracknell Forest Borough Council will be consulted on the construction Traffic Management Plan which will form part of the CEMP to comply with Condition 18.
3. The tree protection details to comply with Condition 14 should include among other things:
 - a. any works required to achieve the visibility splays required by Condition 4 (in particular in relation to T11 which is to be retained in the centre of the roundabout);
 - b. how the footpath improvements along Clay Lane, required by Condition 6, will be implemented without harm to TPO trees, both during construction and in the long term (a combination of a no-dig solution and/or reuse of the existing sub-base are recommended); and
 - c. measures for the protection of the TPO and other retained trees including those along Waterloo Road. Any refinement of the road design and associated drainage ditches will need to ensure that engineering works are outside the root protection area of these trees.
4. The Written Scheme of Investigation to comply with Condition 23 23 should provide for a strip, map and record (or strip, map and sample) mitigation strategy in accordance with the Cultural Heritage Chapter of the Environmental Statement. The mitigation strategy should include all impacts during the construction of the proposed road, including any excavation required for areas such as compounds.
5. The attention of the applicant is drawn to the requirements of Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 in respect of the minimisation of noise on construction and demolition sites. Application, under Section 61 of the Act, for prior consent to the works, can be made to the Public Protection Partnership, Council Offices, PO Box 155 Shute End, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1WW.
6. The Lighting Scheme to comply with Condition 16 shall have regard to the Bat Conservation Trust guidance (2014) which recommends a colour spectrum below

4000K to reduce the amount of blue. Furthermore, any lighting associated with the development (including vehicle lights) must not interfere with the sighting of signalling apparatus and/or train drivers vision on approaching trains. The location and colour of lights must not give rise to the potential for confusion with the signalling arrangements on the railway. The developers should obtain Network Rail's Asset Protection Engineer's approval of their detailed proposals regarding lighting.

7. The landscaping details to comply with Condition 12 shall have regard to Network Rail's requirement for a substantial, trespass proof fence along the development side of the existing boundary fence, to a minimum height of 1.8 metres.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY		
Application Number	Proposal	Decision
SO/2008/2040	Scoping opinion for a development of 2,500 dwellings with associated infrastructure.	13 October 2008
O/2010/1712	outline planning permission (including access details) for 650 dwellings and associated infrastructure	Approved 18 December 2012
RM/2013/0240 (Phase 1 of 7)	Reserved Matters pursuant to O/2010/1712 for the SDR north of the railway, secondary access and two cul-de-sacs	Approved 12 June 2013
NMT/2014/0378	Non-material amendment to planning consent RM/2013/0240 to allow changes to the detailed design of the SDR including the re-location of the zebra crossing	Approved 25 March 2014
VAR/2015/0342	Variation of conditions 3 (phasing), 56 (sustainable design and construction) & 62 (affordable housing) of outline planning permission O/2010/1712	Approved 2 June 2015
152349	Scoping opinion for an Environmental Impact Assessment for the Eastern Gateway	Responded 8 October 2015
161963	Variation of conditions 3 (phasing), 7 (neighbourhood centre development brief) and 62 (affordable and specialist housing provision) and remove condition 63 (extra care dementia housing) of outline planning permission O/2010/1712 (as varied by VAR/2015/0342) to omit references to provision of extra care dementia housing as part of the on-site affordable housing provision.	Approved 24 April 2017

173198	Scoping opinion for an Environmental Impact Assessment for the Western Gateway	Registered 13 November 2017
N/A	Planning Committee resolution to submit an application for a Stopping Up Order for the section of Waterloo Road between the level crossing and the SDR	Resolved 13 December 2017
Application to the DfT for a Stopping Up Order under Section 247 of the T&CPA 1990 (as amended)	Submitted & public notices were posted on 30 January 2018 for the start of the objection period for the Draft Order on 31 January 2018. This consultation will continue until 28 February 2018.	15 December 2017

SUMMARY INFORMATION	
Site Area	6.67 hectares
Previous land use(s) and floorspace(s)	Agricultural

CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
Network Rail	No objection: detailed comments provided on various design requirements, actions the applicant needs to take and approvals required from Network Rail during the design and implementation of the proposals, which have been forwarded to the applicant. Bering in mind that Network Rail designed the bridge on behalf of the council; these design requirements were taken into consideration though the design process. <i>(Officer Note: with regard to the planning matters raised Condition 16 and informative 6 address lighting; Condition 12 and informative 7 address the need for secure boundary treatments and noise and vibration are considered in paragraphs 102-107.)</i>
Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust Bracknell Forest Borough Council (BFBC)	No comments received No objection: the proposed development is recognised as an important element in delivering Wokingham Borough Council's housing requirements as well as strategic highway improvements to the wider road network. The TA indicates construction traffic will be routed from the strategic transport network via Waterloo Road and Peacock Lane (within Bracknell Forest). It is, therefore, requested that condition requiring a

Crime Prevention Design Officer
Environment Agency
Historic England

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Mid and West Berkshire Access Local
Forum (MWBLAF)

construction Traffic Management Plan is imposed and BFBC are consulted on it.

(Officer Note: this will form part of the CEMP to comply with condition 18.

Informative 1 also refers.)

No comments received

“no objection”

“Do not wish to offer any comments”.

Advice should be taken from the council’s specialised conservation and archaeological advisors.

Support the project. The email cross references a letter sent by the Chairman, Graham Smith: the new road will have footways alongside it which the section of Waterloo Road to be closed does not.

No objection: in general the LAF is reluctant to see closures of railway crossings which involve Public Rights of Way but in this case there are a number of factors which lead us to the conclusion that replacement of the crossing with a bridge including a pedestrian and cycleway could be a safer option.

There is a need for improved safety measures for those wishing to cross the line using non-motorised transport due to the anticipated increase in rail movements.

The history of the crossing and of Star Lane is one of fatal accidents reportedly associated with sun-glare so a solution to this is to be welcomed.

- i) In addition to the proposed new bridge, a non-motorised crossing between Waterloo Road and Star Lane should be created in future. *(Officer Note: the desirability of improving links across the railway for non-motorised users is acknowledged in the council’s policy and guidance but feasibility studies have been carried out and unfortunately have not identified any viable opportunities to improve existing or create new crossings. The implications are considered in paragraphs 65-74)*
- ii) all new bridges should have a gentle enough slope for use by cyclists and disabled users and be wide enough to

	allow two-way passage. (<i>Officer Note: see paragraphs 65-78.</i>)
	iii) Public use of all proposed new routes should be secured in perpetuity, as that is the basis of the route being lost. (<i>Officer Note: see paragraph 76.</i>)
National Grid	No comments received
Natural England	"No comments". Advice should be taken from the council's own ecological advisor.
NHS Wokingham Clinical Commissioning Group	No comments received
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue	No comments received
Southern Gas Networks	No objections: advise of the locations of gas mains in the vicinity and safe digging practices which have been forwarded to the applicant.
SEE Power Distribution	No comments received
Thames Water	No comments
WBC Archaeological Advisor	No objection subject to a condition to secure a programme of archaeological work (<i>Officer Note: Condition 23 and informative 4 refer</i>)
WBC Biodiversity	No objection subject to conditions to secure landscape mitigation (Conditions 12-15), implementation of measures to mitigate the impact on bats and birds (Condition 21), a lighting scheme (Condition 16), incorporation of measures to mitigate ecological impacts in the CEMP (Condition 18) and a reptile mitigation and contingency strategy (Condition 22).
WBC Cleaner & Greener (Waste Services)	No comments received
WBC Conservation Officer	Objects on the grounds that the development would result in some harm to the setting of nearby heritage assets, although the harm would be 'less than substantial' in NPPF terms and overall, the benefits arising from the scheme - alleviation of congested traffic and meeting housing needs – may provide a clear and convincing justification for this low level of harm. (<i>Officer Note: paragraphs 42-48 refer</i>). If approved conditions requiring approval of lighting and landscaping are recommended. (<i>Officer Note: Conditions 12 & 16 refer</i>)
WBC Drainage	No objection subject to a condition to secure further details of the proposed drainage scheme. (<i>Officer Note: Condition 14 refers</i>)

WBC Economic Prosperity and Place (Community Infrastructure)	No objection subject to a condition to secure an Employment and Skills Plan (<i>Officer Note: Condition 24 refers</i>)
WBC Environmental Health	No objection subject to conditions to secure a CEMP (Condition 18), restrict hours of work (Condition 19) and an assessment should any unforeseen contamination be encountered (Condition 20)
WBC Highways	No objection subject to conditions to secure further (<i>Officer Note: conditions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 14, 16 and 18 refer.</i>)
WBC Land Use and Transportation	No objection: the principle of development is supported by the Development Plan; Core Strategy Policy CP21 and MDDL policy CC08 identify the intention to provide a new relief road from Coppid Beech to Finchampstead Road.
WBC Tree & Landscape	No objection subject to conditions to secure more detailed information regarding levels (Condition 10), the materials to be used in construction of the bridge (Condition 11), landscaping (Condition 12), retention of vegetation (Condition 13), tree protection (Condition 14 and informative 3) and a landscape management plan (Condition 15).
WBC Property Services	No comments received
WBC Public Rights of Way	"No comment"

REPRESENTATIONS

Wokingham Without Parish Council (full comments attached):

The principle that a road is required is accepted but it will have a massive impact to the character of the area, local environment and cause disruption during construction.

The Parish lack confidence in the modelling given the current experience with road works in Wokingham Town Centre (*Officer Note: modelling is intended to assess the impact of the proposed development rather than the construction phase*).

The reduction in traffic in Wokingham town centre will be achieved through redistribution of traffic along Waterloo Road, Easthampstead Road, Old Wokingham Road and into Wokingham Without, links that are already stretched at peak times (*Officer Note: the impact has been assessed through the TA and is considered in paragraphs 52-60. Condition 9 also refers*).

There will be disruption during construction, particularly given the lack of cross boundary coordination. Support traffic being routed via William Heelas Way or Peacock Lane rather than Old Wokingham Road but care/alternations may be needed to accommodate construction traffic. (*Officer Note: Unlike the current works in Wokingham town centre, much of the Eastern Gateway can be constructed 'off-line' and the level crossing will remain open until the development is operational, which will*

reduce the impact on the network. Condition 18 will secure a CEMP incorporating a Construction Traffic Management Plan which BFBC will be consulted on, in accordance with their consultation response. See informative 2.)

Extended working hours should be considered to reduce disruption/working hours should be harmonised with other developments (*Officer Note: condition 19 establishes normal working hours, consistent with other developments but allows some flexibility for extended working hours where necessary due to the nature of the project. Extended working would not be appropriate throughout the site/construction period due to the proximity to residential properties, in particularly those in Phase 7 of Montague Park which lie immediately to the west of the proposed bridge).*

There is a significant risk that the full SWDR may not be delivered due to land ownership issues at the Eastern and Western Gateways resulting in a "road to nowhere", causing disruption during construction, additional traffic in Wokingham Without but not reduction in traffic in Wokingham town centre. (*Officer Note: this is a matter for the borough council but not a reason to withhold planning permission for a policy compliant proposal.*)

The cumulative impact of nearby schemes is incomplete and does not include some of the closest developments to the site (*Officer Note: the Wokingham Strategic Transport Model is kept up-to-date with all the latest approved and committed developments in Wokingham and Bracknell Forest and has been used to model the likely impact of this application).*

5. It is doubtful whether the existing tree can be successfully retained in the centre of the proposed roundabout (*Officer Note: paragraphs 28-30 refer*)

6. It is disappointing that there are no proposals to improve existing public footpaths or introduce cycle paths south of the scheme (*Officer Note: the current application relates only to the delivery of the second phase of the SDR. The wider pedestrian and cycle networks will be considered as part of the Masterplanning of the wider SDL as mentioned in paragraph 79).*

Wokingham Town Council (full comments attached): The Town Council supports the principle of the project but objects to the provision of a shared cycleway footway; this is highly dangerous for pedestrians and there is sufficient land available to separate them. (*Officer Note: paragraph 67 refers.*)

The Council also requests that utilities be laid under the footway not the highway for ease of maintenance. (*Officer Note: this is the intention*)

Finchampstead Parish Council (full comments attached): "no objection"

Local Members: No comments received

Neighbours: 29 representations have been received; one in support of the application and 28 from objectors including one from the Berkshire Environmental Association. The planning issues raised are summarised below. The two greatest areas of concern are the impact upon Montague Park and the impact of the closure of the Waterloo Crossing on the Waterloo Road/Rances Lane/Priest Avenue area.

In support of the application:

The sooner the better for Phases 1 & 2

Closure of the crossing would remove the need for the pedestrian warning siren which currently causes disturbance to Waterloo Crossing Cottage.

Objections

Information has been provided on one version of the possible road, rather than Options B and C which were made public in August. Alternative routes should be considered. *(Officer Note: the correct procedure at the planning application stage is to propose a single option, to be assessed on its merits. However, the council considered alternative options during the gestation of the proposals. Three alternative alignments (north, central and south) were consulted on between 23rd June and 22nd August 2014. 81% of respondents preferred the central route - with variations to the alignment south of Knoll Farm and in the vicinity of the existing flood attenuation pond - and the design was progressed on that basis. This was the subject of further public engagement in June and July 2017, prior to submission of the application.)*

Impact on the character and amenity of Montague Park

Montague Park is a well-designed housing estate, well incorporated with the rural parts of Wokingham. It is an established residential community now and provides a quiet, safe environment, especially for children.

William Heelas Way was not designed for HGVs/through traffic. The increase in the amount and speed of traffic – in particular HGV and diesel vehicles – resulting from use as a through road would ruin the character of the development which is already bounded by London Road on the north side; reduce safety on a road which passes/provides access to the Floreat Montague Park Primary School and the resulting noise and pollution would be detrimental to the quality of life. Houses should have been set back further from the road – as along London Road – if it had been known that it would be a through road.

One of the reasons for the SDR is to stop vehicles cutting through residential roads but William Heelas Way is a residential road.

The pavements are not wide enough to be safe.

Cars already speed down the road and traffic calming measures including width restrictions should be put in place (but not speed humps which only slow vehicles for a short period and increase noise and pollution due to constant changes in speed).

A ban/restrictions should be put on HGVs.

The speed limit should be reduced to 20mph given the high level of use by school children/ traffic will be limited to 20mph causing congestion

(Officer Note: as explained in paragraphs 1 & 14-20 the delivery of the South Wokingham Distributor Road, connecting the A329 London Road to the A321 Finchampstead Road, has been a well-established part of the Council's spatial strategy since adoption of the Core Strategy in 2010 and has been the subject of public

consultation prior to and since then. The design of the road is consistent with the principles established by adopted policy and guidance as explained in paragraphs 37-38 & 61-64. The width of the foot/cycle paths at Montague Park is three metres as for the current proposal. Paragraph 67 refers).

People were not aware of the proposal when they purchased homes in Montague Park (*Officer Note: this is not a planning matter*).

Some residents of Montague Park complain of not having received formal notice of the application (*Officer Note: consultation on this application was more extensive than the 60 metre zone required by the council's Statement of Community Involvement including letters to occupants of properties within Montague Park, the Priest Avenue/Rances Lane/Waterloo Road area north of the railway and properties within the SDL boundary south of the railway line*)

Properties in Montague Park will lose value (*Officer Note: this is not a planning matter. However, the impact on residential amenity is. In this case the main impacts would be noise and air quality both during construction and, due to increased through traffic, in the operational phase which are considered in paragraphs 102-113.*)

Closure of the Waterloo Crossing

Some correspondents have objected to the proposed closure previously (*Officer Note: the purpose of consultation is to seek views but balanced decisions have to be reached based on sometimes diverse opinions and material planning considerations*)

Is there an alternative? Much of the adverse comment could be alleviated by creating a new link north of the railway line from Waterloo Road through to the SDR. (*Officer Note: the application must be assessed against planning policy on its own merit. The fact that an alternative option may be considered preferable is not a reason to withhold planning permission for an otherwise acceptable proposal*).

The Waterloo Road level crossing is the only one in Wokingham which does not cause significant delays to road traffic. The Star Lane (Easthampstead Road) crossing is controlled from the station and has longer barrier down time causing gridlock and drivers to drive on the wrong side of the road. (Unless the operation of the Star Lane crossing can be improved) the Waterloo crossing should be kept open. Network Rail want to close the crossing for safety reasons but residents are not aware of an accident at this crossing in the last 20 years (*Officer Note: see paragraphs 52-60 & 83-88*).

Has consideration been given to the impact on Waterloo Road, Rances Lane and Priest Avenue area? If the Waterloo crossing is closed traffic from this area travelling south to Peacock Lane/southern Bracknell/the M3 will have to go either via Rances Lane/Priest Avenue and right onto London Road (which is already difficult due to the amount of traffic and will be necessary to access the new bridge) or via Easthampstead Road, across the Star Lane crossing and into Old Wokingham Road (a dangerous junction, ignored by traffic planners). Getting onto Easthampstead Road is already difficult and will become more so with increased use of this road when the Waterloo Crossing is closed. This will increase journey times, the amount of traffic using these routes and therefore pollution. Closure of the crossing should not be contemplated until there have been improvements (a roundabout?) at the Easthampstead Road/Old Wokingham Road junction and to the operation of the Star Lane crossing. The alternatives are a lengthy

trip route around the town centre or via Finchampstead Road. The crossing should be kept open at least until the SWDR reaches Easthampstead Road. It will be harder for traffic travelling south from north Wokingham to avoid Coppid Beech/Twin Bridges. (*Officer Note: see paragraphs 52-60 and Condition 9*).

Increased cycle traffic, with many cyclists routinely using the pavements, endangers pedestrians and residents attempting to exit driveways (*Officer Note: see paragraph 67*).

Residents only access should be maintained (*Officer Note: this would negate the benefits of closing the crossing and be difficult to enforce*).

Priest Avenue should be closed at the Waterloo End to make it a cul-de-sac with a turning circle to provide access to the cottages by the crossing but preventing access from Easthampstead Road. (*Officer Note: the application must be assessed on its own merit. The existence of other – potentially preferable -options is not a reason to withhold planning permission for an otherwise acceptable scheme*).

Impact on pedestrians and cyclists

The proposal will result in longer travel distances for pedestrians and cyclists and safety will be reduced due to driver frustration resulting from increase congestion (*Officer Note: see paragraphs 52-60 & 65-78*).

Cycling should be normalised as a method of transport by placing cyclists on the road rather than shared foot/cycleways. Cycle speeds range from 10 mph to 15-20 mph plus for a commuting cyclist which is not safe combined with pedestrians; increasing on-carriageway cycling will improve driver awareness. Reasonable consideration has been given to people who choose to cycle but shared cycle/footways can be intimidating for pedestrians and slow journey times for cyclists. Cyclists will increase speed as they descend the bridge. Separate cycleways should be provided or, to minimise conflict, the width of the entire path is increased to 3.5 metres. (*Officer Note: see paragraph 67*)

A pedestrian bridge would improve cycle access (*Officer Note: see the response to the Mid and West Berkshire Access Local Forum under Consultation Responses above*).

Restricted visibility due to the tree in the middle of the roundabout will cause accidents (*Officer Note: see paragraphs 29-30*).

What will happen to the ancient footpaths? (*Officer Note: see paragraphs 71, 78-81*).

Other matters

The road should not be progressed until the connection to Finchampstead Road at Tesco has been resolved (*Officer Note: paragraph 91 refers*).

The traffic modelling (simply looking at junctions rather than travel times and flows) appears insufficient to take account of the complex traffic flows that arise in the congested area of Wokingham. The traffic survey showed volumes of traffic would not increase but it was undertaken over a short period and would not be accurate in the long term. (*Officer Note: modelling has been undertaken in accordance with established practice. Paragraphs 52-60 refer*).

There needs to be a traffic assessment of the impact on Wellington Road for Phase II. Consideration should be given to the impact upon Wellington Road/Station Approach (the closure of Broad Street in September/October 2017 resulted in almost constant queues during the day and heavy vehicle traffic at night in Wellington Road, disturbing residents. The new Wellington Road-Shute End link may relieve congestion but this should be assessed. (*Officer Note: these routes are included in the model*).

The road bridge needs to have one lane in each direction, rather than a single lane requiring traffic to take turns, in order to keep traffic flowing (*Officer Note: this is what is proposed*).

Due to the influx of people to the district congestion is increasing and vehicular access to services in the town is becoming more difficult. (*Officer Note: as explained in the summary, part of the purpose of the SDR is to relieve existing congestion in the town centre*).

Road closures during construction will increase traffic along Easthampstead Road/at the Star Lane crossing: for safety the speed limit between the Heathlands Road junction and Star Lane crossing should be reduced to 30mph from 40mph (this section is frequently used by families with children) and keep clear markings should be provided for 1-8 Holme Green to preserve access while traffic is queueing at the level crossing. (*Officer Note: the majority of the works can be undertaken 'off-line' which will reduce disruption. The need for works in the Easthampstead road corridor will be considered as part of the proposals for the remainder of the SDR*).

Waterloo Crossing Cottage experiences frequent disturbances and obstructions associated with Network Rail accessing the railway line at Waterloo Crossing. The frequency of trains has increased, and a pedestrian warning siren cause disturbance supports the removal of the siren. (*Officer Note: these matters are not related to the current proposals*).

Anti-ram barriers and Network Rail access

The anti-ram barriers will have an unsightly, industrial appearance and are not necessary: it takes seven seconds for a train to pass and it is unlikely anyone could be precise enough to ram one; only once in the last 35 years has a car entered the crossing and that was someone who took their own life; the Star Lane crossing would provide easier access. A less intrusive fence and measures such as retractable road spikes should be consider as an alternative. (*Officer Note: boundary treatment details will be confirmed as part of the landscaping details to comply with Condition 12 and will need to achieve an appropriate balance between security and visual amenity*).

Due to the position of the access gates Network Rail vehicles would park directly outside the bedroom window of Waterloo Crossing Cottage, where the elevation of the road would provide direct views into the window. It is not clear why access is needed if there is no crossing and it could be provided from the south side of the railway or at Star Lane crossing (where there is a layby). (*Officer Note: the scope for overlooking from the adopted highway would be no greater than it currently is when vehicles queue at the crossing barrier*).

Rural character and biodiversity

Chapel Green forms a green lung but due to changes in land management over the last 50 years fewer species are found in the area now.

Hedgerows must be maintained due to their importance for wildlife unless removal is absolutely necessary and provision should be made for features like hedgehog crossings.

Any development south of the spine road near the Western Gateway (SW4) would result in noise and light pollution to the detriment of the rural character of the area. The route of the road dips south but for what purpose as it will be a bypass rather than a landscape feature.

(Officer Note: ecological impacts are considered in paragraphs 123-136)

PLANNING POLICY		
National Policy	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	CP1	Sustainable Development
	CP2	Inclusive Communities
	CP3	General Principles for Development
	CP4	Infrastructure Requirements
	CP6	Managing Travel Demand
	CP7	Biodiversity
	CP9	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
	CP10	Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network
	CP11	Proposals outside development limits (including countryside)
	CP21	South Wokingham Strategic Development Location
	Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	CC01
CC02		Development Limits
CC03		Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
CC04		Sustainable Design and Construction
CC06		Noise
CC08		Safeguarding alignments of the Strategic Transport Network & Road Infrastructure
CC09		Development and Flood Risk (from all sources)
CC10		Sustainable Drainage
TB12		Employment Skills Plan
TB21		Landscape Character
	TB23	Biodiversity and Development

	TB24	Designated Heritage Assets
	TB25	Archaeology
	TB26	Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character
	SAL05	Delivery of avoidance measures for Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)		South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document (October 2011)
		Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (October 2011)
		Wokingham Borough Council Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (June 2012)
		Wokingham Borough Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (July 2013)
		Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (28 May 2010)
		DCLG – National Internal Space Standards

PLANNING ISSUES

Background & consultation:

1. As explained in the summary at the start of this report and more fully in paragraphs 13-20 of the appraisal below, the proposal is for the second phase of the Southern Distributor Road (SDR) which is an integral component of the council's spatial strategy for the period up until 2026. As such the proposal has been the subject of consultation through every stage of the evolution and adoption of planning policy – the Core Strategy, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDDLDP) and the South Wokingham and Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPDs – as well as through the pre-application consultation described in paragraph 19.
2. The Closure of the Waterloo Road level crossing requires stopping up of a section of Waterloo Road either side of the crossing. Following the resolution of the Planning Committee on 13 December 2017, an application for stopping up a section of Waterloo Road was submitted to the Secretary of State for Transport on 15 December 2017. A Draft Order has been issued and will be the subject of consultation from 30 January 2018 to 28 February 2018.

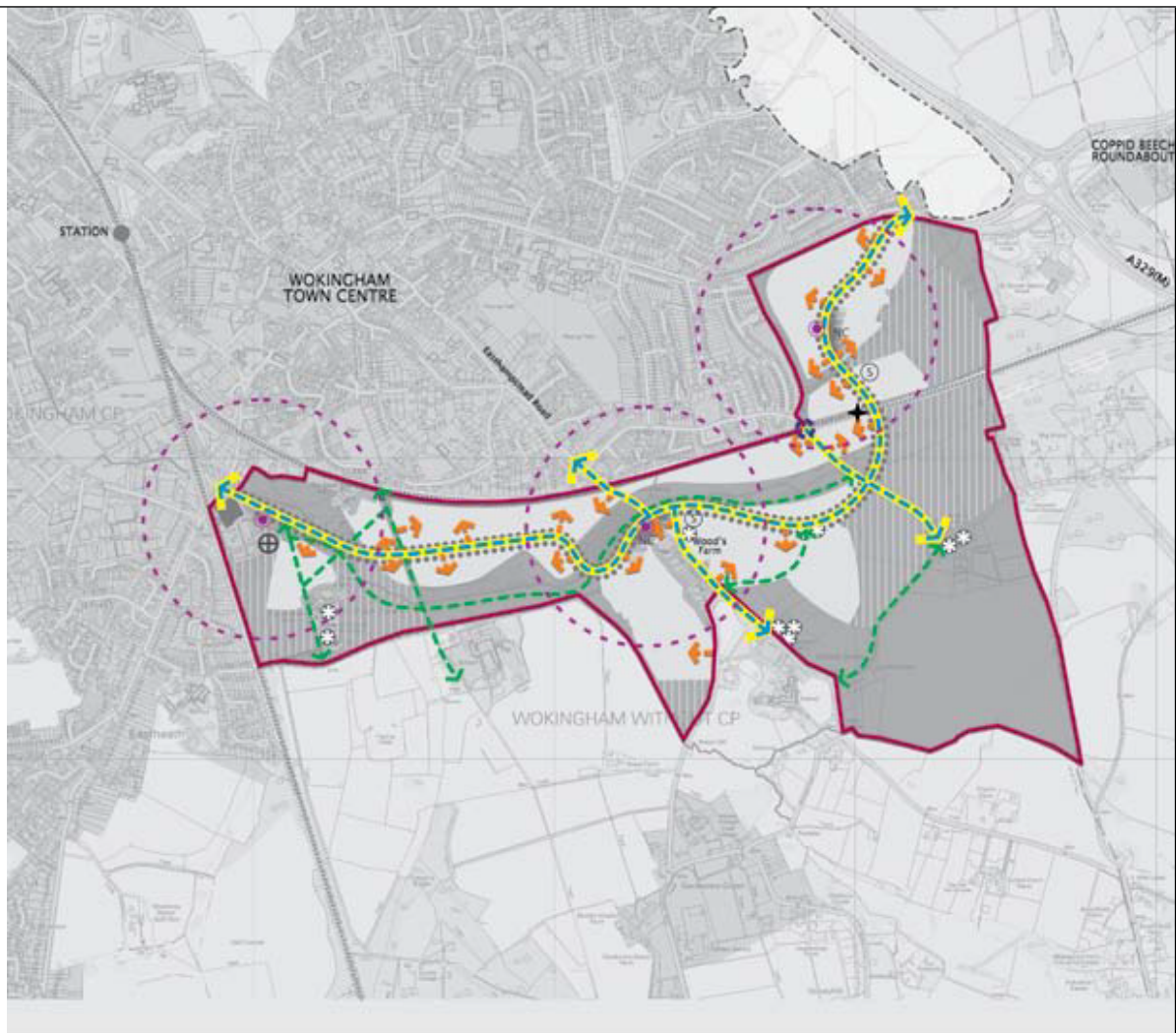
Description of Development:

3. The SDR is planned to be a continuous route connecting the A329 London Road in the north to the A321 Finchampstead Road in the South.

4. The first section of the SDR (William Heelas Way) has already been constructed, extending south from London Road, providing access to the development at Montague Park, and terminating at the Reading-Waterloo railway line.
5. The current application is for the second section of the SDR comprising a 420 metre single carriage way road extending William Heelas Way southwards across the railway line to link to Waterloo Road (350 metres from William Heelas Way to Waterloo Road and a further 70 metres westward required at this stage to provide an alternative access to Brittons Farm). The carriageway is proposed to be 7.3 metres in width with three metre wide, shared foot and cycleways on either side, plus additional land for verges, barriers, drainage, embankments and maintenance strips.
6. The bridge over the railway line will have an overall height of approximately eight metres (6.5 metres high retaining walls or embankments plus a parapet).
7. Waterloo Road is currently a single carriageway road which runs east from its junction with Easthampstead Road, through a residential area for approximately 800 metres before turning south, across the railway (at an at-grade, barrier controlled level crossing) and continuing south, where the road becomes more rural in character.
8. A four-arm roundabout is proposed at the intersection of the new section of the SDR with Waterloo Road. (Options appraisals found a roundabout to be preferable to a T-junction or crossroads because it provides the appropriate level of capacity for all movements while encouraging use of the SDR rather than alternative routes, allows the retention of a TPO tree and keeps the alignment away from the Grade II listed Britton's Farm).
9. The southern arm will quickly merge back into the existing alignment of Waterloo Road with a maintenance access being provided on the existing alignment immediately to the south of the roundabout.
10. The intention is that once the new link opens the level crossing on Waterloo Road (approximately 260m north of the proposed roundabout) will be closed to all traffic and pedestrians with just a short stub provided to facilitate access to future development parcels.
11. A western stub will form the westward continuation of the SDR which is currently being prepared by the Councils highway consultants and will follow later this year with an application submission. The transport assessment has been worked up for the entire SDR and identify the junction options and potential mitigations required. A number of these junctions associated with the wider SDR delivery have been referenced within condition 9.
12. The access to the Britton's Farm and Wokingham Footpath 5 currently join Waterloo Road in the immediate vicinity of the proposed roundabout. The incorporation of an additional arm would complicate the design and function of the roundabout. Hence, it is proposed to divert the Britton's Farm access onto the SDR, leaving the PRoW on its existing route. (Condition 7 secures the detailed design of the new Britton's Farm access which is discussed in more detail in paragraphs 80-82.)

Principle of Development:

13. The National Planning Policy Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through in Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDDLDP) policy CC01, which states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
14. The *Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010)* sets out the spatial strategy for the borough for the period up until 2026, establishing that the majority of new housing will be in four Strategic Development Locations (SDLs). 2,500 of these new homes – together with the infrastructure to support them - are to be in an urban extension at South Wokingham (policies CP17 and CP21).
15. Core Strategy policy CP21, *South Wokingham Strategic Development Location*, amplified by Appendix 7, the *South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)* (the South Wokingham SPD) and the *Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD* (the Infrastructure SPD) establish requirements for the development. These include – among other things - delivery of a continuous new road connecting the A329 London Road in the vicinity of the Coppid Beech roundabout to the A321 Finchampstead Road in the vicinity of the Tesco roundabout: the Southern Distributor Road (SDR). Its delivery is one of the strategic objectives for the site identified at A7.44 c) and it is a key element of the Infrastructure identified in the Infrastructure SPD. Furthermore the route of the road is safeguarded by MDDLDP policy CC08 *Safeguarding alignments of the Strategic Transport Network & Road Infrastructure* and Appendix 3.
16. Consistent with the requirements of Core Strategy policies CP6, *Managing Travel Demand* and CP10, *Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network*, Appendix 7, paragraph A7.42 d) explains that the route should fulfil three important functions:
 - i) *It should enhance the street network within the town to allow for a wider dispersal of traffic, thus relieving some pressure on the town centre.*
 - ii) *It should act as a bus corridor serving both local and strategic needs, and should cater for comfortable and safe pedestrian and cycle movement.*
 - iii) *It should be a key public street within Wokingham, with a civic quality. It should be fronted by development and can serve as a location for commercial and community activity.”*
17. The Preferred Spatial Framework Plan, Figure 3.1 in the South Wokingham SPD provides a broad indication of the route of the SDR and Figure 4.6: Transport and Movement Diagram (see below) identifies it as a primary street connecting to the existing movement network, at Easthampstead Road and Waterloo Road as well as London Road and Finchampstead Road.



18. The first section of the road – between London Road and the Reading-Waterloo railway line – has already been delivered as part of the development of 650 dwellings and associated infrastructure at Montague Park (formerly Buckhurst Farm) (outline planning permission O/2010/1712 was granted in December 2012). It is known as William Heelas Way. The position of the bridge over the railway line was fixed by this application, which secured the land required for the bridge on the north side of the railway line.
19. The route of the road south of the railway line has been refined through a detailed options appraisal, followed by public consultation during summer 2014 when people were asked to express a preference for one of three routes: a northern route parallel to the railway line; a central route; or a southern route along the edge of the SDL. The outcome was a clear preference (86%) for a variant of the central route. Accordingly, on 27 November 2014 the Executive resolved to allocate funds to progress the design, followed by a further resolution on 26 March 2015 to progress site investigations and design for the second phase of the road – the Eastern Gateway consisting of the bridge over the railway line and a short section of road connecting William Heelas Way to Waterloo Road - to a planning application. Further engagement took place during June and July 2017, prior to submission of this application to inform people how the proposals had been informed by previous consultation.

20. The current proposal is for the Eastern Gateway and is entirely consistent with the policies set out in paragraphs 13-19 and the central alignment, established as the preferred route through consultation (paragraph 19), so is acceptable in principle.

Character of the Area:

Landscape and visual impact

21. Core Strategy Policies CP1, *Sustainable Development* and CP3, *General Principles for Development* require a high quality design that respects its context.
22. This requirement is amplified by MDDL Policies CC03, *Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping* and TB21, *Landscape Character* and South Wokingham SPD which require development proposals to protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure, retaining existing trees, hedges and other landscape features and incorporating high quality - ideally native - planting as an integral part of any scheme, within the context of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment.
23. Core Strategy Appendix 7 identifies the landscape setting of the South Wokingham SDL as the key determinant of the urban form (A7.42) and the strategic objectives for the site include embedding the new development within its landscape setting, structured around existing landscape features and notable buildings (A7.44) with a network of open space along the Emmbrook corridor.
24. The site falls within landscape character assessment area N1, Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland (Landscape Character Assessment SPD), a predominant pastoral area with smaller areas of arable land. The landscape is gently undulating, opening out into flatter areas east of Holme Green, and is set within a partially wooded context. The undulating landform, peaceful character and the open pastoral farmland and paddocks are the strongest element of the landscape.
25. The Chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement *Landscape and Visual* considers the outcome of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). Consistent with the landscape Character Assessment it concludes that the site is situated in flat to gently undulating landscape comprising mainly agricultural land to the south and south west and built up urban areas to the north and west. The agricultural land is generally organised into medium-sized, geometrically shaped fields defined by hedgerows of varying quality (some with small blocks of trees) and/or fencing, which results in a relatively open character in places with views towards the urban edge of Wokingham. In contrast, some relatively large areas of woodland to the east, result in a more visually contained landscape and reducing the influence of the A329(M). The proximity to the urban edge of Wokingham (including Montague Park) the railway line and the pylons gives rise to an urban-fringe character.

Trees and hedgerows

26. A number of oak trees in the hedgerows along Waterloo Road are protected under TPO 1340/2010 & TPO 1376/2011. All but two of these on the southern side of Waterloo Road where the new road ties into the existing) are proposed to be retained.
27. Six individual trees (two grade B and four grade C) plus a small tree-group, part of two other tree groups - none of which are protected - and some sections of hedgerow will need to be removed to accommodate the bridge and new roundabout.

28. One of the significant trees included in TPO 1340/2010 - T11, a category B hedgerow oak - lies at the intersection of the SDR with Waterloo Road. Given the importance of this tree the scheme has been designed so the tree can be retained at the centre of the proposed new roundabout. The applicant's Arboricultural Impact Assessment acknowledges that it will be necessary to carry out extensive ground works in the vicinity of the tree and a methodology for these works has been provided, together with a recommendation that they are carried out under arboricultural supervision.
29. It has been suggested in representations that the tree cannot be successfully retained and will in any case obstruct visibility: it would be better to accept its loss, mitigated with new planting elsewhere.
30. Waterloo Road currently passes beneath the crown of this tree and the 28 metre diameter central island of the roundabout will comfortably accommodate its 24 metre root protection area. The Landscape Officer is confident that with the space available and the tree protection and supervision proposed (conditions 13 & 14 refer) the tree can be successfully retained. Visibility requirements for circulating vehicles are around rather than across the roundabout. The tree already has a reasonably high canopy to allow for vehicular clearance along Waterloo Road and, as proposed, it will overhang the roundabout rather than the carriageway. Little if any work will be required to achieve the two metre canopy height required to achieve adequate visibility for lorry drivers and as it will not overhang the carriageway clearance for high vehicles is not an issue (Conditions 5 & 14 will secure any necessary works. Informative 3 also refers). There are examples in the borough – at the Wellingtonia and Carnival roundabouts - where trees grow on roundabouts without detriment to highway safety.
31. The trees that line Clay Lane area also protected under TPO1336/2010. The proposals include resurfacing the southern section of Clay Lane and increasing its width to three metres, to facilitate its use by non-motorised travellers (see paragraph 71). The Arboricultural Impact Assessment does not consider the potential impact upon these trees but the Landscape Officer has visited the site and is satisfied that, subject to Condition 14, the necessary works can be carried out without harm to these trees.
32. Subject to detailed design and appropriate protection during construction (conditions 3, 6 & 14 plus informative 3 refer) the other trees it is proposed to keep could also be successfully retained.
33. The ES concludes that there will be adverse short term effects during construction, with the greatest impact being on views from Locks Farm & House and Footpath 5.
34. During the operational phase the road and bridge with embankments and retaining walls (up to 6.5m above ground level with the parapets increasing the height to about eight metres) plus lighting columns (eight metres high on the bridge and ten meters around the roundabout) together with passing traffic on what is currently largely underdeveloped land, will inevitably change the local landscape character.
35. Mitigation measures are proposed to reduce the adverse landscape and visual effects of the development and compensate for the loss of vegetation: these have been formulated, with reference to guidelines within the Landscape Character

Assessment SPD and help integrate the development into the surrounding landscape. The landscaping proposals include reinstatement or strengthening of retained hedgerows and planting of new hedgerows, incorporating occasional mature standard trees, together with small blocks of woodland, using locally occurring native species. This will help integrate the development into the rural landscape and soften views towards it. Seeding of highway verges and embankments with species rich grass will also integrate with existing unimproved roadside verges in the adjacent landscape and help increase habitats and biodiversity.

36. In the short-term (the first year) there would be a moderate adverse effect due to the introduction of a linear feature into the predominantly agricultural landscape but this would diminish to a minor adverse effect in the long-term (15 years) as the landscape mitigation establishes.

The design of the road and bridge

37. Appendix 7.42 (see paragraph 16) and the SPD also establish clear expectations regarding the function and character of the SDR and how it relates to other development within the SDL and wider area. The development as a whole should be designed on traditional perimeter block principles (Design Principle 2) with different character and street typologies helping differentiate distinct neighbourhoods within the development. There should be a hierarchy street types, designed to the principles of Manual for Streets and differentiated by their design, landscaping and the materials used (design principles 3a, 5a & 5b) providing a continuous, permeable network for movement by all modes. As established by Appendix A7.42 the SDR should be a street with civic quality and a focus for local activity as well as forming part of the strategic network (as explained in paragraphs 62-63 the proposed 7.3 metre carriageway width can accommodate large goods vehicles and buses). It should have a formal character with emphasis on hard landscaping and formal tree planting will be an essential component: relatively dense, “*urban residential*” development of townhouses, terraces and apartments should provide a continuous building frontage and a degree of enclosure along the route. There will be limited opportunities for frontage accesses directly off the SDR and parking for the dwellings fronting it is likely to be in parking courts, mews lanes or private drives, parallel to the street (Design Principle 3e).

38. The concept underlying the design of William Heelas Way is that of a tree lined boulevard. The cross-section of the proposed road, including the bridge is consistent with the guidance in the SDP and the pattern established at Montague Park, with the carriageway flanked by a shared foot and cycle path and verge (see paragraphs 61-77 for further consideration of how the route will meet the needs of travellers). However, the approach to landscaping has been modified due to the constraints of planting on the bridge and associated structures. Whereas the tree planting along William Heelas Way is within the verges, immediately adjacent to the paths the construction of the bridge and embankments would not permit structural tree planting so a narrower 1.5-2.0 metre wide verge is proposed adjoining the path, with a wider landscape strip – around four metres – at the base of the embankments and retaining walls.

39. The aspiration is for the bridge across the railway to be a high quality design and act as a local landmark (Core Strategy A7.47 c) and Design principle 5a(iv)).

However, this must be balanced against the high cost of infrastructure of this nature (which is being delivered by the council from CIL and S106 contributions).

40. A low key approach has been taken, which seeks to assimilate the bridge into the surrounding landscape as far as possible rather than create an eye-catching structure. On the south side of the railway the bridge is proposed to be supported by embankments which can be planted, allowing the structure to 'blend' into the surrounding landscape to some extent. Because the embankments will be engineering structures it will not be possible to carry out structural tree planting on them but space has been allowed for planting at their base where small blocks of native woodland are proposed, including a number of extra heavy standard trees (14-16cm girth and a height of around four metres depending on the species) for instant impact. Due to the proximity to the newly constructed 3G artificial pitch at the Floreat Montague Park Primary School and the wish to achieve a balanced design retaining walls are proposed on the northern side of the railway, with structural planning at their base, similar to the south side. The possibility of growing climbing plants up the retaining wall has been explored but was resisted by the council's structures department, who are responsible for the maintenance of highway structure, because such planting would obscure the wall making inspection more difficult. Condition 12 will secure amplification and implementation of the landscaping proposals and condition 11 will secure further details of the materials and appearance of the bridge.
41. For accessibility reasons the approach to the bridge has been designed with a shallow gradient but this means there will be limited opportunities for development fronting onto this section of the SDR. However, there may still be opportunities for development providing surveillance as has been achieved in Phase 7 at Montague Park; this will be addressed through the masterplanning of the adjacent development.

The setting of nearby heritage assets

42. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 establishes a statutory duty to consider the effect on heritage assets: special regard should be had to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their setting. This is reinforced by MDDL Policy TB24 *Designated Heritage Assets*.
43. The impact upon listed buildings is considered in Chapter 5 of the Environmental Statement *Cultural Heritage*.
44. There are no statutorily designated assets within the application site; nor does it lie within a Conservation Area. However, there are four listed buildings in the vicinity: Lock's House (Grade II*) an 18th century farm house with later 19th century additions and Lock's Barn (Grade II) are located 300 metres to the south-east; Britton's Farmhouse and Barn (both Grade II listed) date from the 17th century with latter additions and are located less than 200 metres to the south-west of the Proposed Scheme. Both historic farmsteads are set back from Waterloo Road in relatively tranquil locations and the Environmental Statement recognises the contribution made by the rural character and functional association of the application site (and surrounding area) to the setting of these buildings and that harm to the setting arises from the proposed development. Following mitigation, this residual harm to the setting of these buildings would be Major (in the case of Locks House) and Moderate (in the case of Locks Barn, Britton's Farmhouse and Britton's Barn).

45. Whilst acknowledging that this setting makes a contribution to the significance of these assets, the Environmental Statement concludes that the development would have a 'negligible effect on the significance of the asset itself' (because the setting is not in itself a heritage asset).
46. The Conservation Officer differs; his view is that if this setting makes a contribution to the significance of the building, a 'major' impact on the setting is bound to have more than a negligible impact on the significance of the asset itself. He considers the harm to overall significance of these listed buildings arising from this element of the SDL development to be at the lower end of 'less than substantial'. It is likely that there will be a further impact arising from the subsequent extension of this road and associated new housing, particularly to the setting of Britton's Farmstead. One aspect of this is the proposed alterations to the access to Britton's Farm (see paragraphs 80-82), which historic maps show was also the historic entrance.
47. The approach to the farmstead together with the patchwork of small, irregular fields and hedgerows, survive in a similar form as they were when these buildings formed part of a working farm and thus contribute to its historic value. The loss of the main entrance, hedgerows and field patterns and replacement with the proposed roundabout, new access road and distributor road, will result in harm to the significance of Britton's Farm and Barn. This harm is considered to be *'less than substantial'* in NPPF terms but nevertheless should be attributed *'considerable importance and weight'* in the planning balance.
48. Harm from both this phase and future phases will lead to a cumulative negative impact on the significance of these listed buildings which will need to be weighed in the balance against the anticipated, substantial public benefits.
49. Paragraph 65 of the NPPF is generally supportive delivery of infrastructure which promotes high levels of sustainability providing townscape impacts are mitigated, except where material harm would be caused to a development designated heritage asset or its setting and this is not outweighed by the proposal's economic, social and environmental benefits. Paragraph 132 explains that "*when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation*"; development within in the asset's setting harm significance and any harm to the significance should require "*clear and convincing justification*". Paragraph 134 explains that "*where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal...*".
50. In this case the SDL including the SDR was designated, to help meet the need for new housing, in full knowledge that there were listed buildings within its boundary and that there would be an impact upon their setting and, providing appropriate mitigation is secured the overall benefits of the SDL, including providing some traffic relief in the town centre, will outweigh the harm to these heritage assets. On balance, despite the less than substantial harm to the listed buildings, the impact is acceptable subject to conditions to secure schemes for landscaping and lighting (conditions 12 & 16 refer).

Access and Movement:

51. Core Strategy Policies CP1, *Sustainable Development* and CP6, *Managing Travel Demand* seek to manage travel demand by a variety of measures. New development to be located to minimise the need to travel and where there are (or will be at the time of development) a choice of modes of transport available. It should also improve the existing infrastructure network, mitigate adverse impacts on the network, enhance road safety and avoid highway or traffic related environmental problems. The South Wokingham SDL is an urban extension, allocated because of its proximity to the facilities in Wokingham Town centre and the potential to improve the existing network (in particular capacity improvements along the A321 and A329) and mitigate existing town centre congestion by providing an alternative route. This is recognised by Core Strategy Policies CP10, *Improvements in the Strategic Transport Network* and CP21, *South Wokingham Strategic Development Location* which amplify CP6, identifying specific measures relevant to the South Wokingham SDL including provision of the SDR and improved provision for travel by means other than the private car.

Traffic generation/modelling

52. The Wokingham Strategic Transport Model 3 (WSTM3) has been used as the basis for the scheme assessment.

53. For the Transport Assessment (TA) (and to inform the Environmental Statement) five scenarios were modelled in addition to the 2016 base year:

- the year of opening (2019) without the proposed development;
- 2019 with development consisting of the current proposal - including closure of the Waterloo level crossing - the completion of development at Montague Park and 100 dwellings south of the railway line;
- the future assessment year (2026 which is the end of the plan period) without the proposed development;
- 2026 with the full SDR but without the associated development within the SDL; and
- 2026 with the full SDR and the associated development within the SDL.

Other cumulative development was included in all five scenarios. This approach allows the impact at different stages of development to be compared and generates a “worst case” scenario for 2026 without the development, allowing the impacts arising from solely from the proposed development and the traffic arising from development within the SDL to be differentiated.

54. Modelling included the junctions of Easthampstead Road with Peach Street, Murdoch Road and Waterloo Road plus the Star Lane level crossing; Waterloo Road with Rances Lane and Priest Avenue plus the new SDR junction; London Road with Priest Avenue and Rances Lane and the SDR (including the signalised junction with the Northern Distributor Road (NDR) & Coppid Beech); Old Wokingham Road with Peacock Lane, West Road/Esthampstead Road, Nine Mile Ride and Hatch Ride.

55. The 2019 scenarios show a mixed impact on local junctions: the scheme is forecast to result in improvements at the Easthampstead Road/Waterloo Road junction which would have been over capacity without it; there would also be improvements at the Peach Street/Esthampstead Road and Waterloo Road/Old Wokingham Road/Peacock Lane priority junctions, which would experience capacity issues

without the scheme; the scheme would result in an improvement at London Road/Rances Lane although the junction would nevertheless remain over capacity; and there would be a negative impact at the Old Wokingham Road/West Road/Easthampstead Road, London Road/Priest Avenue, SDR/London Road and Easthampstead Road/Murdoch Road junctions.

56. Reassignment of traffic resulting from the proposals would result in a decrease in peak hour, traffic flow on Priest Avenue, parts of Waterloo Road and parts of Easthampstead Road with a corresponding increase on the A329 London Road west of Plough Lane.
57. In 2026 the full SDR has a generally positive impact across the network as a result of traffic re-assignment with improvements notably at Easthampstead Road/Waterloo Road and Waterloo Road/Rances Lane but also at Easthampstead Road/Murdoch Road, Priest Avenue/Waterloo Road, Easthampstead Road/Peach Street, and Rances Lane/London Road. Old Wokingham Road/West Road/Easthampstead Road, Old Wokingham Road/Peacock Lane and London Road/Priest Avenue would be over capacity regardless.
58. The modelling has identified six off-site junctions that may require improvement as a result of the proposed development. They are:
 - Old Wokingham Road/ Waterloo Road/ Peacock Lane
 - Easthampstead Road/ Old Wokingham Road/ West Road
 - Nine Mile Ride/ Old Wokingham Road
 - Old Wokingham Road/ Hatch Ride
 - Heathlands Road/Easthampstead Road
 - Murdoch Road/ Easthampstead Rd

However, the need for works cannot be confirmed until further work has been done on the design of the remainder of the SDR, in particular the junctions with Easthampstead Road (and the interaction with the Star Lane level crossing) and with Finchampstead Road. Depending on the design of these key junctions, the scope of the required works could change. Condition 9 will secure junction improvements as necessary.

59. There is potential for a decrease in traffic movements on the majority of assessed links, most notably parts of the A329 London Road, Waterloo Road, Easthampstead Road plus all of Priest Avenue and Rances Lane experiencing a decrease in traffic flow. The exceptions are Waterloo Road south of the SDR and southern parts of Easthampstead Road which would experience increased traffic flows.
60. Overall the proposed scheme would be beneficial to the highway network in south Wokingham and the wider area: the SDR would be more attractive to non-local traffic than the existing route along the A321 and A329, providing relief from road traffic for the community on the southern side of Wokingham. Re-assignment of traffic along the SDR would increase reserve capacity at key junctions in both 2019 and 2026 and traffic flows on a number of key links are forecast to decrease with the full SDR, offering journey time savings and reduced congestion.

Design Requirements

61. The design requirements for the SDR are set out in the South Wokingham SPD (Design Principle 5a) and some aspects have already been considered in paragraphs 37-41.

Design requirement	Southern Distributor Road
General function	To carry all vehicles travelling through South Wokingham, to connect neighbourhoods and to give access and exposure to the centres
Public Transport	Main public transport route
Design criteria	Carriageways should be sufficient width to carry public transport. Cycle provision should be incorporated into the street. Generous pedestrian footpaths should be created along both sides. Tree planting along both sides of the street should be achieved
Frontage development	Continuous throughout the built areas
On street parking	In designated bays only through agreement with the Highway Authority.
Vehicle cross over	Limited opportunities

62. The width of the carriageway needs to be sufficient to fulfil the road's general function of carrying vehicles, including through traffic (a proportion of which will be Large Goods Vehicles (LGV) servicing businesses in the Town Centre and the Molly Millars Lane Core Employment Area) and buses (Core Strategy Policy CP10 requires improvements to the quality and frequency of public transport services and SPD Design Principle 5c requires provision to make for sustainable travel choices). The proposed carriageway width of 7.3 metres.

63. William Heelas Way is a single carriageway with a minimum width of 6.1 metres widening to at least 7.3 metres on bends and a speed limit of 30mph. The design is one that will keep actual speeds to or below the speed limit. The design incorporates pedestrian and cycle facilities along the route with crossing points being provided at appropriate intervals.

64. The proposal meets these design requirements and has been subject to an independent, Stage 1 Road Safety Audit.

Non-motorised users

65. The requirements of Core Strategy policies CP6 & CP10 include providing for a choice of sustainable modes of travel and improving infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists and those with reduced mobility. Consistent with these policies, the South Wokingham SPD requires first priority to be given to the safety, comfort and convenience of pedestrians, followed by cyclist and public transport users; a clear network of safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle routes should be provided, linking beyond the SDL boundary to provide good connectivity and encourage sustainable travel.

66. A Non-Motorised User (NMU) Audit has been undertaken to assess the impact of the proposal on pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians, with particular consideration to needs of disabled people, who may use any of these modes or may require other equipment such as wheelchairs.

67. This proposal is for a section of the SDR, extending William Heelas Way southwards, across the railway and – as anticipated by adopted planning policy and guidance – will form the main corridor for movement through the SDL. Following the pattern established by the South Wokingham SPD and William Heelas Way (and also the Northern Distributor Road) it will provide three metre wide, shared foot and cycle paths on either side, thus providing direct route through the development for local and trips and longer journeys by non-motorised methods. The use of shared foot and cycleways is common practice and provides an appropriate balance between traveller safety and efficient use of space, providing the opportunity to cycle off-carriageway where there are significant vehicular flows but the level of pedestrian and cycle use is low enough to avoid conflict: this is such a situation. The three metre width meets national standards for unsegregated facilities which are reflected in the council's *Cycling Infrastructure Style Guide* (2013). The new section of road will connect into the footpath network in Montague Park and beyond, and to Waterloo Road. The SDL development on either side of it will provide opportunities to develop a network radiating out from the SDR and connecting into the existing network.
68. The main impact for non-motorised users is the closure of the level crossing, which is proposed for safety reasons (see paragraphs 83-85). Eliminating the risks of using the level crossing benefit those travelling by non-motorised means but also inconvenience them by making the route less direct.
69. Currently the distance along Waterloo Road from Clay Lane to the location of the proposed new roundabout is around 325 metres. There is a footpath to the north of the railway line but none to the south.
70. The proposed alternative route is from Waterloo Road north of the railway onto Clay Lane, through Phase 7 of Montague Park to the SDR, over the new bridge and south along the SDR to Waterloo Road.
71. The southern end of Clay Lane is a byway and, at the time of the NMU Audit, had no formal surfacing beyond the turning head at the junction with Waterloo Road. The Audit concluded that due to its uneven surface, insufficient width and overhanging vegetation it is not currently suitable for wheelchair users and recommended that the southern section of the Lane (approximately 35 metres from Waterloo Road to the point where it joins the path network within Montage Park) should be formally surface with a minimum width of three metres. Since the Audit the council's PROW team have carried out improvements to the surface of Clay Lane: the path is now generally 2.5 metres wide along its entire length, with a few narrower sections (constructed from road planings with a 4mm line stone dust surface dressing). While this is an improvement and suitable for recreational use it is not appropriate as the main NMU link across the railway between what will be two residential areas and further works will be necessary to bring it up to the standard recommended by the Audit. The Landscape Officer is satisfied that the necessary works – including an increase in width to three metres - can be implemented without harm to the TPO trees that line Clay Lane (see paragraph 31), most likely using a combination reusing the existing sub-based and no-dig construction methods. Condition 6 will secure the necessary improvements and condition 14 will ensure the construction of the path does not harm the adjacent trees. Informative 3 also refers.

72. The reserved matters for Phase 7 of Montague Park (Site Layout Drawing No C2274-P002 Rev K) include an approximately 115 metre long, three metre wide pedestrian and cycle path connecting Clay Lane to the residential street within Phase 7 (this was originally proposed to be a footpath but was upgraded once it became apparent that it would probably become the primary route across the railway line for non-motorised users). This path, which has already been constructed (with the exception of the connection to Clay Lane which is to be constructed shortly), runs through an area of public open space, adjacent to a pond but with houses providing surveillance at its eastern end. It is top dressed tarmac with a fine gravel surface which provides a durable surface for the intended use but is appropriate to the setting within the area of open space.
73. Depending on the route take it would be 220-240 metres from the eastern end of this path to the foot of the bridge through residential streets; these are tertiary streets but have a footpath on at least one side and traffic levels would be low enough for cyclists to safely use the carriageway.
74. Thus, the alternative route would be approximately 720 metres, an increase of around 395 metres; roughly 2.2 times and the distance. The inconvenience of the less direct route must be balanced against the safety benefits of avoiding crossing the railway and not having to walk in the carriageway south of the crossing.
75. The design of the SDR (both William Heelas Way north of the railway and the proposed new section south of the railway) includes three metre wide shared foot and cycleway on both sides of the road: the intention is that this will continue along its entire length. This continues over the bridge which has been designed with gradients to comply with DMRB guidance (specifically TA 90/05 *The Geometric Design of Pedestrian, Cycle and Equestrian Routes*): 1:24 on the north side and 1:22 on the south side, so less than 5%.
76. The route through Montague Park is on land that is intended to be adopted by the council, either as adopted highway or public open space. Phase 7 is approaching completion (there are 43 dwellings still to be completed in Phase 7 of which 30 are already under construction) so it is anticipated the phase will be complete before the bridge opens.
77. The design of the roundabout at the intersection of the SDR with Waterloo Road, incorporates dropped kerbs, tactile paving and pedestrian and cyclist refuge islands on all four arms.
78. There are no bridleways or formal cycle routes in the immediate vicinity but the TA identifies five Public Rights of Way (PRoW) in the vicinity of the development, two of which would be affected to some extent by the development. Clay Lane is a restricted Byway (WOKI RB26) except for the southern circa 95 metres which is a Byway (WOKI BW26) and the implications for this path are considered in paragraphs 31 and 70-71. Wokingham Without Footpath 5 (WOKW FP5) extends from Easthampstead Road, opposite the junction with Heathlands Road, to Waterloo Road on the site of the proposed new roundabout. The implications of this are consider in paragraphs 46-47 and 80-82.

79. The network for non-motorised travel serves a recreational purpose as well as for day-to-day travel and the South Wokingham SPD highlights the importance of protecting and enhancing pedestrian and cycle access to the countryside including routes from Wokingham Town Centre. The proposed development maintains access across the railway and the wider network, including how it integrates with existing PRow, will be considered through the masterplanning of the wider development within the SDL south of the railway.

Access to Britton's Farm

80. Britton's Farm lies on the western side of Waterloo Road. Access to it is along Wokingham Without Footpath 5, with a priority junction where it joins Waterloo Road; this is in the immediate vicinity of the proposed new roundabout. A fifth arm off the new roundabout, with a very low level of use, would have implications for the design and function of the roundabout. Hence, it is proposed that an alternative vehicular access be provided from the western arm off the roundabout (the continuation of the SDR). The route of the PRow would remain as it is and join the footpath on the south side of the roundabout.

81. This would require the removal of a short section of hedgerow which is considered in paragraphs 27, 33-36 and 126. Britton's Farm is listed and the impact on the setting of the heritage asset is consider in paragraphs 45-47 .

82. The proposal would secure satisfactory access to the farm and is, therefore, acceptable in this regard (Condition 7 refers). However, it may be that alternative proposals are put forward as masterplanning for the surrounding area progresses: these will be assessed on their own merit and may supersede the current proposals.

Closure of the Waterloo Road level crossing

83. The Waterloo Crossing is currently an at grade level crossing with automatic half barriers.

84. Network Rail has a programme of closing level crossings where they can. Crossings are subject to regular risk assessments which consider factors such as location, the level of use (rail, road and pedestrian) and the history of near misses and accidents. These assessments inform their level crossing management strategy, with high risk crossings being included in their level crossing risk reduction programme. The organisation considers closure to be the most effective way of reducing risk and crossings not in the risk reduction programme may also be closed where opportunities arise.

85. The Waterloo Crossing was last assessed in September 2017. The risk to crossing users was ranked as E (on a scale of A to M, with A being highest risk) and the collective risk (for all people using the crossing including staff and passengers on the train) was ranked as 2 (on a scale of 1-13 with one being highest risk). The key risks are identified as the high level of use, sun glare and the frequency of trains.

86. The South Wokingham SPD (paragraph 2.2.1) identifies the inability of existing level crossings at Waterloo Road and Easthampstead Road (the Star Lane Crossing) to cope with traffic numbers as a constraint to development and acknowledges Network Rail's long-term objective to close the level crossings. SPD Design Principle 5a(iii) and Figure 4.6: *Transport and Movement Diagram* identify the potential for pedestrian, cycle and bus access across the Waterloo Road level

crossing but development should not prejudice the closure of the Waterloo Crossing in future.

87. Since the proposal would secure an alternative route across the railway for non-motorised users (see paragraphs 68-74) Network Rail wish to progress a full closure at this stage.
88. Concerns have been raised in representations about the impact of the closure on residents of the Priest Avenue, Rances Lane, Waterloo Road area in terms of increased length (distance and duration due to congestion) of journeys to the south. Residents of this area will be inconvenienced to some extent but this must be balanced against the wider benefits of the proposals in relieving town centre traffic (which in itself supports the regeneration of the town).

Construction Environmental Management Plan

89. A framework Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) has been provided. Until the proposed bridge is completed, the site will be dissected by the railway line and it is anticipated that there will be two compounds; one north and one south of the railway. Depending upon the activity being undertaken, the frequency of HGV traffic for delivery works is anticipated range from a minimum of five vehicles per day in the early stages of construction to up to 70 vehicles per day. Construction traffic will utilise the strategic road network travelling from the M4 Junction 10, along the A329(M) to the Coppid Beech Roundabout and approaching the northern compound via London Road and William Heelas Way and the southern compound via Vigar Way, Peacock Lane and Waterloo Road.
90. Condition 18 will secure a CEMP which will cover access to and operation of the site as well as mitigation of other environmental impacts during construction, including those referred to in the sections of this report relating to environmental health and ecological issues.

Phasing

91. SPD Design principle 6a requires development to be sequenced in a manner which sees the delivery of essential services and facilities early in the development of the SDL in order to begin to establish local community. The SDR a crucial element of the infrastructure required to support the development at South Wokingham, being required to provide access to development in the SDL without undue impact on the existing network as well providing traffic relief to support environmental improvements in the town centre. Hence, it the Executive decision (see paragraph 19) to bringing forward the Eastern Gateway in advance of the remainder of the road.

Flooding and Drainage:

92. In accordance with the sequential approach established by the NPPF, Core Strategy Policy CP1 and MDDL Policies CC09 and CC10 establish that new development should avoid increasing and where possible reduce flood risk (from all sources) by first developing in areas with lowest flood risk (Flood Zone 1), carrying out a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) where required and managing surface water in a sustainable manner. These requirements are reinforced by South Wokingham SPD Design Principle 1c(ii) which requires provision of a comprehensive system for water management, which takes account of existing features and includes proposals for effective sustainable urban drainage (SuDS), measures to avoid flood risk and new

ponds. The Emm Brook (a main river) flows through the SDL to the southwest of the current application site, with a tributary (an ordinary water course) flowing across the application site. Paragraph 2.2.1 of the SPD acknowledges that there are areas that are subject to flooding (predominantly to the west of Waterloo Road) which are not suitable for development but can be interwoven into the green infrastructure strategy for the SDL.

93. The NPPF (paragraphs 102 & 104) explains that both the Sequential Test and Exceptions Test need to be passed for a site to be allocated. For sites within Flood Zones 2 & 3 which have been allocated in a development plan through the Sequential Test - as is the case with the South Wokingham SDL - it is not necessary to carry out a further sequential test.
94. The Wokingham Borough Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA, February 2012, paragraph 8.1.1.9-10 and Appendix D3) classifies the SDR as 'essential infrastructure' and includes an assessment of it, based on the indicative alignment shown on the Spatial Framework Plan (Figure 3.1). The residential areas and the majority of the indicative alignment of the SDR will be located within Flood Zone 1. However, part of the road will cross Flood Zones 3a and 3b.
95. 'Essential infrastructure' is appropriate in Flood Zones 1 and 2 but is required to pass an Exception Test to be acceptable in Flood Zone 3. For the Exception Test to be passed it must be demonstrated that the wider sustainability benefits and a site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime and not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere (NPPF paragraph 102). The SFRA explains that suitable mitigation measures will be required to pass the Exception Test and recommends floodplain compensation is provided. The NPPF which was published the month after the SFRA updated the criteria to be met to comply with the Exception Test but mitigation will be required to demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime.
96. The Environment Agency's flood map and the council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment indicate the majority of the current application site is in Flood Zone 1, where the risk of flooding is low and all land uses are appropriate, but the applicant's more detailed hydraulic modelling identified that the ditches along Waterloo Road are in fact within Flood Zone 3. The Environmental Statement Chapter 13, *Road Drainage and the Water Environment* identifies there is a potential increase in risk of flooding due to the increase in impermeable surfaces and local modifications to drainage catchment patterns
97. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required to demonstrate the exception test has been met and because the site area is over one hectare.
98. The application site is a greenfield site and is underlain by a bedrock of London Clay Formation which has low permeability, so infiltration is unlikely to be feasible. Currently the site drains via overland runoff to drainage ditches that ultimately discharge into the Emm Brook. The FRA divides the site into three catchment areas:
 - i) the area north of the railway, where the drainage system has been designed to accommodate flows from the SDR north of the railway;

- ii) the majority of the area south of the railway including the new roundabout which is proposed to drain to a new wetland area to the east of the new roundabout; and
- iii) the southern part of the connection to Waterloo road (which cannot be combined with the remainder of the site south of the railway cannot due to ground levels) and is proposed to drain to swales along the new south eastern arm of the roundabout that links to Waterloo Road.

Flow control devices will limit discharge into existing ditches from the wetland and swales.

- 99. The combination of new and upgraded culverts, land re-profiling and the SuDS Surface Water Drainage Strategy outlined above will mitigate the risk of the proposed development increasing flooding and allow the exception test to be met (Condition 17 refers).
- 100. Appropriate design and management of the wetland plus an oil interceptor or appropriate SuDS feature at the outfall from the swale will control the quality of water entering the drainage ditches (Condition 17 refers).
- 101. (Condition 17 refers) The drainage system will ultimately be adopted by WBC as part of the highway drainage.

Environmental Health:

Noise

- 102. Core Strategy Policy CP1, Sustainable Development and MDDL Policy CC06, Noise require the impact of noise on (existing and proposed) sensitive receptors to be considered: noise sensitive development should preferably be located outside areas where noise will have an adverse effect and, where this is not possible, mitigation should be provided. The South Wokingham SPD identifies noise as a constraint.
- 103. Chapter 10 of the Environment Statement considers *Noise and Vibration*: this may arise as a result of construction activities and, once the scheme is operational, from traffic using the new road and redistribution of traffic on existing roads.
- 104. Noise and vibration during construction can be adequately controlled through implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and condition controlling hours of working (conditions 10 & 11 and informative 4 refer). Hours of work will generally be the standard hours of construction but on a project like this there are likely to be certain operations that require weekend or night-time working and condition 19 allows flexibility for such works to be agreed.
- 105. The Study Area is based on a combination of the footprint of the proposed scheme and the predicted change in traffic flows in the vicinity. In this case noise levels within 1km of the proposed scheme and outside sensitive receptors (including dwellings and public rights of way) within 600 metres have been modelled, although the dwellings and the school at Montague Park were not included because the impact upon these was considered when planning permission for the development was granted.

106. The modelling shows that in both 2019 and 2026 most properties will experience a decrease, no change, or negligible/low increase in noise as a result of the scheme. One property on London Road is predicted to experience a medium increase in noise in 2019 but noise levels at this property are predicted to remain well below the 68dB (LA10, 18hr) threshold at which noise mitigation measures should be considered. Five dwellings on London Road are predicted to experience increases of more than 1dB and absolute noise levels above 68dB in 2036 due to this scheme: because the properties are more than 300 metres from the scheme there is no duty to provide a grant in respect of noise insulation works and the situation may change once the design of the remainder of the SDR progresses. The ES (paragraph 5.4.6) notes that for such a low speed scheme, there is likely to be no discernible benefit to the use of low-noise surfacing.
107. The noise assessment submitted with the outline application for Montague Park (O/2010/1712, which was also the subject of an EIA) considered the impact in 2026 when development of the whole SDL - including the full extent of the SDR from London Road to Finchampstead Road – is expected to be complete. It identified three areas here noise could affect amenity, including the SDR and London Road corridors. The assessment of the application was consistent with the approach set out in MDDL P policy CC06. (Although outline planning permission pre-dates adoption of the MDDL P a similar policy was in force). Noise considerations were balanced against the place making aims of the South Wokingham SPD, which require active frontages onto the SDR. It was accepted that to achieve these aims some development in relatively noisy locations would be necessary but that the noise impact could be mitigated through the siting of buildings, their internal layout and measures such as the specification of glazing and ventilation. Conditions 24 and 25 of O/2010/1712 refer. The ES for the current application acknowledges that traffic flows are forecast to more than double between 2019 and 2036, so residents of Montague Park will experience a change in conditions despite measures being in place to ensure an acceptable level of amenity is maintained.

Air Quality

108. Core Strategy policy CP1 requires development to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment and minimise the emission of pollutants into the wider environment.
109. Chapter 4 of the Environment Statement considers *Air Quality*: during construction dust and Particulate Matter generated by on-site activities and emissions from construction traffic and other machinery may affect air quality; during the operational phase the main impact will be from changes in the distribution of traffic across the local network.
110. The ES concludes that the impacts during construction is low and emissions can be adequately mitigated through implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (Condition 18), a dust management plan and stakeholder communication.
111. For the operational phase, air quality modelling has been undertaken for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) for 2019 and 2026, both with and without the proposed scheme (using traffic data derived from the Wokingham Strategic Traffic Model WSTM3, which includes approved and committed developments within and beyond the Borough).

112. While results vary at individual receptors, there will generally be an improvement in air quality at most receptors, including within the air quality management area for nitrogen dioxide in Wokingham. Modelled particulate concentrations in 2019 and 2036 are all well below the annual and daily air quality objectives. Modelled nitrogen dioxide concentrations in 2036 are also well below the annual air quality objective. In 2019 levels nitrogen dioxide at one receptor – in Finchampstead Road, close to its junction with Denmark Street and Wellington Road – are predicted to exceed the annual air quality objective but this is the case regardless of the scheme and in 2036 there would be an improvement in this location bringing it back below the target level.
113. Air quality within Montague Park and the remainder of the SDL would easily meet air quality standards both without and with the proposed scheme.

Contamination

114. Core Strategy policy CP1 requires development to avoid areas where pollution may impact upon amenity. Chapter 8 of the Environment Statement on *Geology and Soils* considers the potential for land contamination.
115. A phase 1 desk top study and phase 2 site investigation have been completed. The site history and current uses (predominantly agricultural) indicate that the potential for significant contamination is low and no significant risks to human health or controlled waters have been identified. However, a watching brief for unforeseen contamination is recommended so that it can be dealt with in an appropriate manner, to ensure the site is suitable for use once developed (Condition 20 refers).
116. Given the legal requirements to protect workers, neighbours and the environment during construction, the proposed development is not expected to increase the risk of contamination during the construction phase (Condition 20 refers).

Archaeology

117. Core Strategy Policy CP3 and MDDL Policy TB25 require the archaeological impact of development to be taken into consideration. The site lies in an identified Area of High Archaeological Potential.
118. Chapter 5 of the Environmental Statement deals with *Cultural Heritage*.
119. An archaeological evaluation of the part of the site north of the railway took place as part of the Montague Park development and there are no further archaeological requirements for this part of the site.
120. The archaeological evaluation for the south of the railway line identified two phases of archaeological remains: Roman features, interpreted as possible enclosures, field systems and land management; and later post-medieval field boundaries. The ES concludes that any excavation below existing ground level is likely to truncate or completely remove archaeological deposits and proposes a mitigation strategy of strip, map and record (or strip, map and sample), which would be secured by Condition 23.

Lighting

121. Adequate lighting is required for highway safety reasons (Core Strategy policy CP6) but also has ecological and heritage implications.
122. The Environmental Statement identifies the railway line as a bat corridor and implementation of the Landscape Mitigation Strategy will create new ecological receptor sites for light sensitive, protected species: the reedbed and pond likely to become a good foraging location for bat species. Directional lighting is proposed but more detail is required together with consideration of other mitigation measures such as use of baffles for lanterns now to reduce rearwards light spill and alternative colour spectrum lanterns. Condition 16 will secure a lighting scheme.

Ecology:

123. Core Strategy Policy CP7, *Biodiversity* and MDDL Policy TB23, *Biodiversity and Development* require appropriate protection of species and habitats of conservation value. SPD Design Principle 1b (i-ii) is also concerned with protection of ecological habitat and biodiversity features, together with mitigation of any impacts that do arise.
124. The impact on Biodiversity is considered in Chapter 7 of the Environmental Statement, *Nature Conservation*. The ecological baseline was established through desk based review and field survey data.

Designated sites

125. There are no statutory or non-statutory designated sites and no ancient woodland on the site itself although there are a number of sites in the vicinity. The Thames Basin Heathlands Special Protection Area (SPA), designated under the European Commission Birds Directive, lies approximately 3km to the southeast. The nearest statutory designated site is Wykery Copse Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), located approximately 1.9km east. There are eleven non-statutory Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) plus one proposed LWS and a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) within 2km of the application site. The closest is Big Wood LWS which lies approximately 0.5 km from the site, although the ancient woodland extends beyond the LWS boundary to about 0.3km of the site. Given the distance between the proposed scheme and these habitats, effects upon these areas are not likely to result from the scheme during the construction phase. During the operational phase, there will be changes to traffic flows on the local network which were considered as part of the habitats regulation assessment process.

On-site habitat of conservation value

126. The proposal requires removal of sections of hedgerows (species rich and species poor) along Waterloo Road and field boundaries within the site, fragmenting the hedgerow network: approximately 165 metres of hedgerow would be removed overall with 550 metres being retained. To protect retained hedgerows from changes in air quality and physical damage (from activity within root protection zones) during construction, a dust management plan (Condition 18) and tree and hedgerow protection (Condition 14) should be implemented. 700 metres of new species rich hedgerow – to be composed of suitable native species and with scattered standard trees throughout their length - is proposed to strengthen the network of hedgerow and woodland habitat (Condition 12), to be managed to maintain and increase biodiversity value (Condition 15) which will have a positive impact in the long term: this will provide adequate compensation for the direct loss of this Priority Habitat and will mitigate habitat fragmentation.

bats

127. At least nine species of bat are active in the local area (within 5km of the site) and four species of bat were recorded foraging/commuting in association with hedgerows near to Waterloo Road.
128. Two trees on the site are identified as having moderate potential to support roosting bats: T11 is proposed to be retained at the centre of the roundabout (see paragraphs 28-30) but T8 is proposed to be felled. Other trees within the site, and nearby, were assessed to have either negligible or low potential to support roosting bats. The impact on bats during construction can be reduced by ensuring their protection during felling of T8 and any works to T11 (Condition 16), and protection of retained vegetation during construction (Condition 14).
129. The proposed landscaping will extend the network of woodland and shrub habitats on the site and the creation of the new drainage feature adjacent to the roundabout on Waterloo Road will introduce reedbed and wet grassland planting resulting in additional foraging opportunities for bats. Street lighting will reduce the suitability of some of the newly created verge habitat for light sensitive bat species but this impact can be reduced by the use of directional lighting (Condition 16). The proposed landscaping includes measures to reduce the effects of fragmentation and, once established, the extent of foraging and commuting habitats will be increased. A dark corridor will be maintained along the railway line. Collectively, the proposal will have a negligible effect on bats in the long term.

Birds

130. The habitats within the site - hedgerows, tree, scrub and arable fields – are suitable for a range of nesting birds although the area of habitat is relatively small and there is an abundance of similar habitats in the local area. Removal of habitats and disturbance during construction will have an impact on breeding birds on and close to the site: some may be displaced but if nearby habitats are already well used the number of breeding pairs of some species may be reduced.
131. To reduce the impact on breeding birds during construction, vegetation (including arable habitat) should be removed outside the primary nesting season (March to August inclusive): if limited clearance during the main nesting bird season is required it the habitat should be checked for the presence of active nests first (Condition 21). In addition measures will be taken to protect retained habitat (Condition 14) and to minimise disturbance due to noise and vibration (Condition 18) during construction.
132. The proposed landscaping does not include compensation for the loss of arable habitat but will extend the network of tree, shrub, ruderal and grassland vegetation, increasing habitat for the majority of bird species recorded within the site. The road will have a 30mph speed limit and noise levels will not increase significantly beyond the immediate vicinity of the carriageway, so are unlikely to significantly affect bird breeding behaviour. Overall, subject to establishment of the proposed landscaping (Conditions 5 & 8), there will be a neutral effect on breeding birds in the long term.

Reptiles

133. There are thirteen mapped waterbodies within a 500m radius of the Proposed Scheme, of which seven provide suitable habitat for great crested newts although

survey evidence indicates they are highly unlikely to be present within the site. The arable field margins within the site also provide suitable conditions for reptiles, which are known to be present in the wider SDL although they were not recorded within the site. Nevertheless, the ES recommends precautionary working methods during site clearance and preparation, which will be secured by Condition 22.

134. The ecological survey evidence submitted demonstrates that the proposed development is unlikely to adversely affect the local status of great crested newts, a European Protected Species.

Badgers and Dormice

135. The site provides suitable habitats for badgers and dormice but there is no indication that these species are present.

Implementation of ecological mitigation during construction

136. The outline CEMP does not integrate the specific mitigation recommendations given in Chapter 7 of the Environmental Statement but Condition 18 will ensure the implementation of these measures through the CEMP.

Infrastructure Impact Mitigation

137. Core Strategy policy CP4, *Infrastructure requirements* requires that infrastructure, services, community and other facilities are improved to meet the requirements of new development, taking into account cumulative impact. Mitigation is now secured through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) the rate of which is set out in the council's charging schedule: the proposal is itself infrastructure and does not generate floorspace so is not CIL liable.

Employment Skills:

138. MDDL Policy TB12 indicates that proposals for major development should be accompanied by an Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) to show how the proposal provides opportunities for training, apprenticeship or other vocational initiatives to develop local employability skills.
139. Chapter 12 of the Environmental Statement, *People and Communities* anticipates that the proposed development will provide an estimated 60 jobs during the construction phase and while limited elements of the construction will require the employment of specialist contractors, it is assumed the majority of operatives on-site will be from the surrounding area (i.e. Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area (including Wokingham Borough)).
140. The proposed development is one of a number of major infrastructure projects to be delivered on behalf of the council by Balfour Beatty under a SCAPE contract: the contract includes Key Performance Indicators (KPI) which are being developed into an ESP (for all of the projects in the contract) in liaison with the council's Economic Sustainability Team. Condition 24 secures the approval and implementation of the ESP.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is entirely consistent with Development Plan policy for the delivery of an urban extension at south Wokingham with associated infrastructure; a key element of which is the SDR. The design of the development is consistent with the principles established by adopted policy and guidance and the application includes appropriate mitigation of its inevitable impacts, which will be secured by condition. Accordingly the application should be supported.