Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
192928	05.04.2021	Wokingham, Wokingham Without	Wescott; Wokingham Without;

Applicant	Mrs Jean Mulovi, Wokingham Borough Council
Site Address	Land south of Wokingham, east of Finchampstead Road and west of Waterloo Road, Wokingham.
Proposal	A full planning application for the construction of the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR) between Finchampstead Road and Waterloo Road, including a link to Heathlands Road, together with associated works including demolition of Nos 76A and 76B Finchampstead Road. The SWDR will comprise a single carriageway, approximately 2.7km length and will also include a shared 3m wide cycle lane/foot way.
Type	Full
Officer	Emy Circuit
Reason for determination by committee	Major application within the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SDL)

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on Tuesday 18 May 2021
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director Delivery and Infrastructure: Place and Growth

SUMMARY

The application is for a new road to south of Wokingham. It would extend from the A321 Finchampstead Road in the west to Waterloo Road in the east, forming a substantial part of the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR), a new strategic road required to support planned development in the borough.

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 *Housing Delivery*). Of these 2,500 are to be in an urban extension to the south of Wokingham. Core Strategy Policy CP21 *South Wokingham Strategic Development Location*, amplified by Appendix 7 and two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – the *South Wokingham South Wokingham Strategic Development Location SPD* and the *Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD* – set out the Council's expectations in terms of the comprehensive delivery of these dwellings together with the infrastructure required to support them.

The SWDR is a fundamental element of the infrastructure; a continuous new route running through the SDL connecting, the A329 London Road in the north to the A321 Finchampstead Road in the south. The new road would provide access to the development and form a corridor for sustainable travel, as well as providing some traffic relief in the historic town centre of Wokingham.

The first section of the SWDR - from the A329 London Road to the railway line – was delivered as part of the first phase of the SDL at Montague Park (formerly Buckhurst Farm) (now known as, William Heelas Way). The second section – commonly referred to as the "Eastern Gateway" - will connect William Heelas Way to Waterloo Road via a

new bridge over the Reading-Waterloo railway line. Planning permission was granted in February 2018 and works are underway.

The current application is a full application for the third Section of the SWDR, from the Eastern Gateway to Finchampstead Road. An application for associated works at the junction of Finchampstead Road and Molly Millars Lane (application 203535, often referred to as the "Western Gateway") is reported elsewhere on this agenda.

There has been public engagement throughout the design process including a consultation on route options in 2014 (which resulted in the central route being taken forward) and an exhibition prior to submission of the application. There has also been ongoing liaison with the developers who are bringing forward the SDL development, in order to ensure coordinated delivery including accommodating their accesses and pedestrian crossing points. The road is being delivered by the Council as it was on the Council's historic CIL 123 list. It should be noted that the Council has a proven delivery track record in delivery of major road projects, for example the Arborfield Relief Road which is operational and the final sections of the North Wokingham Distributor Road which are currently under construction.

The road proposals are being assessed alongside four applications for residential development and associated infrastructure in the SDL: a suite of three applications for up to 1,649 dwellings in Phase 2 (applications 190900, 190914 and 191068, also on this agenda) and an application for up to 190 dwellings in the western SDL (application 192325) referred to as "Phase 3" in this report, although that does not necessarily reflect the phasing of development delivery.

While the SWDR is part of the infrastructure required to support development in the South Wokingham SDL it does, in itself, generate impacts that require mitigation (primarily landscape and ecology and off-site highway effects). The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) – prepared jointly with the other SDL developers – establishes how the combined impacts of development within the SDL would be delivered, with each developer contributing their proportionate share.

The Project has been considered under Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning Act (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017: it constitutes conduction of a road on a site of more than 1.0 hectares and is deemed likely to have a significant effect on the environment. Accordingly, the application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES).

The application is before the planning committee because it constitutes a major development proposal within an SDL and is recommended for approval.

PLANNING STATUS

- Strategic Development Location (SDL CP17/CP21)
- Major development location (CP9/CC01)
- Countryside (CP11)
- Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area Linear Mitigation Zones: 5km Linear Mitigation Zone (CP8/SAL05)
- Allocated SANG (SAL05)

- Strategic Transport Network Improvements South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR) (CP10)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zones
- Great Crested Newt consultation zone
- Bat roosts
- Tree Preservation Orders 798/1996, 1341/2010, 1376/2011, 1434/2012 & 1435/2012
- Easthampstead Road is a Green Route north of the railway line and a Green Route Enhancement Area south of the railway; Finchampstead Road is a Green Route (CC03)
- Public Rights of Way within the site: Wokingham FP9, FP24 & FP25; Wokingham Without FP5, & FP10
- Proposed Emmbrook Riverside Footpath (CC03)
- Main River (the Emm Brook west of Wokingham Without Footpath 10)
- Ordinary Watercourses
- Flood Zones 1, 2 & 3
- Records of historic flooding at Landon Court, Holme Green and Wood's Farm
- Landfill gas consultation zone
- Potentially contaminated land consultation zone
- SSE overhead electricity cable consultation zone
- Woods Farm (Grade II Listed Building) & setting of others
- Archaeological site
- Emm Brook Surface Water Nitrate Vulnerable Zone
- Mineral consultation zone

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee authorise the GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the conditions and informatives below:

Conditions:

Timescale for development

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 submitted application plans and drawings:

   Tree constraints plan
   2441-TCP-EV-001 P01 *Tree Constraints Plan*
   2441-TCP-EV-002 P01 *Tree Constraints Plan*
   2441-TCP-EV-003 P01 *Tree Constraints Plan*
   2441-TCP-EV-004 P01 *Tree Constraints Plan*

   Tree protection plan
   70032441-TPP-EV-002 P03 *Tree protection plan*

70032441-TPP-EV-003 P03 *Tree protection plan*
70032441-TPP-EV-004 P03 *Tree protection plan*
70032441-TPP-EV-005 P03 *Tree protection plan*
70032441-TPP-EV-006 P03 *Tree protection plan*
70032441-TPP-EV-007 P03 *Tree protection plan*
70032441-TPP-EV-008 P03 *Tree protection plan*

Landscape design

SWDR-WSP-00-XX-DR-LA-0001 P07 *Indicative planting species & mixes*
SWDR-WSP-00-XX-DR- LA-0002 P07 *Indicative landscape design sheet 2 of 4*
SWDR-WSP-00-XX-DR-LA-0003 P07 *Indicative landscape design sheet 3 of 4*
SWDR-WSP-00-XX-DR-LA-0004 P07 *Indicative landscape design sheet 4 of 4*

Location plan
SWDR-WSP-00-XX-DR-LA-0005 P01 *Location Plan* (insofar as the drawing identifies the location of the development, the details within the red line do not fully reflect the latest proposals)

Red line boundary
SWDR-WSP-00-XX-DR-LA-0006 P01 *Red Line Boundary* (insofar as the drawing identifies the location of the development, the details within the red line do not fully reflect the latest proposals)

Swept Path Analysis
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0040 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 1*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0041 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 2*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0042 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 3*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0043 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 4*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0044 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 5*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0045 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 6*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0046 P03 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 7*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0047 P03 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 8*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0048 P03 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 9*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0049 P03 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 10*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0050 P03 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 11*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0051 P03 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 12*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0052 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 13*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0053 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 14*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0054 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 15*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0055 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 16*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0056 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 17*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0057 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 18*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0058 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 19*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0059 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 20*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0060 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 21*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0061 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 22*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0062 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 23*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0063 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 24*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0064 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 25*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0065 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 26*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0066 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 27*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0067 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 28*

WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0068 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 29*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0069 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 30*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0070 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 31*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0071 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 32*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0072 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 33*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0073 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 34*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0074 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 35*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0075 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 36*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0076 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 37*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0077 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 38*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0078 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 39*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0079 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 40*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0080 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 41*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0081 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 42*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0082 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 43*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0083 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 44*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0084 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 45*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0085 P02 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 46*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0086 P01 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 47*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0087 P01 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 48*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0088 P01 *Swept Path Analysis Sheet 49*

Indicative construction haul road and compound locations
WMHP-BB-SR-SK-PM-5001 *SWDR Compound and Works Access Overview*
WMHP-BB-SR-SK-PM-5002 *SWDR Compound and Works Access Page 1*
WMHP-BB-SR-SK-PM-5003 *SWDR Compound and Works Access Page 2*

Junction Visibility

WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0092 P02 *Junction Visibility Sheet 2*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0093 P02 *Junction Visibility Sheet 3*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0094 P02 *Junction Visibility Sheet 4*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0095 P02 *Junction Visibility Sheet 5*

Typical cross section
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0122 P02 Highways Alignment Typical Cross Section

General arrangements
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9101 P06 *General Arrangement Sheet 1 of 6*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9102 P03 *General Arrangement Sheet 2 of 6*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9103 P02 *General Arrangement Sheet 3 of 6*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9104 P02 *General Arrangement Sheet 4 of 6*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9105 P02 *General Arrangement Sheet 5 of 6*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9106 P02 *General Arrangement Sheet 6 of 6*

Chainage plan
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9212 P02 *Road chainage plan Sheet 2 of 5*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9213 P02 *Road Chainage Plan Sheet 3 of 5*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9214 P03 *Road Chainage Plan Sheet 4 of 5*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9215 P02 *Road Chainage Plan Sheet 5 of 5*

Longitudinal sections

WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9222 P02 *Longitudinal Sections Sheet 2 of 3*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9223 P02 *Longitudinal Sections Sheet 3 of 3*

Emm Brook road bridge general arrangements
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-SE-4102 P01 *SWDR spine road bridge crossing Emm Brook general arrangement sheet 1*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-SE-4103 P01 *SWDR spine road bridge crossing Emm Brook general arrangement sheet 2*

Gypsy Lane boardwalk footbridge
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-SE-5001 P01 *Gypsy Lane boardwalk general arrangement*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-SE-5002 P01 *Gypsy Lane boardwalk sections and details*

Scheme layout drawing
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-SK-HI-0110 P05 *Scheme Layout Drawing*

Culvert Design
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-ST-0540 P01 South Wokingham Distributor Road culvert design plan layout
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-ST-0541 P01 South Wokingham Distributor Road culvert design culvert A
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-ST-0542 P01 South Wokingham Distributor Road culvert design culvert B
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-ST-0543 P01 South Wokingham Distributor Road culvert design culvert C
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-ST-0544 P01 South Wokingham Distributor Road culvert design culvert D
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-ST-0545 P01 South Wokingham Distributor Road culvert design culvert KL

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation with the Local Planning Authority.

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.

Definition of enabling works

3. Before commencement of development details defining the scope of enabling works to inform conditions 5 (levels), 6 (detailed design), 12 (landscaping), 13 (Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) & 15 (Biodiversity Net Gain) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: for the avoidance of doubt and to ensure appropriate mitigation of the impact of the development in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP7 & CP21; and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, TB21 TB23, & TB24; the South Wokingham SDL SPD and NPPF section 15.

Phasing

4. Before commencement of development details of the phasing of works, including the coordinated delivery of the on and off-site mitigation measures, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details. The details include:

i) phasing of construction and opening of the road;

ii) timing of the delivery the drainage and SuDS in relation to the development it is to serve;

iii) phasing of landscaping including early delivery of landscaping required to mitigate the impact upon listed buildings;

iv) off-site highway works necessary to mitigate the impact of the development pursuant to condition 27; and

v) a Traffic Regulation Order for prohibition of driving on Easthampstead Road south of the SWDR (and provision of alternative 'Heathlands Link Road' route).

Reason: to ensure comprehensive planning and timely delivery infrastructure required to support the development in the south Wokingham SDL in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP2, CP3, CP4, CP6, CP17, P21. Details are required prior to commencement to ensure coordinated delivery is achieved.

Levels

5. No development other than enabling works as established by the details approved pursuant to condition 3 shall take place until a measured survey of the whole 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) together with proposed grading and mounding and contours to be formed and showing the relationship of proposed mounding to existing vegetation and surrounding landform has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented for each phase before the section of road within that phase comes into use.

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory form of development relative to surrounding development and landscape in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3; and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB21. Details are required prior to commencement because levels and drainage across the whole site are interrelated and cannot be dealt with in a piecemeal way.

Detailed design of the roads

6. Prior to the commencement of development other than enabling works as established by the details approved pursuant to condition 3, full details of the construction of footways, cycleways and roads, including levels, widths, construction materials, depths of construction, surface water drainage and road signage (including signage, measures to prevent access off unused arms of roundabout) and lighting (consistent with the details pursuant to condition 16)

shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details should include, among the following other things:

i) direct, safe and convenient crossing provision for pedestrians and cyclists at all roundabouts and signalised junctions, and pedestrian and cycle priority (to include features such as raised tables where feasible) at all other junctions;

ii) a Manual for Streets approach with minimal clutter and avoiding physical controls, such as barriers, to control pedestrian and cycle movement;

iii) direct pedestrian access to the Tesco foodstore car park from the new roundabout south of Finchampstead Road;

iv) rationalisation of the maintenance access arrangements for the southern pond shown on Drawing WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9102-P03 *General Arrangement Sheet 2 of 6* to avoid duplication with residential accesses*;*

v) a pedestrian and cycle connection between the SWDR and Easthampstead Road to the south;

vi) how the proposals will integrate with the pedestrian and cycle improvements to Easthampstead Road between the SWDR and Star Lane level crossing;

vii) location of the foot and cycle path between Wokingham Without Footpath 24 and the SWDR to be coordinated with the masterplanning for development in phase 3 of the SDL on Land South East of Finchampstead Road;

viii) bus stop infrastructure including its integration with the landscaping pursuant to condition 12 and if feasible incorporation of laybys at the bus stops serving the neighbourhood centre, to the west of the SWDR/Easthampstead Road junction;

ix) detention basin maintenance accesses and turning arrangements consistent with the landscaping details pursuant to condition 12;

x) road restraint systems, where the need for them cannot be designed out, and how they will be unobtrusively integrated into their surroundings;

xi) The traffic signals junction layout at Heathlands Road/Easthampstead Road/the new ‘Heathlands link road’ junction to include provision for pedestrians, cyclists and associated speed limit changes;

xii) Traffic signals designs including incorporation of MOVA at all three traffic light controlled junctions;

xiii) updated visibility (for pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles) and tracking drawings;

xiv) layout of utility corridors;

xv) means of traffic enforcement for the left-turn banned manoeuvre for motorists from SWDR to Easthampstead Road;

xvi) highway adoption extents;

xvii) consistency with the landscaping pursuant to condition 12;

xviii) ecological permeability measures; and

xix) a statement regarding whether the detailed proposals have any arboricultural implications other than those already assessed in the approved Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

Works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and the phasing pursuant to condition 4.

Reason: to ensure that roads, cycleways and footpaths are constructed to prioritise use by sustainable modes, to a standard that would be suitable for adoption as publicly maintainable highway and incorporate ecological permeability measures in the interests of providing a functional, accessible, safe and high-quality development that supports biodiversity in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP6, CP7 & Appendix 7; MDDLP policy TB23; and the South Wokingham SDL and Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPDs. Details are required before commencement because they are fundamental to the proposal and the whole scheme needs to be considered as one to ensure the comprehensive, coordinated approach required by Core Strategy policy CP21.

Detailed design of the road-bridge over the Emm Brook

7. Before construction of the Emm Brook road bridge commences, detail of its design - demonstrating how the structure can in integrated as an attractive feature within the landscape and incorporate features to support biodiversity - shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the bridge shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure a high quality development that integrates well with its surroundings and incorporates appropriate mitigation measures in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP7 & CP21; MDDLP policies CC03, TB21 and TB23; and the South Wokingham SDL SPD.

Materials

8. Before construction of either bridge over the Emm Brook commences, samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of that bridge shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure an attractive, high-quality development, appropriate to the location in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP21; MDDLP policy TB21; and the South Wokingham SDL SPD.

Tree protection

9. Except where the details pursuant to condition 6.xix) confirm that it is not necessary no development shall take place in any phase except in accordance with an updated Arboricultural Impact Assessment to inform the design of the phase and the landscaping and tree protection details to comply with conditions 11 & 12 which has first been submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: to ensure that due consideration is given to any change in circumstances between approval and implementation which could be several years, in particular for later phases, in accordance with Core Strategy policy CP3; and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

10. 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 value to the area in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP7 & CP21; and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, TB21 and TB23.

11.

a) No development or other operation shall commence in any phase of the development until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Scheme of Works which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent to the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. No development or other operations shall take place except in complete accordance with the details as so-approved (hereinafter referred to as the Approved Scheme).

b) No operations shall commence in any phase in connection with development hereby approved (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) until the tree protection works required by the Approved Scheme are in place 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 in writing 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 value to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP7 & CP21; Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, TB21 and TB23; and the South Wokingham SDL SPD. Details are required prior to commencement to ensure appropriate protection of trees during construction.

Landscape

12.

i) No development other than enabling works as established by the details approved pursuant to condition 3 shall take place in any phase of the development until full details of both hard and soft landscape works for that phase have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and these works shall be carried out as approved. The details shall include, as appropriate:

a) scheme drawings;

b) proposed levels and contours;

c) detailed design of SuDS features in accordance with the SuDS Strategy, demonstrating how they will be integrated into the wider landscape, with attenuation basins having a natural shape and shallow profile (not requiring lifesaving equipment and fence barriers), allowing them to fulfil amenity, ecological and drainage functions;

d) soft landscaping details including planting plans, schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;

e) a Landscape Specification document covering soft landscaping (including site preparation, cultivation, plant handling and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment) and hard landscaping including all construction works such as paths, bridges, retaining walls and road restraint systems;

f) details of the street tree planting pits in combination with the roadside swales/raingardens demonstrating that the trees have sufficient rooting volume to enable their successful retention long term health;

g) hard landscaping materials including samples;

h) minor artefacts and structures (e.g. bus stops, street furniture, refuse or other storage units, signs, external services) including specifications for the product and its installation;

i) consideration of how the landscape proposals for the SWDR integrate with those for the surrounding development to ensure comprehensively planned and coordinated landscape design and delivery;

j) consideration of the route for a future Public Right of Way along the route of the Emmbrook between the SWDR bridge and Finchampstead Road;

k) consideration of incorporation of seating at regular intervals along the route to allow pedestrians to rest and facilitate social interaction;

l) specification for tree rooting systems and use of structural soils under paving or where rooting volumes are limited;

m) all boundary treatments, including temporary highway boundary fences, and other means of enclosure or controlling access such as gates, bollards and vehicle restraint systems, which shall include consideration of ecological permeability, in particular containment of otters and dogs to prevent them straying onto the road;

n) measures required for ecological mitigation and biodiversity net gain;

o) measures for management of the Emm Brook corridor;

p) visual screening between the road and the Grade II listed buildings, Britton's Farmhouse and the adjacent barn;

q) demonstration that the layout that is consistent with and does not prejudice the proposed use of the land as a SANG (under application 191068 or any application that supersedes it);

r) a minimum eight metre wildlife zone to watercourses measured from the top of the bank, with the exception of the areas identified within sections 2.3.4 and 2.3.5 of the WFD assessment (February 2021) within which all planting shall be native species of local provenance;

s) how non-native species such as Himalayan Balsam will be eradicated;

t) how the buffer zone will be protected during development and managed over the long term; and

u) how the river channel morphology and bankside habitat will be enhanced to contribute to biodiversity net gain.

ii) Details of quality control measures, including supervision of landscape contract(s) by a suitably qualified landscape specialist and annual landscape audits for the five-year period from completion of the landscaping for the Landscape Phase or until adoption (whichever is longer). The annual Landscape Audit shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for information prior to the next planting season and replacement planting undertaken in accordance with the landscape audit and iii) below.

iii) 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, to secure necessary ecological mitigation and biodiversity gain, and to safeguard the setting of designated heritage assets in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP7 & CP21; and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, TB21 TB23, & TB24; and the South Wokingham SDL SPD. Details are required prior to commencement to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach to landscaping which is fundamental to the acceptability of proposal.

Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)

13. Prior to the commencement of any Phase of the development other than enabling works as established by the details approved pursuant to condition 3 a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), including long term design objectives, maintenance of ecological enhancement features, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Landscape and Ecological 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 in accordance with Core

Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP7 & CP21; Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, TB21 TB23, and TB24; and the South Wokingham SDL SPD.

Assessment of construction impacts

14. Before commencement of development an Environmental Statement Addendum shall be submitted to assess implications of temporary haul roads, compounds and any other enabling works required to facilitate construction of the road shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the recommendations of the Addendum shall inform the details submitted pursuant to conditions.

Reason: To ensure construction impacts of the development are adequately assessed in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP7, CP21; and MDDLP policies CC03, CC06, CC09, CC10, TB21, TB24 and TB24. Details are required before commencement of development in order to ensure unnecessary long term impacts are avoided and that any impacts are appropriately assessed throughout development.

Biodiversity Net Gain

15. Prior to commencement of the development other than enabling works as established by the details approved pursuant to condition 3 a detailed Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Strategy shall include:

i) a biodiversity net gain calculator using the latest Defra metric and based on the detailed soft and hard landscape plans; and

ii) details of any off-site offset scheme required to achieve a minimum 10% net gain over the baseline in all categories of the calculator.

The approved strategy shall be implemented in full in the course of the development unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development results a net gain for biodiversity, as required by the NPPF section 15.

Lighting

16. Before any section of road or associated development is brought into use, lighting shall be installed in accordance with a scheme that has first been submitted to and approved in writhing by the Local Planning Authority. The Scheme should balance the safety of the public realm with ecological and amenity considerations, referencing current guidance on lighting mitigation and establishing how light spill on habitats used by foraging and commuting bats will be avoided.

Reason: to ensure an appropriate balance is achieved between the safety of the public realm and avoiding detriment to wildlife or residential amenity in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP6, CP7 & CP21; MDDLP policies CC03, TB21, TB23 & TB24; and the guidance in the South Wokingham SDL SPD.

Archaeological investigation

17. 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: it is known that the site is likely to contain archaeological remains and further investigation is required to allow preservation and recording of any archaeological features or artefacts before disturbance by the development in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment), Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB25. Details are required prior to commencement to ensure appropriate mitigation of any impacts on archaeology arising from construction works.

Flood Risk Assessment

18. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment Flood Risk Assessment (Version 3) dated February 2021, reference 66439-FRA-001 (V3) and the following mitigation measures it details:

a) the carriageway level to be set above the 1 in 100 plus 70% climate change level (apart from the point where it ties in at the western end);

b) compensatory storage shall be provided as described in section 3.1 of the FRA and shown in drawing number 66439- CUL-001;

c) the soffit level of SWDR spine road bridge to be set above the 1 in 100 plus 70% climate change level as shown in drawing number WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-SE-4103; and

d) the soffit level of the broad walk bridge to be set above 1 in 100 plus 70% climate change level as shown in drawing number WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-SE-5002.

These mitigation measures shall be implemented in accordance with the phasing pursuant to condition 4 and shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the
lifetime of the development.

Reason: to reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and prevent flooding elsewhere by ensuring that compensatory storage of flood water is provided in accordance with NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Technical Guidance on the NPPF (Flood Risk), Core Strategy policies CP1, CP221 and Appendix 7; Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 & CC10; and the South Wokingham SDL SPD.

Surface water drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

19. Before commencement of development, a strategy demonstrating coordination with the wider Strategic Development Location (the SuDS Strategy), based on the Flood Risk Assessment (Version 3) dated February 2021, reference 66439-FRA-001 (V3) and the hydraulic modelling report (Report Ref. 66439-HMA-01) and including drainage calculations, details of the layout, position and size of

attenuation basins, and principles for locally based treatments such as rain gardens, filter strips and swales shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: to prevent the increased risk of flooding, and to protect water quality in accordance with NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Technical Guidance on the NPPF (Flood Risk), Core Strategy policies CP1, CP221 and Appendix 7; Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 & CC10; and the South Wokingham SDL SPD. Details are required prior to commencement because drainage is integral to the design of the road and levels, all of which need to be considered comprehensively across the whole site.

20. No development shall take place in any phase until details of SuDS that serve that phase, based on the approved SuDS Strategy have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

No section of the road shall be brought into use until surface water drainage to serve it has been provided in accordance with the approved details and the phasing details approved under condition 4 and the SuDS shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: to prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off in accordance with NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change); Core Strategy policy CP1; and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10; and Design Principle 1d(ii) of the South Wokingham SDL SPD. Details are required prior to commencement because drainage is integral to the design of the road and levels.

21. Development shall not commence until details of any proposed points of connection, including any connection into a drainage system or ordinary watercourse on third party land, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and no discharge of surface water from the site shall be accepted into the public system until the drainage works have been completed in accordance with the approved details. The details shall demonstrate any connections onto third party land have the approval of the third party landowner and that the system immediately downstream is clear from obstruction.

Reason: to ensure that suitable connections to existing surface water drainage infrastructure are made and that permission to discharge water is sought from third party landowners where the connection is not on the applicant's land which is necessary to prevent increased flood risk in accordance with NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change); Core Strategy policy CP1; Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10; and Design Principle 1d(ii) of the South Wokingham SDL SPD. Details are required prior to commencement because they are fundamental to achieving acceptable drainage and therefore the design of the scheme as a whole.

Drainage exceedance routes

22.

i) Before commencement of development, an exceedance flow routing plan for flows above the 1 in 100+40% climate change shall be submitted to and approved in writing by Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall identify exceedance flow routes through the development based on proposed topography with flows being directed to highways and areas of public open space. Flow routes through gardens and other areas in private ownership will not be permitted.

ii) works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before any phase of the development is first brought into use.

Reason: to prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off in accordance with NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1; Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10; and Design Principle 1d(ii) of the South Wokingham SDL SPD. Details are required prior to commencement because they are fundamental to achieving acceptable drainage and to the design of the scheme as a whole.

Drainage (Maintenance)

23. No phase of development shall be brought into use until a SuDS Management and Maintenance Plan for the lifetime of the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by Local Planning Authority. The plan should include details of:

i) arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime including adoption by a Private Management Company, WBC or a Statutory Undertaker;

ii) maintenance access to all drainage features including those within the SANG and other public open space, consistent with the highway design and landscaping details pursuant to conditions 6 & 12;

iii) a method statement for safe and sustainable removal and disposal of waste from drainage system, detailing frequency, the materials to be used and standard of work; and

iv) a GIS shape file for the drainage system serving the site.

The approved SUDS maintenance plan shall be implemented in full in accordance with the agreed terms and conditions.

Reason: To ensure drainage system locations recorded in the Wokingham Borough Council Drainage Asset Register and appropriately maintained, to prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off in accordance with NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 & CP21; and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09, CC10 and TB23.

Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

24. No development (including demolition and site clearance) shall take place until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to control the environmental effects of the demolition and construction work (which may be phased) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall include:

i) measures for the control of dust, odour and other effluvia;

ii) measures for the control and monitoring of noise and vibration (including noise from any piling and hours during which such works will take place);

iii) the proposed method of piling (if any);

iv) proposed construction and demolition working hours

v) measures for the control of noise from delivery vehicles and times when deliveries will be accepted;

vi) measures for the control of pests and other vermin (particularly during site clearance);

vii) pollution control measures;

viii) measures to control of surface water run-off including protection of the aquatic environment in terms of water quantity and quality;

ix) measures to prevent spoil or building materials being deposited or stored within any area of the site liable to flood;

x) a construction travel protocol or Green Travel Plan for the construction phase;

xi) construction traffic management plan comprising:

a. analysis of the volumes of construction vehicles during construction phases for both light and heavy vehicles;

b. vehicle routes and notably lorry routes, with volumes of lorries; and

c. traffic management proposals including any mitigations, hours of operation and signage

xii) site construction access;

xiii) haul routes within the site (supported by relevant surveys if not already adequately covered);

xiv) details of any site construction office, compound and ancillary facilities;

xv) cycle storage and motor vehicle parking and turning for site operatives and visitors;

xvi) loading, unloading and storage of plant and materials;

xvii) measures to prevent deposit of mud on the highway;

xviii) provision of an emergency water supply including fire hydrants to meet firefighting needs (including the installation arrangements and the timing of such an installation);

xix) provision of boundary hoarding;

xx) lighting;

xxi) a site security strategy;

xxii) Details of any temporary diversions of Public Rights of Way and how they will be managed to minimise disruption to users (both distance and duration of diversion);

xxiii) protection of important trees, hedgerows and other natural features;

xxiv) relevant ecological mitigation measures for protected species and species of principle importance;

xxv) updated survey information (due to long build out period), for example arboricultural and ecological surveys;

xxvi) an invasive, non-native species strategy;

xxvii) measures to protect the Emm Brook buffer zone, consistent with the details pursuant to condition 12, **Error! Reference source not found.**

xxviii) contact details for complaints construction liaison officer;

xxix) communications Plan to keep local residents, town/parish councils and ward members informed;

xxx) programme of works, including measures for traffic management and operating hours;

xxxi) monitoring and review mechanisms;

xxxii) implementation of the CEMP through an environmental management system;

Construction activity shall be carried out in accordance with the approved CEMP.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of the area; protecting ecology and the landscape, avoiding pollution, increased flood risk and construction related congestion during construction in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP6 & CP7; MDDLP policies CC03, CC06, CC07, CC10, TB21, TB23 and TB24. To avoid harm, measures need to be in place upon commencement.

Hours of work

25. 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, key stakeholders including residential properties within an identified zone that has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, ward members and town/parish councils 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 & CP3; and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06 whilst providing the flexibility where works outside the usual hours are unavoidable or would result in unacceptable disruption in the surrounding area.

Contamination

26.

i) In the event that contamination that was not previously identified is found when carrying out the approved development – including site clearance, groundwork and construction - it must be reported immediately, in writing to the local planning authority. An investigation and full contamination risk assessment shall be carried out and a report of the findings, together with a 'Remediation Method Statement' as necessary shall be submitted to and approved in writing the local planning authority.

ii) Works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Remediation Method Statement' and a final validation report shall be submitted to the local planning authority before the site (or relevant phase of the development) before the road becomes operational.

Reason: to ensure that any contamination encountered is dealt with appropriately in accordance with NPPF Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment); and Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3.

Off-site highway works

27. Off-site works comprising capacity improvements at the junctions of:

i) Finchampstead Road/Molly Millars Lane (the Western Gateway);

ii) Barkham Road/Molly Millars Lane; and

iii) Old Wokingham Road/Waterloo Road/Peacock Lane;

shall be implemented in accordance with the phasing established by condition 4 and details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

Alternative route for the section of Easthampstead Road closed to through traffic

28. Easthampstead Road south of the SWDR shall not be closed to vehicular traffic until a turning head south of the SWDR and an alternative route have been provided in accordance with details approved pursuant to condition 6 and are open for public use.

Reason: To ensure access to properties along Easthampstead Road is maintained in the interests of sustainable travel whilst avoiding harm to the character of the area in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3. CP4, CP6, CP21 and Appendix 7; MDDLP policy CC03; and the guidance in the South Wokingham SDLP SPD.

Employment and Skills Plan

29. No development shall take place until an Employment and Skills Plan has been secured in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: to provide employment and training opportunities for local people in accordance with MDDLP Policy TB12. Details are required prior to commencement because the ESP will need to be in place upon commencement and throughout construction.

Informatives:

Reason for recommendation

1. The development accords with the policies contained within the development plan and there are no material considerations that warrant a different decision being taken.

Relevant policies

2. You are advised, in compliance with The Town and Country Planning [Development Management Procedure] [England] Order 2010 that the following policies and/or proposals in the development plan are relevant to this decision:

National Planning Policy Framework

South East Area Plan saved policy	NRM6	Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010)	CP1	Sustainable Development
	CP2	Inclusive Communities
	CP3	General Principles for Development
	CP4	Infrastructure Requirements
	CP6	Managing Travel Demand
	CP7	Biodiversity
	CP8	Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
	CP9	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
	CP10	Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network
	CP11	Proposals outside development limits (including countryside)
	CP17	Housing Delivery

	CP21	South Wokingham Strategic Development Location
Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014)	CC01	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	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

Borough Design Guide (2012)

South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document (2011)

Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (2011)

Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (21010) & Companion Guide (2010)

Application Drawings

3. The following drawings are broadly acceptable but have not been listed as approved drawings because they have not been updated to reflect the revised general arrangement drawings WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9101 P05 *General Arrangement Sheet 1 of 6* and WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9102 P02 *General Arrangement Sheet 2 of 6*.

70032441-TPP-EV-001 P03 *Tree protection plan*
SWDR-WSP-00-XX-DR- LA-0001 P07 *Indicative landscape design sheet 1 of 4*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-0091 P03 *Junction Visibility Sheet 1*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9211 P02 *Road Chainage Plan Sheet 1 of 5*
WMHP-TG-SRWG1-DR-HI-9221 P02 *Longitudinal Sections Sheet 1 of 3*

Landscape

4. Condition 7 is concerned with the appearance of the bridge and integration of features to support wildlife. The drawings pursuant to it should be prepared with input from a specialist bridge designer, at suitable scale to convey this information; detailed engineering drawings are not required and will not fulfil the requirements of the condition.

5. To fulfil the requirements of condition 12f) an integrated tree pit system such as the ArborSystem by GreenBlue Urban, in combination with a root barrier and soil cells will need to be proposed.

Noise

6. There is nothing in this application to suggest that the Southern Distributor Road will generate a level of noise that cannot be mitigated through the layout of subsequent development within the Strategy Development Location and building design. However, applications for development within the South Wokingham Strategy Development Location will need to include details of measures to ensure that appropriate noise levels can be achieved at sensitive receptors.

Ecology

7. This permission does not convey or imply any approval or consent required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), or the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 for protected species. The applicant is advised to contact Natural England with regard to any protected species that may be found on the site.

Assessment of construction impacts

8. The Environmental Statement has assessed construction impacts based on indicative proposals for compounds and haul road. Condition 14 would secure a review of the proposals and, should they differ significantly from what is currently anticipated, any additional assessments required.

Environment Agency Permit requirements

9. The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit or exemption to be obtained for any activities which will take place:

   a. on or within 8 metres of a main river;

   b. on or within 8 metres of a flood defence structure or culverted main river;

   c. involving quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood

   d. defence (including a remote defence) or culvert;

   e. in a floodplain more than 8 metres from the river bank, culvert or flood defence structure and you don't already have planning permission;

   For further guidance please visit https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activitiesenvironmental-permits or contact our National Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or by emailing enquiries@environmentagency.gov.uk. The applicant should not assume that a permit will automatically be forthcoming once planning permission has been granted, and we advise them to consult with us at the earliest opportunity.

Crime Prevention

10. The CEMP to comply with condition 24 shall have regard to the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 at https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg151.pdf which provides advice on Site boundary treatments; Access control; Compound Security and Security

precautions and advises the contractor to liaise with their local police crime prevention design advisor.

Drainage

11. The Sustainable Drainage details to comply with conditions 19 & 20 shall have regard to The Wokingham SuDS Strategy (2017).

12. The applicant is reminded that any works affecting the flow of water, including temporary works, within an ordinary watercourse will require consent from the Lead Local Flood Authority. The applicant is also reminded of Wokingham Borough Council's Land Drainage Bylaws that require no obstruction within 8 metres of the edge of a watercourse without the consent of the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Highways

13. The off-site mitigation required by condition 27 i) is the subject of a separate application, 203535, reported to the same meeting of the planning committee as this application with a recommendation for conditional approval, including a requirement for detailed design to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. For the purposes of condition 27 i) submission of the Local Planning Authority decision notice listing the details submitted pursuant to the relevant condition(s) of 203535 and confirming their approval will be sufficient. Should 203535 or an alternative application not be implemented, full details would need to be submitted.

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application Number	**Proposal**	**Decision**
SWDR north of the railway, within Montague Park (Phase 1 of the SDL, formerly Buckhurst Farm).		
O/2010/1712 as varied by	Outline planning permission (with details of access) for up to 650 dwellings and associated infrastructure including the SWDR from London Road to the railway.	Approved 18 December 2012
VAR/2015/0342 &		Approved 02 June 2015
161963		Approved 24 April 2017
RM/2013/0242	Reserved matters for the SWDR within Montague Park	Approved 12 June 2013
NMT/2014/0378	Non-material amendments to the SWDR design approved under RM/2013/0240	Approved 25 March 2014
South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR) south of the railway		
152349	Scoping opinion for an Environmental Impact Assessment for the Eastern Gateway	Responded 8 October 2015
172934	Eastern Gateway: full planning permission for the bridge over the Reading-Waterloo Railway line and connection to Waterloo Road registered on 4 October 2017.	Approved 19 February 2018 following the resolution of the planning committee on 14 February 2019
173198	Scoping opinion for the South Wokingham Distributor Road	

	(SWDR) between Waterloo Road and Finchampstead Road including associated works in the Finchampstead Road corridor.	
Stopping Up Order under Section 247 of the T&CPA 1990 (as amended)	Stopping Up of the section of Waterloo Road between the level crossing and the SWDR, once the new bridge and highway extending William Heelas Way to Waterloo Road is complete.	Planning Committee resolution to submit an application to the DfT 13 December 2017
		Order made by the Secretary of State for Transport on 09 November 2018
190989	Full application for formation of a temporary vehicular access to Britton's Farm during construction of the Eastern Gateway	Approved 23 July 2019
190991	Formation of an attenuation pond and drainage ditch (works forming part of the drainage strategy pursuant to condition 17 of planning permission 172934 but requiring separate approval as they fall outside the red line)	Approved 23 July 2019
191080	Full application for erection of temporary class B1(a) office building and construction of temporary compound including associated car parking, storage, boundary treatment and spur road to Eastern Gateway haul road (to support the Wokingham Major Highways Programme)	Approved 23 July 2019
303535	Full application for a larger roundabout at the junction of the A321 Finchampstead Road and Molly Millars Lane	Reported elsewhere on this agenda.

SUMMARY INFORMATION	
Site Area	43.9 hectares of which the scheme alignment is approximately 10 Hectares.
Previous land use(s) and floorspace(s)	agricultural
Net loss of dwellings	-2

CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
Berkshire Archaeology	No objection subject to a condition to secure further archaeological investigations. (*Officer Note: condition 17 refers.)*

BFBC	
Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust	No comments received.
Crime Prevention Design Officer	No comments received.
Environment Agency	No objection subject to conditions12, 18 & informative 9.
ESP utilities	No objections. Advise of the presence of gas mains and the need to implement safe working practices in their vicinity.
Gigaclear Ultrafast Fibre Broadband	No objections. Advise of the presence of apparatus in the vicinity.
Health and Safety Executive	No objection: the site is not currently within the consultation zone for any major hazard site or major accident hazard pipeline.
Highways England	No objection. Would like to be consulted on the CEMP if construction overlaps with other committed developments around Wokingham.
Historic England	No objection: do not wish to offer any comments on the application but recommend the council's conservation and archaeological advisers are consulted.
Linesearch	Advise of utility companies with assets in the vicinity.
Loddon Valley Ramblers Ramblers Association	No objection raised: Regret the inevitable extinguishment of part of Wokingham Footpath 25 the boulevard design of the new road would provide an alternative route to Finchampstead Road; Relieved that the routes of Wokingham Footpath 24, Wokingham Without Footpath 9 and Wokingham Without Footpath 10 are retained, albeit that they need to cross the new road. A central reservation is not sufficient to allow walkers to cross safely and controlled crossings should be provided. The revised proposals for the new roundabout south of Tesco are welcomed. *(Officer note: the Highway Officer considers the proposed crossing provision – described in sections 7.1 & 7.3 – to be appropriate for the level of traffic.)*

	The gradient of ramps should not be an impediment to use by people with limited mobility. *(Officer note: section 7.3 refers.)*
	Support the proposal for a new footbridge across the Emm Brook as the current bridge is not accessible for walkers with restricted mobility but the risk of flooding should be eliminated/minimised. *(Officer note: paragraph 108 refers.)*
	The road should not prejudice opportunities to create new north-south links between FP 10 and Heathlands Road. *(Officer note: the wider pedestrian and cycle network including new paths within the proposed SANGs is considered in the report on phase 2 of the SDL.)*
Natural England	No objection providing a CEMP is secured and the landscape drawings confirm the drainage proposals would not prejudice the proposed SANG use. *(Officer note: conditions 12q) & 24 refer.)*
Network Rail	Supports the application insofar as it forms part of a programme of works that enables removal of risk or enhancement of railway operations through closure of the Waterloo Road Level Crossing.
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue	No comments received.
South East Water	No comments received.
Southern Gas Networks	No comments received.
Thames Valley Police	No comments received.
Thames Water	No comments received.
Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks	No objection. Advise of the presence of assets in the vicinity.
SSE Telecommunications	No objection. Advise of the presence of assets in the vicinity.
Southern Gas Networks	No objection. Advise of the presence of gas mains and the need to employ safe working practices when working in their vicinity.
WBC Built Heritage Officer	No objection subject to a condition to secure landscape screening of the listed buildings at Britton's farm. *(Officer note: conditions 4 & 12p) refer.)*
WBC Drainage	No objection subject to conditions. *(Officer note: conditions 4, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 & 23 refer.)*

WBC Ecology	No objection subject to conditions. *(Officer note: conditions 7, 8, 12, 15 & 24 refer.)*
WBC Environmental Health Officer	No objection subject to conditions to secure a CEMP and remediation of any unexpected contamination found and an informative about noise. *(Officer Note: conditions 24 & 26 and informative 6 refer.)*
WBC Highways	No objection subject to conditions. *(Officer note: conditions 4, 6, 16, 24, 27 & 28 refer.)*
WBC Tree & Landscape	No objection subject to conditions. *(Officer note: conditions 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11,* ***Error! Reference source not found.*** *, 12, 13 14 & 24 refer.)*
WBC Public Rights of Way	No objection subject to further detail of the design and materials of the new footbridge and linking paths and commuted sums for future maintenance being secured. *(Officer note: conditions 6 & 24and paragraph 105 refer.)*

REPRESENTATIONS

Wokingham Town Council:

Full comments attached. In summary:

Initially raised no objection but sought clarity on crossing points (see section 7.1) and raised the need for separate cycle provision *(see section 7.2).*

Subsequently raised concerns about compliance with Core Strategy policy CP6 *Managing Travel Demand*, specifically sustainable transport (see paragraph 13 and sections 7.1 & 7.4); improving the infrastructure network (see section 10.); enhance road safety *(Officer note: the road has been designed to be safe and attractive for all users and the design is subject to the usual Road Safety Audits);* highway or environmental problems *(see section 7.5);* and the use of low bridges by high sided vehicles *(see section 2.1).*

There is also a requirement to have a place to safely walk horses along the route. *(Officer note: paragraph 13 explains the objectives for the SWDR which do not include equestrian use and the route is not likely to be attractive to horse riders).*

Who would be responsible for maintenance of timber boardwalk which may rot? *(Officer note: paragraphs 105 & 107 refer.)*

Suggest the SWDR should be named after the late (town and borough) Councillor Bob Wyatt. *(Officer note: although SPD design principle 3g supports the use of local historic names or names of persons associated with an area, this is not a planning matter and the suggestion has been passed onto the team who deal with street naming and numbering.)*

Wokingham Without Parish Council:

Full comments attached. In summary:

The main congestion currently occurs at:

a) Nine Mile Ride/Heathlands Road traffic lights (morning & evening peak);

b) Heathlands Road/Easthampstead Road junction (primarily the northbound traffic);

c) Waterloo Road/Easthampstead junction (due to northbound traffic turning right into Waterloo Road); and

d) Old Wokingham Road/Nine Mile Ride (during the evening peak southbound traffic on Old Wokingham Road usually backs up beyond the Easthampstead Road junction).

(b) and (c) are exacerbated by the Star Lane level crossing on the Easthampstead Road which would become worse as the frequency of rail traffic increases. In the absence of a bridge over level crossing the traffic lights at the junction of the SWDR with Easthampstead Road should be phased with the level crossing. *(Officer note: sections 1 & 7.5 refer.)*

Honey Hill provides an alternative to Easthampstead Road and does not need traffic calming but mitigation would be required at Heathlands Road/Nine Mile Ride junction. *(Officer note: section 7.5 refers.)*

Better provision should be made for pedestrians and cyclists (especially travel to school) at the Star Lane crossing. *(Officer note: paragraph 88 refers.)*

There is no resolution to the low-level railway bridges which would negate result in lorries being routed through the town centre, negating the benefit of the South Wokingham Distributor Road. *(Officer note: section2.1 refers.)*

Accesses to Ludgrove School and the Gray's Farm sports hub are not defined. *(Officer note: the proposals do not alter the existing access arrangements for Ludgrove School. Access to Gray's Farm sport hub would be determined as part of any future application for the change of use of the site to sports use but - consistent with the principle of comprehensive masterplanning – the SWDR proposals would facilitate access to Gray's Farm via the neighbourhood centre proposed within phase 2b if required.)*

More information should be provided on PRoW connections to existing byways and footpaths, PRoW connections to Gray's Farm from the South, cycle/wheelchair crossing over the railway and upgrades to surfaces of connected footpaths so that they are usable in all weathers. *(Officer note: these matters are considered in section 7.1 & 7.3 insofar as they are relevant to this application. The wider network is considered in the reports on phase 2.)*

Ward members & adjoining ward members:

Full comments are available on the website. In summary:

Cllr Ross accepts the form of the road and proposals for Public Rights of Way but considers there are unresolved issues around access to Ludgrove School; access to the Gray's farm sports hub; and safety at the Star Lane Level Crossing which would increasingly be used by pupils travelling to schools north and south of the railway; consideration should be given to an alternative crossing. Notes an error regarding the number of houses proposed in the Walking, Cycling & Horse Riding Assessment. *(Officer note: the proposals do not alter the existing access arrangements for Ludgrove School. Access to Gray's Farm sport hub would be determined as part of any future application for*

the change of use of the site to sports use, although an initial feasibility indicates that access could be achieved from Heathlands Road. Nevertheless - consistent with the principle of comprehensive masterplanning – the SWDR proposals would facilitate access to Gray's Farm via the neighbourhood centre proposed within phase 2b if required. The Star Lane crossing is considered in paragraph 88. While this issue relates primarily to the housing rather than the SWDR, the existence of alternative, potentially preferable options is not a reason to withhold planning permission for an otherwise acceptable proposal.)

Cllr Gee objects to the initial proposal and to the revisions. Cllr Kerr also objects, whilst accepting the need for the road, to facilitate delivery of development in the SDL. Their very detailed comments, many of which are shared, are summarised below (available in full on the council's website).

The proposal would not achieve the aim of alleviating congestion in the town centre and delivering extra capacity; to function as a bypass and alleviate congestion the SWDR would need to be constructed with wider carriageways and higher speed limits, to make it more appealing than alternative routes (not that this is suggested). The road would generate additional/longer trips, becoming congested and people would quickly revert to travelling through the town centre (an Air Quality Management Area). *(Officer note: section 7.5 refers.)*

Finchampstead Road is already congested/polluted and the need to replace the narrow bridges/ height restrictions has not been addressed; it is pointless to enlarge the Tesco roundabout unless this is tackled; there is a risk of lorries travelling from the A329 M using this route resulting in congestion/damage to the bridges; the use of this route by construction traffic would exacerbate congestion. *(Officer note: section 2.1 & 7.5 refer.)*

New roads should provide alternatives to motorised transport, not just additonal capacity. The proposals would not fulfil the objective of creating an environment that is safe for and encourages active travel, which must be achieved if the number of vehicles on the road/congestion are to be addressed and climate change targets met. The provision for pedestrians and cyclists would not be complaint with new government guidance in LTN 1/20, that cyclists should be treated as vehicles and separated from pedestrians rather than sharing space on busy, urban streets. The proposals do not give sufficient consideration to who uses sustainable modes and the reasons that other people do not. *(Officer note: sections 6.1 & 6.2 refer*).

Pedestrian and cycle provision should be part of a connected network and provide safe routes to schools and into town: the SWDR would provide an isolated stretch of carriageway bound by a bridge with a path only on one side of the road at one end, and a very restricted crossing of a railway at the other. *(Officer note: integration with the wider pedestrian and cycle network would be secured through the Pedestrian and Cycle Strategy for the SDL housing development which is considered in the reports on phase 2 of the SDL, elsewhere on the agenda.)*

The Star Lane crossing is narrow and would not be safe, for children and cyclists in particular, to cross without mitigation. The revisions do not address this. *(Officer note: paragraph 88 refers.)*

That the new guidance came out after the initial design is not a reason not to follow best practice; it is better to put things right now than invest in costly schemes later to bring the route up to standard. *(Officer note: section 7.2 refers.)*

Failure to incorporate appropriate measures may be funding at risk. *(Officer note: while this is a consideration for the council – the applicant in this case - it is not a planning matter.)*

Traffic calming measures should be put in place to prevent motorists picking-up speed as they travel over the bridge towards Montague Park school. The revisions do not address this. *(Officer note: William Heelas Way and the Eastern Gateway were designed for a 30mph speed limit, with the intention that the road would become a through route, so have necessary measures incorporated already. These will include vehicle activated signs on the school approaches for an advisory 20 mph speed limit during peak school arrival/departure times)*

Living Streets – A Highways Guide for Developers in Wokingham hasn't been adopted so it is concerning that this guidance is being used. Particularly as the publication of LTN 1/20 means that parts of it are obsolete. *(Officer note: The road has been designed to Manual for Streets, which has been adopted as part of the Development Plan. While Living Streets has not been adopted it is current policy, replacing the outdated 2006 guidance and it is expected to be incorporated through the local plan update.)*

It is unclear whether the proposals would achieve the objective of creating a sense of place and identity for the area. *(Officer note: sections 3, 4 & 5.1 refer.)*

The proposed boardwalk bridge is an improvement on the existing provision but is not well suited to wheelchair use, can be slippery when wet and have a limited lifespan. *(Officer note: section 7.3 refers.)*

Local residents and interest groups:

Representations have been received from 47 correspondents: 25 in response to the initial consultation in late 2019 and a further 25 following consultation on revisions and additional information in late 2020/early 2021. These included responses from the British Horse Society; Wokingham Active Travel Community Hub (WATCH), a community group aiming to make walking and cycling the natural first choice for local travel around Wokingham; The Wokingham Society and Great Langborough Residents' Association (GLRA).

GLRA commented that the revisions included small but welcome improvements including the design of the road crossings of the Emm Brook and tributaries; flood and drainage provisions; and improvements to the footpath from Gipsy Lane including the boardwalk to replace the difficult footbridge. Other than that, the recent comments related to the scheme in general – primarily the application of new government guidance on cycling - rather than the revisions so have been summarised with the earlier representations.

Support

Five respondents were broadly supportive of the proposals, with caveats (included in the summary of objections): the proposal has been talked about since the 1990's and it is essential that this crucial infrastructure, which would help alleviate congestion, is delivered; the junction with Finchampstead Road would allow the road to act as a southern distribution road.

Objections

The remaining 42 respondents object to the proposals.

General points

Wokingham is being overdeveloped and the new road would create opportunities for further development, generating more traffic and congestion; its purpose is to facilitate development rather than traffic relief. The SWDR is being paid for by WBC but would benefit developers. (*Officer Note: see the sections 2 & 10 of the appraisal)*

Loss of "greenbelt land" when brownfield sites should be prioritised. *(Officer note: Greenbelt is a specific designation which does not apply in this case. See Section 2. Brownfield sites are prioritised but could not deliver sufficient new homes to meet the housing needs of the borough.)*

Lack of information on coordination of development in South Wokingham and length of the construction period and construction impacts. *(Officer note: see section 10.1. Construction impacts are considered in the Environmental Statement and would be mitigated by condition 24.)*

Does the proposal meet government climate change targets? *(Officer note: Section 7 explains that the SWDR would provide access to new homes, facilitate sustainable travel and result in redistribution of traffic so would contribute towards a sustainable development in south Wokingham.)*

A number of responses touched on infrastructure and the need to mitigate the wider impact of SDL development (*Officer Note: the application is for the SWDR only, which is itself part of the infrastructure required to support the development in the SDL and, as such, is being delivered by the council from CIL. While it is reasonable and necessary for any planning permission for the SWDR to secure mitigation of the impacts arising directly from the construction and operation of the road, it is for the applications for housing and associated development to mitigate the impacts of additional traffic (all modes) generated by the SDL development.)*

The council's recommendation not to develop further south of the local red demarcation line, therefore, preserving local open and historic countryside, is supported.

All planners, officials and councillors should read Bill Mollison's book *"Permaculture a Designers' Manual"* to gain a better understanding of green, sustainable, joined up planning, design and implementation. (*Officer Note: the officers involved with the assessment of this application are all appropriately qualified and undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in line with the requirements of their professional bodies*.)

Landscape, greenspace and ecology

The description of the landscape of the western part of the site emphasises the impact of the railway line and suburban Wokingham, giving a misleading impression of a mainly built up area. The proposal would result in loss of a beautiful, green part of Wokingham, significant trees, wildlife habitats and biodiversity including protected species - bats, owls and slow worms – and existing open views. Although routes may be maintained, development of the SDL would change the rural character of the area making it less attractive to walkers, runners, cyclists and horse riders who use it for informal recreation; SANG is no substitute. New housing development should be limited to land that is not currently accessible. (*Officer Note: the principle of development has already been*

established, see section 2; the impact on the character of the area and ecology are considered in sections 3, 4, 5 & 6.)

It would take up to 15 years new planting to establish and for the adverse effects on relatively open views from PRoW and nearby dwellings to be significantly ameliorated.

Trees and vegetation should be retained and reinforced (with evergreen species) for ecological purposes; to screen views of the road from existing dwellings in Gipsy Lane and PRoW; to lessen noise and pollution; to avoid increasing flooding; to maintain the enclosed, tranquil character or existing paths; and to maintain overall canopy cover. *(Officer note: section 4 refers.)*

There is lack of information on planting proposals to mitigate losses which should be refined to provide a varied mix that would support biodiversity, avoid species that are susceptible to pests and disease (currently included); be adaptable to climate change; and ensure no overall loss of canopy cover. *(Officer note: section 4 and condition 12 refer.)*

The proposed planting along the road should help make it less intrusive/has the opportunity been taken to maximise the land alongside the new road for new planting for both aesthetic, road screening and environmental benefits. *(Officer note: section 4 and condition 12 refer.)*

Five notable or veteran trees are proposed to be lost; could the design be revised to allow their retention. *(Officer note: five notable trees are proposed to be removed, four Category A trees and one Category B tree, all on the road alignment so the loss could not be avoided. No Veteran trees are proposed to be removed. Section 4.2 refers.)*

A 3-5 year maintenance plan for new planting should be secured. *(Officer note: conditions 12 & 13refer.)*

Provision for pedestrians and cyclists

The provision of a pedestrian and cycle route along the length of the SWDR is supported but the proposed three-metre wide, shared surface does not comply with the latest government guidance in LTN 1/20 and would cause conflict between pedestrians and cyclists: cyclists should be treated as vehicles and should be physically segregated from both pedestrians and from motor vehicles (a painted line would not be sufficient), where volumes of traffic are high, including at crossings and roundabouts where there should be cycle priority or signal controlled crossings; reference was also made to the consultation on revisions to the Highway Code which would require priority to be given to pedestrians and cyclists at junctions. That design took place before the guidance was published is not a reason not to be flexible and embrace the new guidance. *(Officer note: see sections 7.1 & 7.2).*

If the width cannot be increased consideration should be given to reducing the width of the verge. *(Officer note: paragraph 98 refers.)*

Pedestrians and cyclists travelling along the SWDR should have priority at junctions with side roads, with pathways raised to reinforce the priority *(Officer note: the revised proposals include pedestrian and cycle priority at side roads and crossings at roundabouts. See section 7.1 and also condition 6)*

There is no provision for cycling on the north west segment of the replacement for the current Tesco roundabout, or for the section of Finchampstead Road heading north within

the scheme boundary. We anticipate this route featuring in the LCWIP for Wokingham Town and it is unacceptable to put in place a new design which is both noncompliant with the LTN requirements for new roundabouts and highways and would require rework in the near future. *(Officer note: the roundabout design would not prejudice this and the applications for SDL development would secure contributions towards improvements.)*

The additional housing would result in a significant increase in pedestrian flows along Easthampstead Road, which would be a primary route to St Crispin's secondary school. Closure of Easthampstead Road south of the SWDR would stop walkers and cyclists taking a safe direct north-south route. Better pedestrian and cycle facilities are needed at the junction of the SWDR with Easthampstead Road and between the SWDR and the Star Lane level crossing. The paths immediately north of the crossing are narrow and would not accommodate buggies, mobility vehicles or cyclists. (*Officer Note: see paragraph 6 & section 7.1.)*

There is no footpath on one side of Finchampstead Road under the southern bridge (*Officer Note: works in the Finchampstead Road corridor are the subject of a separate application 203535. Improvements are also considered as part of the assessment of the applications for housing development within the SDL.)*

Closure of the Waterloo Crossing to pedestrians and cyclist should be reconsidered. *(Officer note: this was secured as part of the planning permission for the Eastern Gateway and is beyond the scope of this application.)*

A tunnel through the railway embankment is suggested to improve pedestrian and cycle provision. *((Officer Note: each application must be assessed on its own merit and that fact that an alternative proposal might be preferable is not a reason to withhold planning permission for an otherwise acceptable proposal.)*

Public Rights of Way (PRoW) & greenways

There are no proposals to address access restrictions at the Gipsy Lane, railway footbridge which is on the council's proposed Greenway route D. *(Officer note: any feasible improvements to the existing footbridge are to be delivered as part of the council's Greenways project.)*

The important north-south footpaths - connecting Crowthorne and Wokingham - must be protected and there is an opportunity to offset loss of amenity/enhance public access through improvements to the existing footpath network e.g. drainage of FP9 and FP24. (*Officer Note: see section 7.3 of the appraisal.*)

There is a lack of clarity about how footpaths 9, 10 and 25 connect across the SWDR and the alignment of footpaths 9 and 24 at the intersection with the SWDR is not shown consistently (*Officer Note: revised plans have addressed these points. See section 6.4 of the appraisal.)*

Wokingham Without Footpath 9 and the replacement footbridge would be lower than the existing path/bridge and, hence, more prone to flooding; the path should be raised so it only floods in extreme conditions. *(Officer note: 106 refers.)*

The Transport Assessment doesn't consider PRoW connections at either end of the Ludgrove access or to the south of it; it is hoped that it would still be possible to walk or cycle along this route. (*Officer Note: this is because these connections are not affected by the proposed SWDR. See section 6.4 of the appraisal. The Ludgrove access is private*

land and outside the application site boundary. While the owners currently permit use, there is no right of access over it.)

PRoW should be accessible throughout construction. *(Officer note: condition 24 xxii) would manage access during construction and minimise the need for any temporary PRoW closures. Temporary diversions and any unavoidable closures which would need separate approval under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.)*

The British Horse Society submitted a detailed document setting out the case for improvements to the PRoW network; particularly bridleways which can be used by vulnerable users, horse riders, cyclists, disabled, parents with prams and buggies. The document is primarily concerned with the wider opportunities offered by the SDL to improve the PRoW network and provide safer off road recreational travel opportunities for all users, rather than commenting on this proposal. In summary, the points relating specifically to this application are the design of the traffic light junction at the junction of Heathlands Road/Easthampstead Road/the link to the SWDR and the increase in traffic on Heathlands Road and Easthampstead Road. Heathlands Road is already dangerous for horse riders and cyclists and is likely to become. Riders from areas south and east access Gorrick Woods via the Ludgrove access/avoid Heathlands Road. The proposed traffic light junction would not be safe for horse riders and a refuge should be provided to allow horse riders to cross the SWDR-Heathlands Road link before the junction. (*Officer Note:* there is no right to use the Ludgrove access; the lawful access to Gorrick Plantation is via Luckley Road or Heathlands Road.)

Other transport issues

The following have been suggested as better alternatives to (or in addition to) the proposal: a relief road terminating at the Throat (junction of Finchampstead Road and Sandhurst Road) or Nine Mile Ride; a new bridge over the railway line allowing the SWDR to join Finchampstead Road at Molly Millars Lane; a road connecting directly to the A329(M) (without additional development); a direct link from Heathlands Road to the SWDR with a "no right turn" into Waterloo Road which would address the problem of rat running in Waterloo Road, remove the need for the SWDR and allow direct access to the town centre to be retained; and a one-way, traffic calmed ring road formed by the NWDR and SWDR. (*Officer Note: each application must be assessed on its own merit and that fact that an alternative proposal might be preferable is not a reason to withhold planning permission for an otherwise acceptable proposal. Furthermore, in this case the principle of a route on this alignment has been established by planning policy*.)

The road should be completed prior to any development being started. (*Officer Note: Any necessary controls on the phasing of housing delivery would be secured through the planning permission for the housing.)*

The road (and associated development) would increase Wokingham's traffic problems, resulting in more traffic and delays. Finchampstead Road is already at capacity at peak times and without improvements at the Tesco junction (where the SWDR would join it; enlargement of the roundabout would not be sufficient), congestion would be exacerbated, increasing queuing on Finchampstead Road in both directions but particularly northbound because SWDR traffic turning right (towards the town centre) or south onto Finchampstead Road and then right into Molly Millars Lane (where there is insufficient space for a filter lane) would have priority over northbound traffic on Finchampstead Road. *(Officer Note: see section 7.4.)*

The SWDR would join Finchampstead Road between the two railway bridges and - unless the bridge is widened/existing height restrictions are addressed - the road would not provide good pedestrian/cycle connectivity or an alternative HGV route to Molly Millars Lane, defeating the aim of reducing traffic through the town centre. Others suggest traffic restrictions should be put in place at the London Road. (*Officer Note: section 2.1 refers.*)

Traffic flow projections are needed before the road can be approved. *(Officer note: section 7.4 refers.)*

Lack of queuing space eastbound to turn onto Easthampstead Road would result in gridlock if the Star Lane level crossing is down for a longer than expected; and increased use of Easthampstead Road resulting in increased congestion at the junction with Waterloo Road (*Officer Note: see paragraph 4 and section 7.4.*)

There is objection to/it is not clear whether Easthampstead Road would be closed between the SWDR and Heathlands Road, which would cut off access to Wokingham Town Centre. (*Officer Note:* paragraphs 4-6 and 118-120 refer.)

Measures should be implemented to keep traffic on Easthampstead Road north of the Star Lane Level crossing to the 30 mph speed limit. *(Officer note: development is required to mitigate its impact but not to resolve existing issues.)*

It is not clear what is proposed for Waterloo Road, which is used as a rat-run resulting in queuing, air pollution and litter at peak times and, unlike Priest Avenue and Rances Lane) does not benefit from traffic calming. (*Officer Note: there are no proposals for these streets. The alternative route provided by the SWDR combined with the restriction on eastbound SWDR traffic turning north onto Easthampstead Road – see paragraph 5 - would generally result in a reduction in movements in this area.)*

William Heelas Way is not wide enough and local roads would still be used as a cut-through. Are residents of Montague Park aware William Heelas Way is to become a through-road? *(Officer Note: the intention to deliver the whole SWDR has been a matter of public record since consultation on the Core Strategy, which was adopted in 2010; William Heelas Way was planned as the first phase of the SWDR and has been constructed accordingly; and the connection to it (a bridge over the railway line and link to Waterloo Road) has already been approved under application 172934.)*

The application should not be approved without mitigation of congestion at the junction of Nine Mile Ride/Heathlands Road) which was approaching capacity in the 2015 base year and exceeds capacity in 2026. Also, the links to Easthampstead Road and Heathlands Road and the Nine Mile Ride/Honey Hill junction are also close to capacity. (*Officer Note: see section 7.4 of the appraisal.)*

Instead have a better, more joined up and more consistent public transport system and better cycle ways. (*Officer Note: the SWDR has been planned as a key route in a sustainable transport network for all modes of transport as explained in sections 2, 7.1 & 7.4 of the appraisal. Additional measures would be secured under the applications for residential development within the SDL.*)

Perhaps pressure could be put on Network Rail to upgrade the bridges during the next plan period.

Construction traffic should not be routed through the town centre. *(Officer note: condition 24 refers.)*

Flooding

The road would be on a flood plain; the measures to prevent future flooding seem inadequate; the proposal would increase the risk of flooding of nearby properties. *(Officer Note: section 8 refers.)*

The roundabout and Tesco car park are prone to; with changing weather patterns indents like the flooding of the Emm Brook tributary, in front of Ludgrove School in February 2020 may become more frequent; how would water captured in the flood meadow east of the Reading-Gatwick Railway line/south of Tesco (run-off from Luckley Road and Luckley House School plus overflow from the stream running down the centre of the flood meadow) would be accommodated; officers have advised that surface water discharge from the site would be captured and released at greenfield rates. *(Officer Note: section 8 refers.)*

Pollution

Air noise and light pollution must be kept to a minimum in an already congested space. Air quality along Finchampstead Road is already in breach of government guidelines during peak times and the additional traffic would increase pollution with health implications. (*Officer Note: air quality is considered in section 9.2.)*

Would planting capture all the carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and pollutants that the new road would create? *(Officer note: neither Development Plan nor national guidance/legislation requires this at this stage but the application has been assessed against adopted policy: section 4.2 refers.)*

Consultation

The application is listed as being in Wokingham Without but part of the site lies within Wokingham Parish: both parishes and the relevant wards should be mentioned so residents are aware that the of proposed development in their immediate vicinity (*Officer Note: unfortunately, the system does not have the flexibility to display both parishes on the website. However, both parish councils were consulted as were neighbouring properties in the vicinity of the site.)*

WBC should consider their polices and feedback from the surveys people are asked to participate (*Officer Note: the application has been assessed against development plan policy and appropriate consultation, in accordance with the council's Statement of Community Involvement, has taken place at every stage of the plan making, pre-application and application and feedback has been taken into consideration in drawing up policies and proposals. However, it is not possible to fulfil everyone's wishes in the context of national planning requirement to deliver development.)*

One correspondent commented that the Traffic Assessment is difficult for a layperson to understand. Information should be presented in a more accessible way including journey times, an explanation of how they were calculated and thresholds for unacceptable journey times. The correspondent sought to interpret the document and draw conclusions about unacceptable peak hour journey times between Finchampstead and Wokingham. (*Officer Note: transport modelling is a complex, specialist subject and the Transport Assessment is a detailed technical document written primarily for a technical audience. It*

has been reviewed by relevant specialists within the Highway Authority as part of the assessment of this application. See section 7.4 of the appraisal.)

PLANNING POLICY		
National Policy	**NPPF**	National Planning Policy Framework
South East Area Plan saved policy	**NRM6**	Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
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
	CP8	Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
	CP9	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
	CP10	Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network
	CP11	Proposals outside development limits (including countryside)
	CP17	Housing Delivery
	CP21	South Wokingham Strategic Development Location
Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	**CC01**	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	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
	TB21	Landscape Character
	TB23	Biodiversity and Development
	TB24	Designated Heritage Assets
	TB25	Archaeology
	BDG	Borough Design Guide (2012)

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)		South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document (2011)
		Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (2011)
		Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (21010) & Companion Guide (2010)

PLANNING ISSUES

1. **Description of Development**

1. The application is for the section of the SWDR between the A321 Finchampstead Road and the new roundabout on Waterloo Road (which is being constructed as part of the Eastern Gateway). It would extend through open countryside, to the south of Wokingham for approximately 2.7km.

2. The existing "Tesco" roundabout on Finchampstead Road is proposed to be enlarged (to 44 metres diameter) to increase capacity flows (a similar enlargement of roundabout at the junction with Molly Millars Lane is proposed under application 203535). From there, the road would be constructed roughly on the alignment of the existing Tesco access, extending to the south-eastern corner of the Tesco site, where a new roundabout would be constructed. This would provide access to the foodstore car park and the largest parcel in Phase 3 of the SDL (application 192325 refers), as well as the eastward continuation of the SWDR.

3. Two bridges are proposed over the Emm Brook: a new road bridge and a replacement for the existing footbridge at the junction of Wokingham Footpaths 9 and 24. The Emm Brook road bridge is proposed to be a 'single span' structure of 15.3 meters width and 40 m length, supported by abutments with sufficient offset from the banks of Emm Brook to accommodate flooding events and an ecological corridor. The footbridge is described in more detail in the *"Public Rights of Way (PRoW)"* section of the appraisal.

4. The most significant change to the existing network would be where the SWDR crosses Easthampstead Road, approximately 110 metres south of the Star Lane Level Crossing (the reasons for this are explained in section 7.5 of the appraisal).

5. The section of Easthampstead Road immediately to the south of the SWDR would be closed to motor vehicles and a traffic light controlled T-junction would be formed with the SWDR and northern section of Easthampstead Road. Southbound traffic on Easthampstead Road would be able to join the SWDR in either direction; westbound traffic on the SWDR would be able to go straight ahead only (except for buses and emergency vehicles which would also be able to turn left into Easthampstead Road; eastbound traffic on the SWDR would be able to continue straight ahead or turn right into Easthampstead Road.

6. Approximately 500 metres to the east of this, a new "Heathlands Road link" (approximately 400 metres in length) is proposed connect the SWDR to Easthampstead Road, forming a crossroads at the existing junction with Heathlands

Road. The junctions at either end of this link would also be traffic light controlled, with all movements permitted. The section of Easthampstead Road between the SWDR and Heathlands Road would become a cul-de-sac with access from the south for existing dwellings plus one proposed residential parcel within Phase 2. Pedestrians and cyclists travelling north-south on Easthampstead Road would still be able to take the direct route (approximately 370 metres) but vehicles would be diverted via the Heathlands Road link and SWDR (approximately 900 metres).

7. A microsimulation model (VISSIM) was created to model the interactions of the three traffic signal junctions with the operation of the railway level crossing barrier down times. The junction layout, approach lanes and queue capacity have been carefully set in line with future year requirements. The three junctions are proposed to be equipped with Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation (MOVA) software to optimise performance. Toucan crossings are proposed on each arm to enable pedestrians and cyclists to cross within the signal timings.

8. Typically, the road would be single-carriageway with an overall width of 7.3 metres, flanked by a three-metre wide verge (incorporating SuDS and structural landscaping) and three-metre wide shared footpaths and cycleways.

9. The design incorporates 12 accesses into residential parcels, pedestrian crossings (two Toucan crossings and the remainder with central refuges) and bus stops (the locations of which have been agreed with the SDL developers to be consistent with the masterplanning for phases 2 & 3). A right-turn lane has been incorporated in the junction that would serve the school and neighbourhood centre, where the modelling indicates a greater number of turning movements.

10. The drainage for the road consists of rain gardens/swales in the verges that run alongside it and a series of attenuation basins which are proposed to be integrated in the public open space in the wider SDL.

2. **Principle of Development:**

11. The National Planning Policy Framework establishes an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan: applications that accord with the Development Plan for the Borough will be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDDLP) Policy CC01 *Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development*).

12. The Wokingham Borough Core Strategy establishes the spatial vision for the Borough for the period 2006-2026, including a requirement to provide at least 13,487 new dwellings, with associated infrastructure (Core Strategy policy CP17 *Housing Delivery*). The majority of this new residential development is to be in four Strategic Development Locations (SDLs), of which South Wokingham is one. Core Strategy policy CP21 *South Wokingham Strategic Development Location* anticipates a comprehensively planned, phased urban extension of around 2,500 dwellings and associated infrastructure, including includes a new connection between Coppid Beech Roundabout and Finchampstead Road; the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR). Core Strategy policies CP10 *Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network* MDDLP policy CC08 Safeguarding alignments of the Strategic Transport Network & Road Infrastructure also refer.

13. The SWDR is to form a continuous new route running broadly east-west through the SDL, south of the existing settlement, connecting the A329 London Road in the northeast to the A321 Finchampstead Road in the southwest and should fulfil three important functions (Core Strategy paragraph A7.42 d): to integrate with the existing street network, providing access to the new development as well as allowing dispersal of traffic, thus relieving some pressure on the historic town centre; to function as a corridor for sustainable travel accommodating bus routes and catering for safe, comfortable pedestrian and cycle movement; and to be a street with civic quality, fronted by development and serving as a location for commercial and community activity. (Relieving traffic pressure through the town centre would also assist with realising the aims of Core Strategy policy CP14 *Growth and Renaissance of Wokingham Town Centre*.)

14. The first section of the SWDR – from London Road south to the Reading-Waterloo railway line - has already been delivered as part of the first phase of the SDL, at Montague Park (formerly Buckhurst Farm) and is called William Heelas Way.

15. The second section of the road, often referred to as the "Eastern Gateway", is under construction and will extend William Heelas Way southwards, to Waterloo Road. The works include construction of a new bridge over the railway line, a new roundabout at the junction with Waterloo Road and stopping up of Waterloo Road between the existing level crossing and the new roundabout, to facilitate closure of the level crossing by Network Rail (for safety reasons) once the alternative route via between William Heelas Way and Waterloo Road is open.

16. An application for capacity improvements at the junction of Finchampstead Road and Molly Millars Lane (the Western Gateway, application 203535), required in connection with delivery of the SWDR, is to be determined by the Planning Committee prior to this application.

17. This application (together with application 203535) is for the final section of the SWDR and would complete delivery of the continuous route required by Development Plan policy. As such the proposal is acceptable in principle and there are other planning considerations that outweigh the objection to the net loss of two dwellings (considered in paragraph 24 below).

2.1. Finchampstead Road bridges

18. Other works identified by Core Strategy CP10 *Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network* include improvements to the two railway bridges on the A321 Finchampstead Road. Core Strategy Appendix A and the Infrastructure SPD anticipate replacement of the southern bridge (on the Reading-Guilford line) and a contribution towards replacement of the northern bridge (on the Reading-Waterloo line) but the subsequent (now historic) Regulation 123 List identified them as works to be delivered by the council from CIL. Subsequent design work by the council indicate that the cost and disruption caused by the bridge works would be disproportionate compared to the benefits and it is not feasible to implement at this time, for the reasons explained below.

19. The SWDR is proposed to join Finchampstead Road between the two bridges, both of which are narrow with restricted headroom. The consequences of this are poor provision for pedestrians and cyclists, and restrictions on movements by high vehicles: there is a footpath on the east side only of the southern bridge and, while

there are paths on both sides of the northern bridge, they are narrow; and high vehicles travelling north-south on Finchampstead Road must either straddle both lanes of the road or take a longer route via the Molly Millars Lane employment area and the town centre one-way system. Replacement of the bridges would allow their width and headroom to be increased.

20. The increased width would facilitate improved pedestrian and cycle provision in the immediate vicinity but those improvements would be very localised and wider works would be required to deliver a coherent network. Improvements to the wider network - which would make walking and cycling between the town centre and destinations south of the railway including the SDL and Molly Millars Lane employment area, more attractive – are proposed. These would be delivered through a combination of conditions and S106 contributions in connection with planning permissions for other development within the SDL (the IDP refers). While leaving the bridges in situ would result in a pinch-point, it would not prevent these wider improvements taking place.

21. Detailed assessment has shown that the Finchampstead Road bridge headroom enhancement is not essential in highway terms either. Alternative routes already exist and the additional headroom is not required to derive the benefits of the SWDR or to deliver the SDL. Large vehicles constitute only a small of the traffic travelling north-south on Finchampstead Road. Thus, the benefit of diverting the majority of through traffic from the town centre would be realised by the SWDR and Western Gateway, without replacement of the bridges which would achieve only a small additional benefit, albeit of large vehicles.

22. The scheme is compatible with the objectives of the strategic plan in that it facilitates the SDL whilst accommodating new and existing traffic levels satisfactorily and does not prejudice the bridge from being replaced at a later stage should that be considered necessary in the future.

23. Also, while not determinative, the complexity, cost and duration of the works are a consideration: the works would involve raising the railway track and embankments and reducing the level of the road beneath and would require a road closure of around two years due to the complexity and Network Rail requirements.

2.2. Net loss of dwellings

24. Core Strategy policy CP3 i) *General Principles for Development* resists development that would lead to a net loss of dwellings. The works at the junction with Finchampstead Road would require demolition of two existing houses: 76a and 76b Finchampstead Road. However, the SWDR is of strategic importance, being required to support the delivery of around 2,500 new homes in the SDL as part of the planned development of the borough; material considerations that significantly outweigh the in principle objection to the loss of two dwellings.

3. **Design and character**

25. Core Strategy policies CP1 *Sustainable Development* and CP3 *General Principles for Development* establish an overarching requirement for high quality design that maintains or enhances the high quality of the environment. The Core Strategy and

South Wokingham SPD establish the function (see paragraph 13), broad alignment and principles for design of the SWDR.

26. An options appraisal – which considered environmental constraints such as flooding, engineering approaches and traffic modelling – was undertaken in 2014, following which public consultation took place on three options. The design has been progressed on the basis of a central route which was the preferred option (81% of respondents favoured it) and also the best fit with the adopted guidance.

27. The quality of the built environment is an important factor in promoting sustainable and active travel (one of the key functions of the SWDR, considered further in section 6). SPD Design Principle 5a establishes that, as a primary street, the SWDR should have generous footpaths and street tree planting - an essential component of the design - on both sides of the street, which should also incorporate cycle provision.

28. The design incorporates a three metre wide verge, on either side of the road. This would physically separate the shared footpath and cycleway from vehicular traffic and incorporate street tree planting and SuDS features, thus providing for visual amenity (an important factor in making routes attractive for walking and cycling) as well as drainage and some ecological benefits.

29. Street trees are identified as an essential component of the development and the landscape design of the street should be governed by a detailed street design strategy (SPD Design Principle 5b). This should include details of materials (a simple palette of materials should be used across the movement network to highlight the distinction between different streets within the established hierarchy) and the specification of street furniture (seating, litterbins, lamp stands, bus shelters, bollards and signage which should add to the overall identity quality and character of the development and should reinforce character areas whilst avoiding 'clutter'). The application establishes principles for the landscaping of the site and condition 12 would secure coordinated delivery of landscaping across the SDL in line with policy requirements.

30. Design principle 5a also indicates that opportunities of vehicle crossovers will be limited and that there should be continuous frontage development through built-up areas (natural surveillance is an important aspect of the safety of the public realm). The design incorporates access to residential parcels and – while it is beyond the scope of this application - the applications for residential development within the SDL demonstrate that frontage development can be achieved without the need for many if any additional accesses.

4. **Landscape**

31. Core Strategy policy CP1 Sustainable Development and CP3 General Principles for Development established a requirement for high quality of design that respects its context and maintains or enhances the quality of the environment. This includes the way development integrates with its surroundings and the use of appropriate landscaping.

4.1. Landscape character

32. MDDLP policy TB21 *Landscape Character* amplified by the Borough Design Guide (General Principle G1) and South Wokingham SPD (Design Principle 1a) require

proposals to demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of the council's Landscape Character Assessment and respond positively to the local landscape context. New development should protect and enhance green infrastructure networks, promoting connectivity between different parts of the network (MDDLP policy CC03 *Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping).* The landscape setting of the SDL – in particular the course of the Emmbrook – is a key determinant of the urban form (Core Strategy Policy CP21 *South Wokingham Strategic Development Location,* the Concept Rationale in Core Strategy Appendix 7 and the South Wokingham SPD, especially Section 4, part 1).

33. The council's Landscape Character Assessment identifies the area to the South of Wokingham as N1 *Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland*. It is a gently undulating, agricultural landscape in predominantly pastoral use. The Emm Brook and its tributaries form a network of brooks in small valleys, although these are not visible in the landscape being hidden within woodland and trees. The land appears to slope up from these watercourses to the edge of Wokingham to the north and to the forested plateau (Gorrick Plantation) to the south.

34. The inevitable impact of the construction of a strategic road through this landscape is adequately assessed in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

35. Due to flooding and drainage requirements, it is necessary for the SWDR to be elevated on an embankment ranging from one to four metres in height, depending upon local topography. The sides of the embankment would typically be constructed at a gradient of 1:3 but in some locations subsequently groundworks, within the adjacent development parcels, could potentially reduce its relative height and/or gradient, improving its integration into the surrounding landscape. With appropriate landscaping, discussed in more detail below and secured by condition 12, the elevated structure would not be unduly prominent in the landscape. (Furthermore, land levels adjacent to the road may be raised when the detail of the SDL development comes forward, reducing the relative difference in levels.)

36. The bridge over the Emm Brook would have a clear span of 40 metres and the top of the parapets would rise to approximately six metres above ground level. Due to its size, the bridge and associated embankments would be a significant feature in the landscape, seen from the existing footpath network and proposed SANG. Hence, it is important that it is designed, not just as a functional structure, but with consideration for its landscape setting, especially in views from the SANG. Condition 7 and informative 4 refer.

37. The landscape design aims to integrate the SWDR into its surroundings, creating a sense of identity and contributing to placemaking; mitigate the loss of trees, hedgerows and views through the introduction of high quality planting, using locally characteristic, native species; and ensure the highway design is attractive, accessible, safe and uncluttered.

38. Street-trees are proposed in groups on roundabouts and forming a tree lined avenue along the verge on either side of the SWDR, which would incorporate rain gardens as part of the SuDS strategy and be seeded with species-rich grassland mixes. This is consistent with the approach established at Montague Park and the character of the existing Green Routes that form the strategic routes into Wokingham.

39. The highway embankments are proposed to be planted with linear belts of native tree species (planted individually or as woodland), formal hedges, and species-rich grassland, integrating the road with adjacent open spaces and attenuation basins. It is proposed that the planting would balance the aims of screening and softening the appearance of the road with intervisibility between the road and adjacent areas (residential and open space), to allow natural surveillance in the interests of safety; this would also help provide variety and legibility. Beyond the highway embankment, where appropriate, wetland habitats would be enhanced with suitable native tree and woodland edge mixes or riparian herbaceous planting and rich species grass mixes according to location, existing ecological quality and need. Species would be selected to enhance biodiversity as well as visual amenity. Planting along stream banks, around attenuation ponds and the boardwalk, has been designed to improve the richness of these habitats, using marginal plants that are suited to the conditions.

40. Condition 12 would ensure the coordinated delivery of the proposed landscaping, ensuring mitigation of landscape and ecological effects.

4.2. Trees

41. MDDLP policy CC03 *Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping*, supported by Borough Design Guide Design Principle R14, requires new development to retain and protect existing trees, hedges and other landscape features and to incorporate high quality, ideally, native planting and landscaping.

42. A number of individual trees, groups of trees and woodlands on the site are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO). These are generally along roads footpaths or watercourses and include the trees and woodland that line footpath 10, extending eastwards from there along the north bank of the Emm Brook; trees that line the Ludgrove School access, Easthampstead Road, Footpath 5, and Heathlands Road; and a number of individual trees and small groups adjacent to water courses between Easthampstead and Waterloo Road. The woodland north of the Emm Brook and at the junction of Byway 28 with Waterloo Road are also classified as semi-natural ancient woodland.

43. The applicants' Arboricultural Assessment categorises trees according to their quality and landscape value and establishes their root protection areas, in accordance with BS5837:2012. It recorded 161 landscape features including individual trees, groups, woodlands and hedgerows across the application site.

44. Retention of important trees was one of the factors that informed the alignment of the SWDR but – when balanced with other constraints - it would not be possible to avoid loss. Implementation of the Scheme would require the complete removal of 46 trees, eight tree groups and one hedgerow. These include seven high-quality trees, fifteen moderate-quality trees and 24 low quality. A further eight low-quality tree groups would also be lost as would low-quality hedge H142.

45. The loss of these trees would be compensated for by the tree planting secured by conditions 12 and 15, which would significantly exceed the number of trees lost as a result of the proposals. Based on the indicative Landscape Plans over 300 individual or street trees would be planted, in excess of 5000m^2 of woodland planting including wet woodland and over 750 linear metres of new hedgerow are included in the landscape proposals. Other planting will also include woodland edge mix, native shrub planting, wetland and herbaceous riparian planting and meadow seeding.

46. The assessment considers trees on the alignment of the road. It also considers construction impacts based on indicative compound and haul road locations. However, the proposals are only indicative as this stage condition 14 requires the construction impacts to be reviewed once there is more certainty about the construction phase.

5. Heritage

5.1. Listed buildings

47. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, establishes a statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess. Consistent with this, Core Strategy Policy CP3 *General Principles for Development* and MDDLP policy TB24 *Designated Heritage Assets* establish that development should not have a detrimental impact on important heritage features and works affecting heritage assets or their setting should conserve and, where possible, enhance their important character and special architectural or historic interest.

48. The Environmental Statement identifies designated heritage assets (listed buildings and conservation areas) in the vicinity and considers in more detail those the setting of which would potentially be affected by the SWDR. These are the Lucas Hospital, farm complexes at Wood's Farm, Locks Fam, Britton's Farm and Pearce's Farm, Southbrook and Luckley House School. The impact on each is considered below.

49. The SWDR would run approximately 285 metres to the north of the **Henry Lucas Hospital** (Grade I) and outbuildings (Grade II*), with the garden wall (Grade II) in between. The group is located in a quiet, rural landscape and the outlook to the south is predominantly rural. The cluster of farm and residential buildings to the north of the walled garden, at Chapel Green would reduce views towards the SWDR, although it would be visible and the associated traffic noise and light would also have an impact on the setting. However, the scheme would not affect the relationship between the heritage assets or views to the south from the hospital.

50. The SWDR would be roughly 140 metres north of **Wood's Farm** (Grade II), which lies within a complex of modern farm buildings and a wider agricultural setting. The proximity of the scheme together with the associated noise and lighting would impact on the farm's rural setting.

51. **Lock's House** (Grade II*) and **Lock's Barn** (Grade II) lie on the south side of Waterloo Road, approximately 340 metres to the south-east of the site. They retain a rural setting, albeit affected by development in the immediate vicinity and traffic along Waterloo Road. The SWDR would be visible to the and the associated noise and lighting would also affect the setting but would not affect the relationship between the buildings or their immediate setting.

52. The SWDR would run approximately 60 metres north of **Britton's Farmhouse** (Grade II) and Barn (Grade II); the Heathlands Link would be approximately 40 metres to the west. The road would be visually intrusive and alter the surrounding rural landscape, which has a historic relationship with the farm, as well introducing substantial traffic noise and light. These impacts would alter how the assets are

experienced but, the relationship between the farmhouse and barn would not be affected. Condition 12 would secure landscape screening to mitigate this impact. The impact of noise in this location is considered in section 9.1.

53. The Heathlands Road-SWDR link would lie approximately 200 metres north-west of **Pearce's Farm** House, a granary and barn (all Grade II). The road would be visible and the associated traffic noise and light, would also impact on the rural landscape that forms the buildings' setting. However, the relationship of the individual farm buildings and the immediate rural surroundings would not change significantly.

54. **Southbrook**, Finchampstead Road (Grade II) is located approximately 70 metres north of the Tesco junction. It is defined by its location, next to a historic main road with the railway embankment to the north. The SWDR and associated noise and light would not be prominent in its setting.

55. **Luckley House School** (Grade II), is located on the south side of Luckley Road, some 500 metres south-west of the application site and is set among modern school buildings. Intervening buildings would screen views between the Listed Building and SWDR and traffic noise and light are also unlikely to be prominent in the setting.

56. The Built Heritage Officer notes that the Environmental Statement considers the impact of the SWDR but does not take into account the other development proposed within the SDL which – with the exception of Britton's farmhouse and barn – would lie between the listed buildings and the SWDR, mitigating its impact to some extent. Not accounting for the planned housing, the road proposal would cause limited harm to the setting of the designated heritage assets, amounting to less than substantial harm. According to paragraph 196 of the NPPF (2019) *"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 including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use"*. As such, subject to mitigation of the impact on Britton's Farm (condition 12 refers) there is no objection to the proposals.

5.2. Archaeology

57. Core Strategy Policy CP3 *General Principles for Development* establishes that development should not have a detrimental impact upon heritage assets. This is amplified by MDDLP Policy TB25 *Archaeology* which requires developments in areas of high archaeological potential to provide an assessment of the impact of the development upon archaeological remains and to secure preservation in situ or - where this is not practical - excavation, recording and archiving of remains.

58. There are two identified areas of high archaeological potential on the periphery of the application site: one centred on Gray's Farm; the other to the east of the site.

59. A detailed desk-based archaeological assessment, a report on the archaeological trial trench evaluation which has been undertaken and a summary of effects of the scheme, with potential mitigation, are included in the Environmental Statement.

60. Over much of the route, little of significance was found. However, some trenches revealed archaeology of post-medieval date and, in one area, late prehistoric (Iron Age) features were recorded. Further archaeological assets from these periods are likely to survive within the application site.

61. No further work is required prior to determination but a condition is recommended, to secure the mitigation described in the ES and to preserve “by record” any archaeological deposits or features affected. Condition 17 refers.

6. **Ecology**

62. Core Strategy polices CP3 *General Principles for Development* and CP7 *Biodiversity* establish that proposals should not have a detrimental impact on ecological features. Species and habitats of conservation value should be protected and the ability of a site to support fauna and flora, including protected species, should be maintained and enhanced. Where the need for development outweighs the need to safeguard nature conservation importance and there are no less harmful alternatives available harm should be mitigated or compensated for. In addition, MDDLP policy TB23 *Biodiversity and Development* requires proposals to enhance and incorporate new biodiversity features, provide appropriate buffer zones between development and designated sites as well as habitats and species of principle importance for nature conservation and ensure ecological permeability. These principles are reiterated in Core Strategy A7.46 and SPD Design Principle 1b.

63. The application is supported by a Phase 1 habitat survey based on a desk top study and field surveys. There are no designated sites within the application site but the ES ecology chapter describes the habitats and species within the site and its zone of influence, provides a detailed assessment of potential ecological effects development and identifies the need for any measures to avoid, mitigate or compensate for significant adverse effects on habitats and species. It also details enhancements to the sites ecology to be implemented as part of the development.

6.1. Habitats, protected species and species of principal importance

64. A **bat** roost was identified at 76B Finchampstead Road, which is proposed to be demolished (this would require a licence from Natural England; informative 7 refers). 29 trees were identified as having potential roost features and a roost was confirmed in one of these (which is proposed to be retained). Of the remainder, 18 (four of moderate or high potential, the remainder low potential) would be felled. The CEMP (condition 24 xxiv)) would ensure mitigation of construction impacts and the LEMP (condition 13) would ensure long-term mitigation measures, including bat boxes within open space and integrated into the structure of the Emm Brook Bridge (condition 7) subject to which the impact would be acceptable.

65. The impact of street lighting would affect how bats, in particular light sensitive species, commute and forage in the post-development landscape. The Environmental Statement outlines appropriate mitigation measures which would be secured by condition 16, which requires approval of a detailed lighting scheme.

66. While there is no current evidence of **otters** on this stretch of the Emm Brook they have been recorded on other parts of the river around Wokingham. Given their expanding range and population, consideration should be given to avoiding the risk of road collision. In normal flow periods, there would be sufficient space for otter to pass under the bridge on the dry bank either side of the brook but in extreme wet weather events this would not be possible and the landscaping should incorporate measures to prevent otters seeking alternative dry routes over the road (condition 12m)).

67. Breeding Bird surveys identified a number of red and amber listed **bird species** in the vicinity. The CEMP (condition 24 xxiv)) would secure mitigation of construction impacts, such as clearance of vegetation outside the bird breeding season, and subject to a biodiversity net gain of habitats (section 6.2 and condition 15) the proposals would secure a net gain for birds in general.

68. The proposed SWDR is unlikely to have in adverse effects on **great crested newts** and more broadly, the habitat creation proposals, with at surface attenuation ponds, would benefit amphibian species.

69. **Reptile** surveys identified a grass snake and slow-worm close to the railway. The risk to reptiles would mainly be during construction and the CEMP (condition 24 xxiv)) would secure appropriate mitigation.

70. Where culverts are proposed under the SWDR it is proposed to secure mammal and herptile tunnels, to provide safe crossing points under the road. Condition would **secure ecological permeability** is integrated into the design (condition 66.xvii)).

71. As well as avoiding adverse effects on habitats and species, The Environmental Statement recommends species specific ecological enhancements which would be secured through a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP). Condition 13 refers.

72. Mitigation of construction impacts would be secured by condition 24.

6.2. Biodiversity net gain

73. The application is supported by a draft Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, calculated using DEFRA's Biodiversity Metric 2.0 Calculation Tool (Beta) (Natural England, 2019). This provides an initial assessment of the net change in the biodiversity value of the site as a consequence of the proposals, taking into consideration habitat type, area, distinctiveness and condition, ecological connectivity and strategic significance. It is an iterative process and the calculation would be refined as design and implementation progresses.

74. The calculation currently predicts a small net loss of habitat units and a more significant net loss of hedgerow units but a gain of river units. However, it does not make any allowance for the habitats that would be created in the Holme Park SANG (these are within the application site boundary, associated with the flood compensation and drainage for the SWDR and have not been included in the biodiversity net gain calculation for phase 2b). There is potential for creation of more distinctive habitats than currently factored into the calculation which could reduce the net loss. There is also potential to improve the hedgerow score through the design and management of linear landscape and habitat features associated with the SWDR.

75. The assessment has taken a cautious approach: it is transparent about projected losses and does not rely on gains where there is uncertainty about delivery. The Defra metric 2.0 is designed to be able to factor in an off-site provision to provide the overall net gain if necessary. Condition 15 would secure a review of the calculation, delivery of on-site measures and alternative off-site provision on land in the council's control to address any shortfall in on-site biodiversity net gain.

6.3. Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) Appropriate Assessment

76. The application is supported by a Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA), which screens all European sites within 10km and identifies one instance where the proposal (alone, due to redistribution of traffic or in combination, as a result of facilitating development in the SDL) could result in likely significant effects: air quality impacts on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). Changes in traffic flows could affect air quality, therefore deposition of pollutants and consequently the ability of adjacent habitats to support qualifying bird species (Nightjar, Woodlark, Dartford Warbler).

77. Stage 1 of the Assessment used traffic modelling to identify locations where development would result is a significant change in traffic movements and Stage 2 considered how the consequent changes in air quality would alter levels of deposition of pollutants and the nature of the affected habitat. It demonstrates that the changes in traffic flow are unlikely to result in a deterioration of habitat within the SPA that supports the designated features (Nightjar, Woodlark, Dartford Warbler). Likely significant effects on the designated features of the SPA can be ruled out with sufficient certainty for the competent authority to take the view that the project passes appropriate assessment.

6.4. Water framework Directive Assessment

78. Core Strategy policies CP1 Sustainable Development and CP3 General Principles for Development establish that development should not have a detrimental impact upon watercourses; emission of pollutants into the wider environment and adverse effects on water quality should be minimised.

79. The construction of two new bridges over the Emm Brook, ordinary watercourse diversions, culvers and other drainage works associated with the construction of the road have the
potential to affect the quality and status of the Emm Brook. However, the proposals have been assessed under the Water Framework Directive and mitigation is included as part of the design. It has been demonstrated that – with the proposed mitigation, the impacts of the scheme would be neutralised and the scheme would be compliant with the Water Framework Directive.

7. **Access and Movement:**

80. Core Strategy Policies CP1 *Sustainable Development* and CP6 *Managing Travel Demand* require consideration of the travel impacts of development, emphasising the importance of reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car. Supported by *CP10 Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network* and MDDLP policy CC08 *Safeguarding alignments of the Strategic Transport Network & Road Infrastructure* they require development to make provision for a choice of sustainable forms of transport including facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and those with reduced mobility. There is also a general requirement, established by Core Strategy policies CP1 *Sustainable Development* and CP3 *General Principles for Development* for high quality design that is functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable. The South Wokingham SPD, Section 4, part 5 in particular, provides more detailed guidance on the Access and Movement Framework for the SDL.

7.1. Pedestrian and cycle network

81. Core Strategy policy CP1 *Sustainable Development* establishes an overarching aim of reducing the need to travel by car. This can only be achieved by providing for alternative, sustainable forms of transport to allow choice: Core Strategy policies CP6 *Managing Travel Demand* and CP10 *Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network* both require improvements to pedestrian and cycle networks to improve access to services and facilities and increase use of cycling. The guidance in the Borough Design Guide and South Wokingham SPDs reinforce the importance of good connections to local destinations and Core Strategy paragraph A7.42 D identifies one of the functions of the SWDR as a corridor for sustainable travel.

82. The Design and Access Statement explains that the objectives for the project include designing a space which is safe and accessible for all users and encourages travel by non-motorised modes whilst creating a sense of place and identity for the area.

83. The application proposes to continue to the approach already established along the first section of the SWDR at William Heelas Way (and in the other SDLs) with a three-metre wide, unsegregated, shared footpath and cycleway on each side of the SWDR, separated from the carriageway by a three-metre wide verge containing SuDS features and street trees. Pedestrians and cyclists would have priority at side roads. This is consistent with the guidance in Section 4, part 5 of the South Wokingham SPD which establishes that the SWDR should incorporate generous footpaths, street tree planting on both sides of the road and provision for cyclists.

84. Gradients would need to meet highway standards for new developments and the requirements of the Equalities Act. The detailed design (condition 6) would secure this.

85. Crossing facilities would be incorporated at the two roundabouts, the three traffic-light controlled junctions, at 11 other locations along the SWDR and at one location on the Heathlands Link. These include two controlled, Toucan crossings: one between the existing roundabout at the junction of Finchampstead Road/Oakey Drive and the proposed new roundabout; the other east of the proposed new roundabout at the northern end of Wokingham Footpath 25 (see section 7.3). The separation between them ranges from 70-300 metres and their locations have been identified in liaison with the SDL developers to maintain the connectivity of the PRoW network and provide opportunities for pedestrian and cycle connectivity between the SWDR and adjacent residential parcels and open space, consistent with the emerging masterplans, as well as engineering considerations (to ensure the crossings would be safe to use).

86. The provision at the roundabout on Finchampstead Road would consist of a Toucan crossing (for use by pedestrians and cyclists, with sensor controls to manage to determine when the crossing is clear) on the southern arm (Finchampstead Road south of the roundabout) and two-stage uncontrolled crossings (with a central refuge) on the northern and eastern arms (Finchampstead Road north of the roundabout and the SWDR). While it would be desirable to prioritise pedestrians at these crossing points, particularly as they need to cross two lanes of traffic on the exits, this would reduce the capacity of the roundabout for motor traffic to the extent that it would cause significant congestion, so is not considered feasible in this case. The path on the west side of the junction is proposed to be widened to three metres to allow provision of a shared surface. Although its length would be limited, the IDP identifies

a contribution towards improving provision in this area, to be secured through the S106 agreements for the applications for SDL housing.

87. Elsewhere the crossings have been designed to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. Central refuges would mean it would only be necessary to cross one lane of traffic at a time, except at the traffic lights, which would facilitate safe crossing. The traffic signals would balance the needs of vehicles and pedestrians in terms of signal timings and enabling a variety of pedestrian crossing phases to occur at the same time as non-conflicting vehicle phases.

88. As described in paragraph 6, it is proposed to maintain a pedestrian and cycle connection between the SWDR and **Easthampstead Road** south of the SWDR, so people travelling by those modes can continue to take the most direct north-south route and crossing facilities would be incorporated in the SWDR-Easthampstead Road junction. New housing in the SDL would generate increased journeys along this corridor on foot and by bicycle. Accordingly, the Pedestrian and Cycle Strategy for phases 2 & 3 includes proposals for improvements to provision for pedestrians and cyclists along this route which would be secured as part of the infrastructure package to mitigate the impact of residential development: a preliminary scheme has been drawn up to extend the shared footpath and cycleway from the SWDR to the level crossing; localised improvements identified in the Pedestrian and Cycle Strategy would be delivered north of the level crossing; and improvements to make the cul-de-sac section of Easthampstead Road more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists are proposed.

7.2. LTN 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design

89. Since the application was submitted new government guidance has been issued on provision for cycling: Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 *Cycle Infrastructure Design* (July 2020) emphasises the importance of cycling as means of everyday transport and establishes that cycle networks should be coherent; direct; safe; comfortable; and attractive.

90. On 15 March 2021 the council adopted LTN 1/20 as highway design guidance for schemes not yet commenced and resolved to embrace its principles in schemes already within the design process, were possible within budget constraints (Individual Member decision by the Executive Member for Highways and Transportation). The SWDR is at an advanced stage in the design process so it is necessary to consider whether the proposed shared use facility is consistent with the guidance in LTN 1/20 and, if not, the feasibility of revising the design.

91. According to the guidance in LTN 1/20, shared use facilities can be appropriate in certain circumstances but are not generally favoured by either pedestrians or cyclists, particularly when flows are high. Main roads are often the most direct routes between key attractors but are also where people most fear the danger from motor vehicles, as they tend to be busy or high-speed with a high proportion of HGV traffic, bus routes and kerbside deliveries and car parking to accommodate. Where there are high volumes of motor vehicles (expressed as vehicles per peak hour) cyclists should not be required to share the carriageway and a segregated cycle lane (with both horizontal and vertical separation) is recommended.

92. The SWDR is proposed to have a 30 mph speed limit, so would not be high speed; it is proposed to be a bus route with parking restrictions and kerbside deliveries and

car parking would also be limited (due to the masterplanning approach proposed in Phases 2 & 3). The volume of traffic suggests that segregated cycle provision would be desirable.

93. However, the guidance also states that a fully shared surface is preferable to creating sub-standard widths for both pedestrians and cyclists where the available width is three metres or less. This allows users to walk or cycle side by side and negotiate the space when passing. It also advises against the use of a white line to provide separation as this approach is not well observed and can lead to greater conflict that unsegregated facilities.

94. The guidance includes a Cycling Level of Service (CLoS) Tool and a Junction Assessment Tool (JAT) as a means of assessing the quality of cycle provision: various aspects of the proposal are assessed to give an overall score. The applicant's assessment indicates that the proposed, shared surface scheme would achieve an overall score of over 35 (70%), with no critical fails. Although it is not sought in this case, this is the threshold for consideration for government funding, which suggests good quality provision.

95. Furthermore, the applicant has carried out an assessment of the feasibility of providing a segregated footpath and cycleway: implications include an increase the land take of 8,752m^2 (approximately 15%), with a corresponding increase in the area of hard surfacing and a reduction in the area of the floodplain, which would in-turn increase drainage requirements; the width and span of the SWDR bridge over the Emm Brook would need to be increased; the buffers along the Emm Brook would be compromised; there would be implications in terms of the loss of vegetation, habitats and the land requirements needed to compensate for this.

96. The extensive redesign that would be required to incorporate segregated provision could potentially be absorbed into the detailed design programme for the SWDR but the increased land take – for the road itself and associated drainage and other mitigation – would have masterplanning implications for the remainder of the development in the SDL, with potential to jeopardise the council's medium-term housing land supply due to delays in delivery and/or a reduction in the number of dwellings (and consequently CIL receipts). Although the latest published Five-Year Housing Land Supply Statement (31 March 2020) demonstrates a 5.23-year supply, without reliance on development in the South Wokingham SDL south of the railway, it would become critical to the supply 2024/2025

97. Notwithstanding the lack of segregation, the proposal achieves good quality cycle provision which would deliver a coherent route along the whole length of the SWDR and can be supported. Similar provision has been made in the North Wokingham and Arborfield SDLs and no significant issues have been reported along these routes.

98. It has been suggested in representations that verge widths could be reduced to allow provision of segregated foot and cycle paths. LTN 1/20 provides guidance on re-allocation of space, which should generally be taken from motor vehicles rather than pedestrians: lane widths of 3.65 metres (as are proposed in this case) are standard UK practice but around three metres is appropriate in built-up areas; they are easier for pedestrians to cross and encourage low traffic speed without causing a significant loss of traffic capacity. The guidance also acknowledges the importance of green

infrastructure, advising that the buffer or verge strip between the cycle track and carriageway can contribute positively to the quality of the streetscape, with the potential to accommodate planting and sustainable drainage. The proposed three metre wide verges are an essential element of the vision for the SWDR, of achieving an attractive route that would encourage walking and cycling and their width cannot be reduced without prejudicing the ability to accommodate SuDS and structural landscaping or, therefore, the quality of the route and the development as a whole.

7.3. Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

99. The existing Public Right of Way (PRoW) network passing through the SDL south of the railway consists of two broadly north-south routes which form part of the wider network connecting Wokingham town with Gorrick Planation to the south and Crowthorne beyond. These are Wokingham/Wokingham Without Footpath 25 immediately east of the Reading-Guildford railway line and Wokingham Without Footpath 10 further to the east, connected by Wokingham Footpath 24 and Wokingham Without Footpaths 9 and 17. To the west of the SDL, Wokingham Without Footpath 5 and Wokingham Without Byway 30 link Easthampstead Road and Waterloo Road.

100. Four alterations to PRoW network are proposed to facilitate delivery of the SWDR: extinguishment the section of Wokingham Footpath 25 between the SWDR and Finchampstead Road; extinguishment of part of Wokingham Without Footpath 10, where the SWDR crosses it; and part diversion and part extinguishment of Wokingham Without Footpath 5 at either end. In addition, although not required for delivery of the SWDR, this application also proposes diversion of Wokingham Without Footpaths 9 and 24 at their intersection with the Emmbrook, as part of the comprehensive planning of the SDL.

101. The PRoW extinguishments and diversions are controlled under separate legislation and are the subject of a separate report elsewhere on this agenda but the rationale for them is considered below.

102. The proposed alignment of the SWDR crosses **Wokingham Footpath 25** in three places over a distance of approximately 270 metres. If the path were retained on its existing alignment walkers would need to cross the SWDR at each point, which would significantly detract from the attractiveness of the route. The shared surface along the SWDR would provide a more direct and convenient alternative route, so it is recommended that the western section of the path be extinguished. A 1:20 ramp is proposed to ensure a suitably accessible connection and a Toucan crossing would be provided at the northern end of the footpath, where it emerges onto the SWDR Footpath 25. It is also worth noting that an alternative route through the land north of the SWDR is expected to be secured as part of the development in phase 3.

103. The SWDR would cross **Wokingham Without Footpath 10** at one point and it is proposed to extinguish the section of the path that would become adopted highway. 1:20 ramps and an uncontrolled crossing are proposed on the alignment of the PRoW to ensure continuity.

104. The eastern end of the **Wokingham Without Footpath 5** coincides with the new roundabout on Waterloo Road - approved under application 172934 – and the western end with the junction of Easthampstead Road and Heathlands Road. A partial extinguishment at the Waterloo end of the path and a diversion at the

Easthampstead Road end of the PRoW are necessary to facilitate construction of these junctions.

105. It is also proposed to divert **Wokingham Without Footpath 9 and Wokingham Footpath 24** at their intersection with the Emmbrook, to provide a replacement footbridge. The latter is required as part of the Pedestrian and Cycle Strategy for the wider SDL but can be delivered most efficiently as part of the SWDR project (the equalised cost of delivering the bridge and a commuted sum for future maintenance would be secured through the 106 agreements for the SDL housing development.)

106. The proposed alignment of the SWDR road bridge is over the existing footbridge (Gipsy Lane Footbridge, Structure Reference 3094) and, while there would be sufficient headroom for the bridge to remain in use, it is substandard and unfit for the more intensive use that would result from the SDL development. The proposal is for a boardwalk structure, approximately 70 metres in length, four metres wide and with 2.4 metres minimum headroom under the SWDR road bridge. Its design achieves an accessible gradient and cyclists, is appropriate to the semi-natural setting of the phase 3 SANG, would avoid forming an obstruction in the flood plain and (due to gaps between the slats) would avoid adverse ecological effects due to avoid excessive overshadowing of the riverbank (combined with the adjacent road bridge).

107. The boardwalk is proposed to be constructed from Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) timber with an underlying structure of steel piles and concrete ground beams. However, alternative materials such as recycled plastic (which may have environmental and durability benefits whilst still being visually appropriate) would be considered at the detailed design stage (condition 8).

108. Although the new bridge and the path under the road bridge would be accessible for the majority of the time, there may be a few days each year when they would not be, due to flooding, and an alternative route is proposed via a ramp in the SANG, the SWDR and the northern parcel within Phase 3. Condition 6.vii) would ensure consistence with the masterplanning for phase 3.

109. Allocation of the SDL would inevitably change the rural setting of the PRoW, and the experience for walkers. Furthermore, the paths would become much more intensively used as they would become part of the pedestrian and cycle network through the SDL, serving for day-to-day journeys as well as more recreational use. How the PRoW can be integrated into the development and retain a pleasant – albeit more urban – character, along with surface improvements to meet the increased use, to be considered as part of the assessment of the applications for residential development. The replacement footbridge and provision of an alternative route during times of flood would be a benefit.

110. The Pedestrian and Cycle Strategy for Phases 2 and 3 envisages the PRoW being used by cyclists as well as pedestrians. To fulfil the anticipated future level of use the applications for Phases 2 & 3 would secure improvements to the PRoW surfaces and permissive use by cyclists.

7.4. Public transport

111. Core Strategy policies CP6 *Managing Travel Demand,* CP10 *Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network* and SPD Design Principle 5c require development to provide for sustainable forms of transport, including delivery of public transport. One

of the three functions of the SWDR identified in Core Strategy A7.42 D is as a corridor for sustainable travel including by bus.

112. Accordingly, the SWDR has been designed with a 7.3 metre carriageway width, which is sufficient to accommodate buses (while avoiding excessive width, which would encourage higher vehicle speeds and make the route mor difficult to cross, so less attractive to pedestrians) and locations for five pairs of bus stops have been identified (to be confirmed through detailed design, condition 6). The distribution of bus stops would ensure that one is located close to the neighbourhood centre and that the majority of new homes within the SDL are within 400 metres walk of a bus stop. Proximity to public transport is considered further in the applications for new housing.

7.5. Traffic generation and mitigation of off-site transport effects

113. Core Strategy policy CP6 *Managing Travel Demand* establishes that development should not cause highway or traffic related environmental problems: any adverse effects upon the local and strategic transport network arising from development should be mitigated, road safety should be enhanced and development should not lead to highway problems or traffic related environmental problems.

114. The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment, which uses the Wokingham Strategic Transport Model (WSTM4) to forecast the combined impact of development in the South Wokingham SDL and elsewhere (including other SDLs and sites in Bracknell Borough), plus background growth for various scenarios. For comparison purposes, these include a 2015 base year, 2021 assumed opening year with and without the SWDR, 2026 without any development, with the SWDR but none of the other SDL development in South Wokingham and with the full SDL development being complete. WSTM4 is fully validated model in line with Department for Transport WebTAG (industry standard) guidance. Data from the strategic model is further validated by local traffic surveys, to ensure that the local junction modelling work carried out for the planning application is robust. This modelling has also informed the noise and air quality assessments which are considered elsewhere in this appraisal.

115. While development in the SDL and elsewhere would generate additional traffic, the SWDR would provide an alternative route, in particular for through traffic travelling on the A329 London Road – A321 Finchampstead Road corridor. The resulting redistribution of traffic would mean that, in some locations, a reduction may be experience despite an overall increase in the amount of traffic on the network. For instance, on London Road, west of William Heelas Way.

116. At its southern end, the SWDR is proposed to connect to **Finchampstead Road** at the **Tesco/Oakey Drive roundabout** and concerns have been raised in representations about any increase in traffic at this point, given that Finchampstead Road is already acknowledged to be congested. While development within the SDL would inevitably generate additional traffic, flows at this junction would be significantly different as a result of the opening of the full SWDR. Whereas the dominant flow is currently north-south the traffic on the northern arm would be split; in future there would be an increase in traffic on the eastern arm but a broadly corresponding reduction in traffic on the northern arm. The modelling demonstrates that taking into account background growth, the SDL development, revised traffic

flows and the larger roundabout proposed, the junction would function satisfactorily in 2026 (and the modelling for Phase 2 shows this would also be the case in 2036).

117. Associated enlargement of the roundabout at the junction **of Finchampstead Road and Molly Millars Lane** is the subject of a separate application (application 203535, elsewhere on this agenda). The modelling demonstrates that taking into account background growth, the SDL development, revised traffic flows and the larger roundabout proposed, the junction would function satisfactorily in 2026 (and the modelling for Phase 2 shows this would also be the case in 2036). Alterations to the **Carnival roundabout** at the junction of Finchampstead Road, Wellington Road and Denmark Street have been approved and partially implemented in conjunction with the developments at Elms Field and the Carnival site.

118. The proposed junctions with **Easthampstead Road and Heathlands Road** are described in paragraphs 4-7. During the early stages of the design process a number of options for the junction of the SWDR with Easthampstead Road were modelled, including variations on a traffic light controlled junction and a roundabout. It became apparent that the size of junction required to accommodate all movements, with the additional constraint of the level crossing in close proximity, would be excessively large (much larger than the William Heelas Way/London Road junction), dominating character of the area: this would be entirely incompatible with the placemaking aims for the SDL or the objective of making the SWDR and attractive route for travel on foot and by bicycle.

119. The proposed option effectively splits the movements between three smaller junctions, which function in terms of traffic and can be less intrusively integrated into the wider development. As explained in paragraph 6, pedestrians and cyclists travelling north-south on Easthampstead Road would still be able to take the direct route along Easthampstead Road; there would be a short diversion, of approximately 960 metres, for motorists via the SWDR and new Heathlands Road link. This would not be significant in terms of journey times, particularly given the use of MOVA traffic light controls to optimise efficiency.

120. The Star Lane level crossing is currently manually controlled from the signal box at Wokingham Station but may be automated in future as a result of Network Rail's Feltham Re-Signalling Project, which would improve efficiency and also safety (due to sensors at the crossing). The future increase in number of trains and resultant barrier down times at the level crossing, as provided by Network Rail, have been incorporated into both our Strategic Transport Model (WSTM4) as well as a special microsimulation (VISSIM) model focusing on the highway network in the immediate vicinity of the level crossing. The increased use of this link by pedestrians and cyclists arising from development in the SDL is considered in the report on phase 2b.

121. Thus, the proposal achieves an appropriate balance between transport considerations and the overarching aim of delivering a high quality, sustainable place for people to live.

122. The intersection of the SWDR with **Waterloo Road**, approved as part of the Eastern Gateway, was also designed to accommodate planned growth and would have sufficient capacity.

123. At its northern end the SWDR ties into the existing highway network at **London Road**. Recent works along **London Road** including the junctions with the SWDR (William Heelas Way) and the North Wokingham Distributor Road (Oak Avenue) and Coppid Beech roundabout improvements were designed in anticipation of the remainder of the SWDR and entire SDL development coming forward and the modelling confirms sufficient capacity.

124. Including the junctions in the immediate vicinity, considered above, the modelling has identified the need for increased capacity to allow the following junctions to continue to function satisfactorily in future. Those that would require improvement due to the SWDR (alone and in combination) are:

    i) Finchampstead Road/Molly Millars Distributor Road (the Western Gateway);

    ii) Finchampstead Road/South Wokingham Distributor Road (existing Tesco foodstore);

    iii) Barkham Road/Molly Millars Lane; and

    iv) Old Wokingham Road/Waterloo Road/Peacock Lane;

125. It has been suggested in representations that mitigation is also required at the junctions of Heathlands Road and Honey Hill with Nine Mile Ride; and at Easthampstead Road/Old Wokingham Road.

126. The modelling demonstrates that, due to redistribution of traffic, there would be a reduction in movements at Heathlands Road/Nine Mile Ride and consequent improvements on modelled junction operation and capacity as a result of the SWDR. However, the residential SDL development is projected to have an impact and mitigation will be secured at this junction.

127. The Honey Hill/ Nine Mile Ride junction is forecast to operate within capacity as a result of the SWDR, with no significant change in junction operation with or without the SWDR. Similarly the Easthampstead Road / Old Wokingham Road junction sees a reduction in traffic as a result of the new distributor road.

128. In the interests of efficient, coordinated delivery, preliminary proposals - to mitigate the impact of the SWDR and the additional impact of the wider SDL development - have been prepared for each of these and the IDP establishes how each development would deliver its proportionate share of the overall mitigation required. Condition 27 would secure timely delivery of the works required to mitigate the impact of the SWDR.

129. Construction traffic could be managed through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (Condition 26).

8. **Flooding and Drainage:**

130. The NPPF and National Planning Practice Guidance establish a framework for assessing the probability of flooding and the suitability of land for different uses, depending on their level of vulnerability. Consistent with this, Core Strategy Policy CP1 *Sustainable Development* (and Appendix7 A7.46 & A7.53) and MDDLP Policy CC09 *Development and Flood Risk (from all sources)* require a sequential approach which directs development away from the areas at highest risk of flooding (from any

source). Furthermore, development should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to provide adequate drainage; avoid increasing - and where possible reduce - the risk of flooding, on the site and elsewhere; and limit adverse effects on water quality (including ground water).

131. The South Wokingham SDL is allocated for development in the Core Strategy which was subject of a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). Furthermore, the application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) - required because the site area is more than one hectare and includes land within Flood Zones 2 and 3 (where the probability of flooding is medium or high) – and hydraulic modelling.

8.1. Fluvial flooding and hydraulic modelling

132. The site is crossed east to west by the Emm Brook and several tributaries, including the Luckley Brook. From the confluence of the Emm Brook with a with a tributary (just west of Wokingham Without Footpath 10) westwards, the Brook becomes a Main river; to the east of that point the Brook and its tributaries are classified as Ordinary Watercourses. Given the presence of these watercourses, it is not unexpected that application site contains land within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3; low medium and high risk of flooding, including the functional floodplain.

133. The Hydraulic modelling (based on a 1 in 100 year flood event plus 35% and 70% allowance for climate change and with 0.1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP)) was undertaken to determine the how the extent of the existing flood zones would be altered as a consequence of the Construction of the SWDR and associated works, most notably: infilling of an existing balancing pond (west of Easthampstead Road) and loss of flood storage where the SWDR passes though Flood Zones 2 & 3 (including two new bridge crossings and culverts), diversion of the Emm Brook and tributaries in the eastern part of the scheme; and flood compensation.

134. The existing balancing pond is fed by the Upper Emmbrook Tributary (which would be diverted along the eastern boundary of the school site) and two Thames Water surface water sewers (which would be culverted under the SWDR and neighbourhood centre access road) to discharge into the Holme Park, where two basins would provide flood compensation (and additional capacity for surface water drainage for the SWDR and wider SDL development). Raising the ground between the compensation area and the Emm Brook, combined with flow control measures would prevent uncontrolled flow directly into the Emm Brook. The eastern basin would have a maximum depth of approximately 2.2 metres and the western basin a maximum depth of 3.4 metres: their banks are proposed to have a shallow profile allowing them to be safely integrated into public open space and to be landscaped to provide wetland habitats.

135. Culverting would not normally be accepted but was in this case because of the very significant masterplanning implications that would have arising from incorporating from a surface channel at a suitable depth and gradient. Also, because the culvert would be adopted by Thames Water rather than becoming the responsibility of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

136. The Luckley Brook, which flows south to north and has a confluence with the Emm Brook at the downstream end of the Scheme, would also be diverted to join the Emm Brook north of the proposed SWDR route.

137. Comparison of the Baseline and Post-Development (with mitigation) modelling indicates that flood levels and extents would increase (by approximately 750mm) in the SANG area as designed. There would also be a slight increase in flood extent and levels upstream of the proposed bridges over the Emm Brook (approximately 135mm immediately upstream of the bridges) but these would be contained within the SANG.

138. Flood levels and extents would be decreased immediately downstream of the proposed sports hub access road (by approximately 43mm); on the floodplain adjacent to the Luckley Brook (Ordinary Watercourse) south east of Tesco (by approximately 386mm); to the north of the Emm Brook (Main River) east of Tesco and Finchampstead Road (by approximately 50mm; and immediately downstream of the scheme area west of the railway line (by approximately 70mm). Despite increases in flood levels at localised points route the modelling shows betterment in terms of flood extents and levels downstream of the Application Site & there would be no exacerbation of flood risk to existing properties in the vicinity.

8.2. Flooding from other sources

139. The site is not at risk of flooding from **tidal or coastal sources**.

140. **Surface water** flow routes within the site are mostly associated with the Emm Brook and its tributaries and accommodated within the fluvial flood zones. Surface water runoff would be conveyed through culverts below the SWDR and discharge at the south extent of the embankment before continuing to the ordinary watercourses in the same manner as currently. The culverts have been designed to regulate flows during fluvial events (up to the 1% plus 70% climate change AEP event), to restrict flows on the Upper Emm Brook Tributary (which has sufficient capacity to accommodate this) and attenuate fluvial flows into the flood compensation area within the SANG. The road would not be at risk of pluvial/overland flooding or increase the risk pluvial flood elsewhere.

141. **Groundwater** levels are close to the surface in some areas but the proposed road would be elevated, resulting in a low risk of groundwater flooding, the design of the SuDS would mitigate the risk; there would be no increase in groundwater flood risk to others.

142. The risk of flooding from **surface water sewers** is low and the proposed drainage system would allow flows to be conveyed and discharged to watercourses rather than to sewers. With the proposed mitigation, the scheme would not be at risk of flooding from sewer and drainage infrastructure sources or increase the risk elsewhere.

143. The scheme would not increase the risk of flooding from **artificial sources** and there is no significant risk of flooding of flooding from Queen's Mere reservoir affecting access and egress.

8.3. Surface water drainage

144. MDDLP Policy CC10 *Sustainable Drainage* requires surface water to be managed in a sustainable manner, maintaining greenfield run-off rates and volumes, taking into account climate change, which is likely to result in more frequent short-duration, high intensity rainfall and more frequent periods of long-duration rainfall. This is

reinforced by policy CC03 *Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping* which expects green infrastructure improvements within the River Valleys to help minimise flood risk.

145. The proposed surface water drainage strategy has been designed to cater for the 1% AEP rainfall event, including a 40% climate change allowance. Consistent with the approach envisaged by the South Wokingham SPD, the strategy comprises a linear system of raingardens (shallow grassed depressions in the landscaped verge that store run-off at the surface) and where these cannot be incorporated and gullies that would capture runoff from the road and discharge it, via a filter-drain, to detention basins or to the flood compensation area located with the Holme Park SANG. Four attenuation basins are proposed, in addition to the two in the Holme Park SANG: on land west of the SWDR at Tesco; north of the SWDR in open space required to mitigate the ecological effects of the SWDR; south of the SWDR in the phase 3 SANG; and at the junction of Easthampstead Road/Heathlands Road junction in open space within phase 2.

8.4. The Sequential & Exception Tests

146. The SWDR is classified as 'essential infrastructure' and the application site includes land in flood zones 1, 2 & 3. Essential infrastructure is appropriate in zones 1 & 2 but because part of the site fall within zone 3 an Exception Test is required.

147. To pass the Exception Test it must be demonstrated that the development provides wider sustainability benefits that outweigh flood risk and that the development would be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, would reduce flood risk overall.

148. The SWDR is part of the infrastructure identified as necessary to support delivery within the SDL and the FRA includes details of measures to mitigate the effect of the proposals on flood risk onsite and offsite over its lifetime and accounting for the effects of climate change. Thus, the Exception Test has been met.

9. **Environmental Health:**

9.1. Noise and vibration

149. MDDLP Policy CC06 *Noise* requires proposals to demonstrate how noise impacts on sensitive receptors (both existing and proposed) have been addressed.

150. It is inevitable that the construction and operation of a major new road would have noise implications and the Environmental Statement Addendum considers noise and vibration during construction as well as day-time and night-time road traffic noise during operation.

151. During the **construction phase** the most significant impact is predicted to be at a residential property known as Rosedene (on the corner of Easthampstead Road and Heathlands Road) (although any effects are likely to be short-lived as the vibratory roller would not operate at the closest distance for a long period of time) with other less significant impacts elsewhere. With the mitigation recommended in the Environmental Statement the impact could be reduced to an acceptable level and condition 24 would ensure use of "best practicable means" to minimise noise and vibration.

152. During the **operational phase** adverse effects are predicted in Montague Park, at Britton's Farm and at receptor to the north, east and south of the scheme.

153. An increase in noise is predicted within the first phase of the SDL at **Montague Park**, in particular along William Heelas Way. However, this is compared to the baseline situation and the application for Montague Park was assessed on the basis that the remainder of the SDL - including the extension of William Heelas Way to Finchampstead Road - would come forward. Consequently, this impact (including necessary noise mitigation) was taken into consideration at that time.

154. A major adverse impact is predicted at **Britton's Farm** in the short-term, reducing to moderate in the long-term, with a lesser impact at the adjacent mobile home. The application for Phase 2b of the SDL identifies the land surrounding these dwellings as public open space, so there would be no intervening development to mitigate noise. Accordingly, the noise assessment explores other possible mitigation:

    a. low noise road surfacing is only effective at speeds over 75 km/h (46-47 mph) and the SWDR is proposed to have a 30mph speed limit;

    b. a noise barrier or bunding would need to be at least three metres high, to achieve even a modest benefit, and a structure of this size could not be successfully integrated into the open space without significant harm to the setting of Britton's Farm (the Farmhouse and barn are Grade II listed), to the character and function of the public open space and adjacent roads generally and conflict with SuDS features. Furthermore, the modest acoustic benefit to two properties would not justify the cost of acoustic screening; and

    c. improvements to the glazing of habitable rooms at Britton's Farm were explored with the occupant but would not have resulted in a worthwhile improvement. Furthermore, the works would almost certainly have resulted in an unacceptable impact on the Listed Building.

    It is also noted that the adverse effect at Britton's Farm is due to the relative increase in noise rather than absolute noise levels. Hence, the report concludes that it is not feasible to mitigate this impact and, given the circumstances outlined, the Environmental Health Officer has not objected.

155. Noise levels are predicted to increase at a number of locations to the **north, south and east** the site but the intervening development within the South Wokingham SDL and the proposed realignment of Waterloo Road are predicted to reduce the impact to an acceptable level. At other locations to the north and south, and adjacent to Easthampstead Road, a beneficial impact is predicted.

9.2. Air quality

156. Core Strategy policy CP1 *Sustainable Development* establishes that development should minimise the emission of pollutants into the wider environment.

157. Dust arising **during construction** could have a significant impact on air quality unless appropriately mitigated. The application is accompanied by a design stage Environmental Management Plan (EMP) which sets out measures to reduce the level of dust and other pollutants during construction and condition 24 would secure further detail and implementation of these measures.

158. The Environmental Statement Addendum also includes an assessment of the **operational impact** of the development on local air quality, including nitrogen dioxide, PM10 and PM2.5, taking into account changes in traffic flow on roads potentially affected by the development.

159. The report does not anticipate any exceedances of Air Quality Standards (AQS) in 2021 or 2036. The overall effect of the scheme on NO_2 concentrations is predicted to be negligible in 2021; in 2036 there is predicted to be a slightly adverse to moderately beneficial impact in one location but a negligible impact elsewhere. No exceedances of the AQS objectives for PM_{10} are expected in 2021 or 2036 and the overall impact of the scheme is predicted to be 'slightly significant'. For $PM_{2.5}$ the effects of the scheme are predicted to be negligible but with slight significance due to the sensitivity of receptors. The Environmental Health Officer has no concerns about the impact of this scheme on air quality when operating.

9.3. Contamination

160. Core Strategy policy CP1 *Sustainable Development* requires development to minimise the emission of pollutants, limit any adverse effects on water quality (including ground water) and avoid areas where pollution may impact upon amenity.

161. The applicant's contaminated land assessment did not identify any significant contamination but it remains possible that unexpected contamination may be encountered during construction. Condition 26 would ensure appropriate remediation of any contamination encountered.

10. **Infrastructure impact mitigation**

162. Core Strategy policy CP4 establishes are requirement to improve infrastructure to meet the requirements of new development, taking into account cumulative impact. Specific requirements for the South Wokingham SDL – including delivery of the SWDR - are set out in Core Strategy policy CP21 *South Wokingham Strategic Development Location*, Core Strategy Appendix 7 (paragraph A7.53 in particular) and the Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD.

163. In April 2015 the council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule, allowing it to collect a contribution towards infrastructure delivery for each new market house built, to be allocated according to the council's priorities and overall funding availability. The "Regulation 123 List", now superseded by the council's Infrastructure Funding Statement and Capital Programme, sets out the infrastructure that CIL is expected to cover which includes the SWDR (and any mitigation required as a result of its construction).

164. Planning policy and guidance also establish that there should be a comprehensive approach to the planning and the delivery of infrastructure for the SDL, with each development making a proportionate contribution towards the infrastructure required for the SDL as a whole. Accordingly, the applicant was party to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for South Wokingham which listing the necessary infrastructure, each developers' proportionate share and how it is to be secured.

165. Since this is a council application, it is not possible to enter into a S106 agreement. However, as set out in the relevant sections of the appraisal the necessary mitigation

of landscape, ecological, archaeological and transport effects can be secured by condition, as can an Employment and Skills Plan.

10.1. Delivery programme

166. While the duration of the construction period is not something that can be controlled under planning legislation, this is a council project and is fundamental to the coordinated delivery of development in the SDL. It is anticipated that the Western Gateway would be delivered first and that the construction programme for the SWDR would be up to two years. The applications for housing are in outline and require approval of reserved matters and pre-commencement conditions before works can start. The consortium currently anticipates first occupations in 2022/2023 at the earliest, although and the council's current Five-Year Housing Land Supply Statement takes a more cautious view, not expecting occupations before March 2025. Phasing conditions are recommended for the SWDR and housing applications to ensure coordinated delivery as well as conditions placing a ceiling on the number of dwellings that can be occupied prior to completion of the road.

11. **Employment Skills Plan (ESP):**

167. MDDLP Policy TB12 *Employment Skills Plan* indicates that proposals for major development should be accompanied by an Employment and Skills Plan to show how the proposal accords opportunities for training, apprenticeship or other vocational initiatives to develop local employability skills required by developers, contractors or end users of the proposal.

168. Condition 29 would secure an ESP.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)
In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts upon protected groups as a result of the development.

CONCLUSION
The proposed infrastructure is an essential element of the spatial strategy established by the Development Plan. The principle of development has already been established and the proposals are consistent with Development Plan policy and guidance. The application contributes to the coordinated delivery development in the South Wokingham SDL and should be supported.

This page is intentionally left blank