



West Winch Housing Access Road Planning Statement

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by WSP on behalf of Norfolk County Council (NCC) ('the Applicant'), in support of a full planning application for the development of the West Winch Housing Access Road ('the Proposed Scheme'), located on land immediately to the east of West Winch village.
- 1.1.2 NCC is working in partnership with the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKLWN) to expediate housing delivery and coordinate the provision of the required highway infrastructure in the West Winch area.
- 1.1.3 NCC is both the Highway Authority and the Local Planning Authority ("LPA") for this scheme. As Highway Authority, it is the promoter and applicant of the Proposed Scheme and it follows that the application for planning permission will be made and pursued by the County Council.
- 1.1.4 This Statement is intended to assist the LPA, in its determination of the planning application, which is submitted by the Applicant under Regulation 3 of the 1992 Town and Country Planning General Regulations.
- 1.1.5 The Applicant submitted a request for pre-application advice to the LPA on September 28, 2023. The Applicant has received pre-application advice from the LPA on throughout the development and design period and formally on the November 23, 2023 (Ref: ENQ/2023/0029). The planning submission has been prepared in line with NCC's National and Local Validation Requirements for County Council (Regulation 3) Planning Applications, published June 2023 [Regulation 3 Local List \(norfolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.norfolk.gov.uk). A full list of documents provided as part of the planning application submission is provided at Section 1.3 of this Statement.
- 1.1.6 An EIA for the Proposed Scheme has been undertaken as it is considered that it falls under Schedule 2 paragraph (f) construction of roads of the Town



and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (SI 2017/571), as amended to allow for the 2018 'Exit' Regulations, (hereafter referred to as the 'EIA Regulations 2017').

- 1.1.7 Under the provisions of Regulation 5 the EIA Regulations, the applicant had not requested a formal screening opinion from NCC, as it was the applicant's view that the Proposed Scheme would be EIA development and an Environmental Statement (ES) would be submitted with the application.
- 1.1.8 The findings of the EIA are reported in the accompanying ES. The scope of the assessments undertaken as part of the EIA are based on the LPA's most recent Scoping Opinion adopted [Ref. SCO/2021/0001], dated May 2021.
- 1.1.9 This Statement therefore sets out the background to the planning application and uses the conclusions of the Environmental Statement (ES) (Document Ref: 3.01.00 – 3.19.00) and other documents submitted with the application to assess the case for the Proposed Scheme and its compliance with the policies of the development plan.
- 1.1.10 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Discussion of the relevant development plan for these purposes is contained in Section 4 of this Statement.
- 1.1.11 This Statement seeks to identify relevant material considerations and assesses whether the Proposed Scheme is consistent with the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) ('The NPPF'), having regard to its guidance on the operation of that presumption, together with the objectives for sustainable development in paragraph 8 of the NPPF, noting that those objectives are not necessarily to be achieved with every individual planning decision (as explained in paragraph 9 of the NPPF). Where the scheme is found to be in breach of specific planning policy or is considered less



sustainable, consideration is similarly given as to the applicability of NPPF paragraph 12, which seeks to establish whether material considerations and the wider benefits of the scheme, allow for a deviation from the adopted Development Plan.

1.2 Structure of the Statement

1.2.1 This Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** confirms the details and description of the Proposed Scheme, the information that has been submitted with the Planning Application, the Site and its surroundings and planning history;
- **Section 3** comprises the Transport Case for the Scheme. This section sets out the background to the planning application, the Scheme Objectives, the need for the Proposed Scheme. It also identifies how it will fulfil the Objectives of the Government's Major Road Network programme;
- **Section 4** confirms the Development Plan and identifies the Scheme Objectives, the need for the Proposed Scheme, and the relevant policies against which the planning application should be assessed. It also identifies transport policy documents that are considered to be material considerations that are relevant to the determination of the application and looks to identify key emerging policy documents that may be of relevance.
- **Section 5** considers the principle of development and uses the conclusion of the ES to identify and assess the environmental impacts of the Proposed Scheme and against the policies of the Development Plan. It identifies where the Proposed Scheme is consistent, as well as any conflicts with, the Development Plan;
- **Section 6** considers the planning balance for the Proposed Scheme. This includes an assessment of the Proposed Scheme against the Development Plan as a whole, consideration of relevant material



considerations, and an assessment of whether the Proposed Scheme benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF, and applicability of NPPF Paragraph 12 where the scheme is found to deviate from the adopted Development Plan; and

- **Chapter 7:** provides a conclusion.

2 Planning Application

2.1 Scheme Description

2.1.1 Planning permission is sought for:

- “A 3.5km long carriageway to the east of West Winch connecting the A47 with the existing A10, providing access to proposed housing development;
- Modifications to the existing Hardwick Interchange and dualling of the existing A47 between Hardwick Interchange and the housing access road;
- The housing access road will be predominantly single carriageway, with a short section of dual carriageway on the approach to the A47 and feature a total of five roundabouts including;
 - A partially signalised roundabout junction where the housing access road meets the A47;
 - A roundabout on the housing access road providing access to the Hardwick Green (i.e. Hopkins Homes) planned development, plus two roundabout junctions to accommodate connections to further housing development;
 - A roundabout at the southern end of the housing access road, providing a connection to the existing A10 with new signalised crossings nearby;



- Treatment of local roads severed by the housing access road including an overbridge at Rectory Lane to accommodate road and bridleway users, and closure of Chequers Lane where it crosses the scheme with an at-grade signalised crossing, to maintain east to west access;
- Modifications to the existing A10 to improve safety and support its repurposing as a local traffic route;
- Construction of drainage features, including basins, and associated maintenance access tracks;
- Landscaping, and connections for non-motorised users;
- Utility diversions, including National Grid gas mains;
- Demolition of Hill Cottages on A47 Constitution Hill; and
- Temporary use of land during construction for working areas, haul routes, site compounds, and storage.”

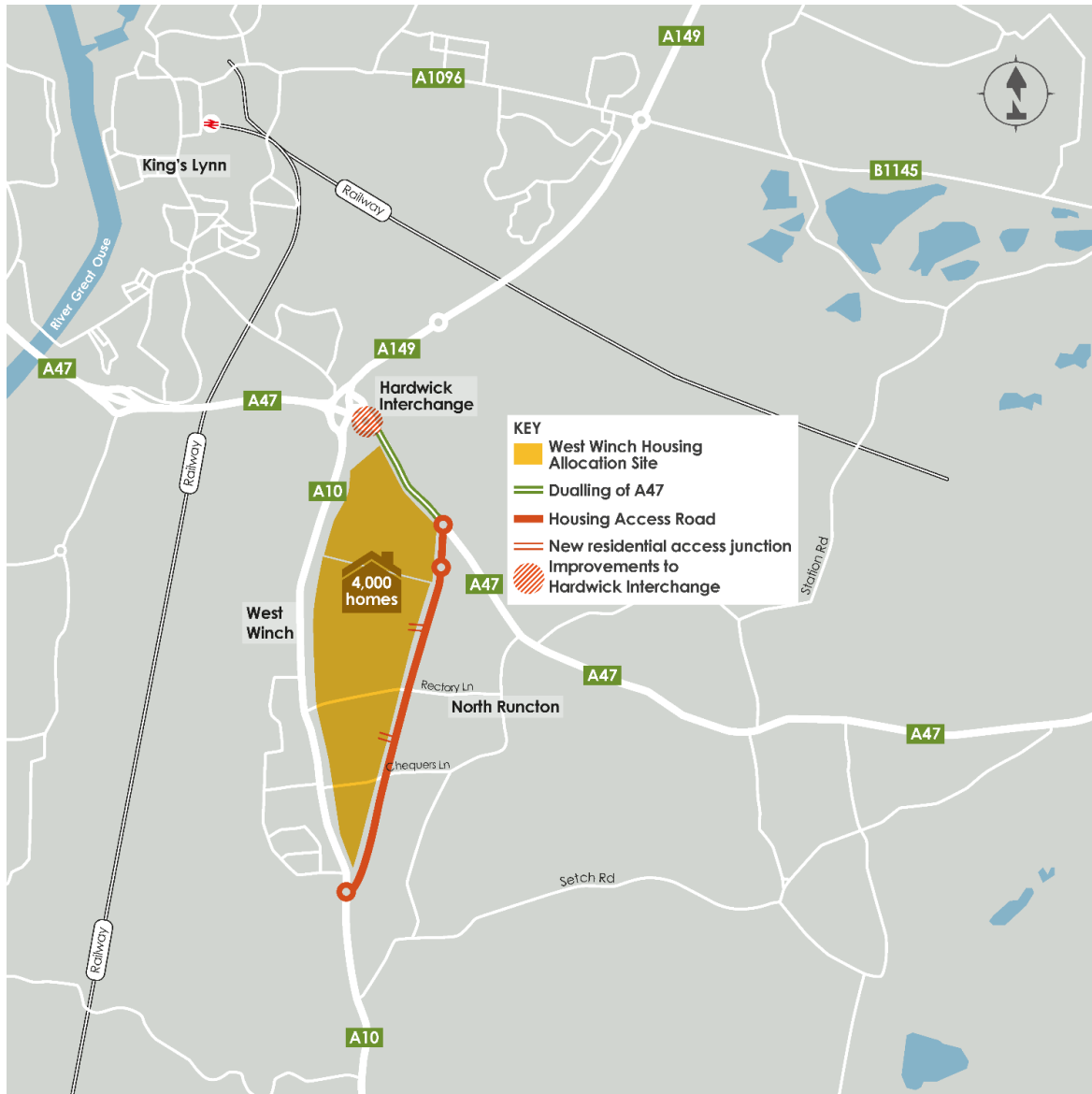
2.1.2 The proposed National Grid gas main diversion works will be undertaken under permitted development rights under Part 15 Class A of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order (2015).

2.1.3 Chapter 3 (Description of the Proposed Scheme) of the ES contains a detailed description of the Proposed Scheme.

2.1.4 Figure 2-1 below shows location of the WWHAR scheme.



Figure 2-1 Scheme Location



2.1.5 For ease of understanding, the design is presented from North to South, in the following areas as shown in Figure 2-2 below:

- **Area 1:** Hardwick Interchange
- **Area 2:** Dualling of the A47
- **Area 3:** WWHAR: A47 to Metacre Roundabout
- **Area 4:** WWHAR: Metacre Roundabout to the A10
- **Area 5:** A10 tie in and work



Figure 2-2 Scheme design overview plan



2.1.6 Appendix A - shows the key features associated with the proposed scheme.

2.2 Design and Layout

2.2.1 The scheme proposes the modification of the existing highway network on the existing alignment and the A10 to introduce traffic calming measures. This is required in order to divert the majority of traffic flow away from the A10, once the scheme is constructed, reducing the residual vehicular traffic on the A10. At this stage measures for traffic calming are likely to include:



- New signalised pedestrian crossing;
- Splitter islands;
- Removal of central white lining;
- Visual narrowing of the carriageway;
- Build outs (to create alternating give way movements); and
- A short section of the A10 in the centre of West Winch to be reduced to 20mph to create a 'high street' environment.

2.2.2 It is anticipated that the dualled section of the A47 as well as the approaches to the Hardwick Interchange and new roundabout junction between the WWHAR and the A47 would be lit. No other scheme lighting is currently proposed.

2.2.3 The Proposed Scheme requires the diversion of the National Grid Feeders 2 and 4 high pressure gas pipelines, the indicative location of which and diversion works extent are shown on enclosed GA plans.

2.2.4 Ground moving activities required as part of the works will include the excavation of a gas pipe trench and the establishment of temporary compound areas and access roads. Access to the site establishment area for the Feeder 2 diversion will be via the existing A10 road then turning right onto Chequers Lane. An existing access to the field, in which the site establishment is to be located, will be utilised to allow access from Chequers Lane. Access to the site establishment for the Feeder 4 diversion is proposed to be via an existing field access gate off the A47.

Design and Access Statement (DAS)

2.2.5 The accompanying Design and Access Statement (DAS) (Document reference. 1.02.00) provides information on the design evolution process with a consideration of alternative design options, to demonstrate observance of key design principles which are to:



- Provide resilience to the infrastructure adjoining the WWHAR, to optimise capacity and connectivity;
- Not preclude network improvements made by National Highways;
- Minimise land take required;
- Improve facilities and crossings for walking and cycling; and
- Minimise impact on existing woodland and habitats.

2.2.6 The DAS demonstrates how the site and surroundings have been fully appraised to ensure that the final design solution responds to local context and planned growth. It describes various options that were considered along the three road sections: the Hardwick interchange and A47, WWHAR Northern Extent and WWHAR Southern extent.

2.2.7 Design decision making has been influenced by the principles, and stakeholder feedback throughout the design development process. The design has sought to avoid or minimise impacts, whilst realising opportunities for environmental enhancement. The design responds to policy and guidance relating to design and access for infrastructure projects, with the specific strategies within the planning application for environmental, accessibility and user needs to be delivered as part of the Proposed Scheme. The Proposed Scheme design response to relevant policy is provided in Section 6 of the DAS.

2.3 Consultations

2.3.1 The need for the Proposed Scheme and potential options for addressing the traffic issues in the West Winch area have been the subject of comprehensive community engagement with key stakeholders over a number of years. A full Statement of Community Involvement (SoCI) (doc ref: 1.03.00), setting out details of these consultations, has been submitted with the Planning Application.



2.3.2 NCC latest public consultation ran for 8 weeks between 14 November 2022 until 8 January 2023. Three in-person public consultation events were held during the consultation period at two locations including West Winch Primary School and The Village Meeting Place, North Runcton. Details of these events can be found in section 2.4 of the SoCI.

2.3.3 A virtual consultation room was available online throughout the consultation period. This included links to the consultation brochure and the consultation feedback questionnaire.

2.3.4 An online survey was hosted on the project's online consultation portal. Overall, a total of 149 responses were received online via a survey. A total of 18 written responses were also received. The survey asked a series of questions to ascertain respondents' views on the proposals put forward as part of the consultation. A summary of key topic areas addressed, and responses received is provided below. Full details of the emerging themes from the responses received are provided in the SoCI.

Links to the A47 and Hardwick Interchange

2.3.5 15% of respondents took the opportunity to raise their concerns and objections on the potential impact to congestion on the A47 and Hardwick Interchange as a result of the proposals.

2.3.6 10% of respondents suggested alterations to the proposal such as new locations to build the road and asked for more consideration to be made to other roads in the area.

Local access proposals

2.3.7 58% of respondents agreed to some extent with the proposal to include a new bridge carrying Rectory Lane. 47% agreed to some extent with the proposal to close Chequers Lane where it crosses the access road.

2.3.8 Respondents took the opportunity to comment on design changes for the proposed southern section of the access road, as well as more broadly. This included suggestions around repositioning of roundabouts, extending or



dualling the access road, lowering the bridges' level, and more generally a consideration of the road network around King's Lynn and to align any plans with it. Some respondents mentioned their concerns regarding the impacts on the surrounding areas.

Environmental and landscape considerations

- 2.3.9 The most common theme occurring within the responses to the environmental proposal included opposition over the impact the development may have on the environment, in particular the existing rural setting. Other respondents mentioned their concern over the potential pollution the proposal may cause, specifically on air pollution and noise pollution.

Improvement measures on the A10

- 2.3.10 73% of respondents agreed to new controlled crossings for pedestrians and cyclists and 49% of respondents strongly agreed to by weight limit restrictions. On the other hand, 39% of respondents disagreed with introducing traffic calming measures.

Active Travel

- 2.3.11 The analysis of respondents' travel habits indicated a high car usage and low usages of public transport.
- 2.3.12 Respondents were asked what would be the most important factors that would encourage participants to cycle and walk more. Responses included paths and cycle tracks physically separated from vehicles, more leisure routes away from busy roads and safer junctions and more crossings.

Public Transport

- 2.3.13 Respondents were asked what would encourage them to use public transport more. The most popular option chosen was for more frequent buses, followed by more services running later in the evening.
- 2.3.14 Other key stakeholders had been consulted and engaged as part of the consultation process including regular meetings held with National Highways,



Norfolk CC Network Management Team, National Gas, LLFA and landowners.

2.3.15 A coordination meeting with Kings Lynn Borough Council and Hopkins Homes was also held and centred around coordinating the extents of the Hopkins Homes site and the Housing Access Rd. Discussions aimed to ensure seamless coordination between the different stakeholders involved in the project.

2.3.16 A stakeholder workshop for the Sustainable Transport Strategy (STS) was held on 24 March 2023. Stakeholders discussed the conditions for active travel and public transport users near West Winch, exploring proposals and opportunities related to the West Winch Housing Access Road (WWHAR).

2.3.17 From June 2023, Active Travel England became a statutory consultee for major planning applications. The STS document was reviewed by Active Travel England (ATE) in Autumn 2023 and the proposals were discussed with representatives from ATE and DfT (Department for Transport) in November 2023. Comments received from Active Travel England focussed on the form and locations of Non-Motorised User crossings on A10 and at Chequers Lane, plus dimensions of shared use provision.

2.3.18 The scheme has benefitted from pre-application discussions with case officers at Norfolk County Council and a summary of the meetings that have taken place is provided in the SoCI.

2.3.19 The views expressed through consultation undertaken has informed the development of the Proposed Scheme. Please refer to the supporting Statement of Community Involvement (doc ref: 1.03.00) for further detail as to the findings.

2.4 Site and Surroundings

2.4.1 The Application Site (the 'Site') is shown on the Location Plan (Drawing ref. 2.01.00) / Site Plan (Drawing ref. 2.02.00) submitted with the Application. The



site is located within the district of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, and within the administrative area of Norfolk County Council (NCC).

- 2.4.2 The Site is approximately 688,249.0m² located on land to the east of West Winch village and approximately 2 miles south-east of the centre of Kings Lynn, Norfolk. West Winch is a civil parish in the county of Norfolk. It is recognised as a 'Rural Service Centre' providing a range of services to help sustain the wider rural community.
- 2.4.3 The West Winch Housing Access Road (WWHAR) will connect the A10 to the A47, starting south of Gravelhill Lane in West Winch and joining the A47 before it reaches the Hardwick Junction.
- 2.4.4 The Site includes parts of the parishes of West Winch and North Runcton and is very roughly bounded by the A10 to the west, the A47 to the east, and the Setchey to Blackborough End road to the south. It stretches around 3.5 km north-south and around 1.5 km east-west. The area fringes the village of West Winch and the main road (A10) north towards Hardwick roundabout and King's Lynn. It stretches towards, but stops short of, North Runcton village.
- 2.4.5 Although predominantly agricultural land, the Site does encompass a number of existing dwellings and other premises lying between the two villages.
- 2.4.6 There are a number of features of environmental interest within and surrounding the Site, including:
- Sheep's Course Wood County Wildlife Site (CWS) is located adjacent to the northeast of the Proposed Scheme;
 - West Winch Common CWS, approximately 195m to the west of the Proposed Scheme;
 - Brook Watering Meadow CWS, approximately 490m to the west of the Proposed Scheme;
 - Rush Meadow CWS, approximately 790m to the west of the Proposed Scheme;



- Adj. River Narr CWS, approximately 1.4km to the west of the Proposed Scheme;
- Plantation Wood CWS, approximately 1.6km to the northeast of the Proposed Scheme;
- South of Gaywood Park CWS, approximately 1.8km to the northwest of the Proposed Scheme;
- Saddlebow Reedbeds CWS, approximately 2km to the west of the Proposed Scheme;
- Roydon Common Ramsar 5.5km to the north-east of the Proposed Scheme;
- The Wash Ramsar and SPA is located approximately 6.1km to the north-west of the Proposed Scheme;
- River Nar SSSI is located approximately 220m to the west of the Proposed Scheme;
- Setchey SSSI is located approximately 1.2km to the south of the Proposed Scheme;
- Hedgerows, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, arable field margins and ponds are the habitats of principal importance are located within or directly connected to the Proposed Scheme; and
- The Proposed Scheme is considered to offer potential to support bats, badgers, otter, water vole breeding and wintering birds, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates.

2.4.7 The landscape within and surrounding the Proposed Scheme is generally flat with very gentle undulation. It lies approximately 10-20m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

2.4.8 The Proposed Scheme is located on predominantly greenfield agricultural land (Grade 2 and 3) with the exception of an area of scrubland where the



Proposed Scheme joins the A47. There are no known landscape designations within the Proposed Scheme.

2.4.9 There are no Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), National Parks or Country Parks within 5km of the Proposed Scheme.

2.4.10 The route corridor of the Proposed Scheme is not located within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The nearest AQMA is approximately 970m to the north in King's Lynn along the A148 London Road, including the Railway Road/Blackfriars Road gyratory, known as the Railway Road AQMA (AQMA ID 138).

2.4.11 Noise Important Area (NIA) (ID 5191) is located within the Proposed Scheme boundary. Other NIAs (ID 5187, 11358, 5189, 14279, 5190 and 11359) are located within the A10 West Winch Main Road.

2.4.12 There are no Statutory Main Rivers within the Proposed Scheme boundary.

2.4.13 The following Public Rights of Ways (PROWs) are noted within and near to the Proposed Scheme:

- Restricted Byway:
 - North Runcton RB2, joins A10 to the west; and
 - North Runcton RB3 joins A47b to the southwest.
- Bridleway:
 - North Runcton BR4 joins rectory Lane to the south.
- Footpaths:
 - North Runcton FP1, approximately 35m to the southwest.

2.4.14 There are no National Trails within 2km of the Proposed Scheme. There is a designated recreational route, the Nar Valley Way, which runs alongside the River Nar and connects King's Lynn with Gressenhall, situated 1.3km south of the Proposed Scheme.



2.4.15 National Cycle Network Route no.1 lies just within and beyond the east and northeast of the study area, between Wisbech to Kings Lynn, approximately 1.9km from the scheme at closest. National Cycle Network Route 11 lies just outside the study area to the south, connecting with Route no.1 in the north to Downham Market in the south.

2.5 Planning History

2.5.1 Table 5-3 in Chapter 5 (Approach to EIA) of the ES, provides a list of committed development with the potential for cumulative effects. The LPA's pre-application response identifies additional sites for consideration within the cumulative effects assessment. A number of these sites have not been taken forward within the assessment owing to their smaller size and negligible impacts.

2.5.2 Notwithstanding the relevance of the committed development identified in Chapter 5 of the ES, the Table below lists only planning applications identified as being material considerations in the determination of the planning application for the Proposed Scheme, following a search of the NCC local planning authority online planning register:



LPA Reference	Description	Comments
13/01615/OM	<p>Location: Land West of Constitution Hill Constitution Hill North Runcton Norfolk PE33 0QP</p> <p>Proposal: Outline application: change of use from agricultural/undeveloped land to a new development of housing and associated facilities; comprising a mix of up to 1110 residential units (Class C3); primary school (Class F1), local centre (Class E, F2); public open space, landscaping and highway access on the A47 and A10.</p>	Awaiting decision

2.5.3 The Proposed Scheme would enable the delivery of the outline proposal (Ref. 13/01615/OM) for 1,110 new dwellings on land West of Constitution Hill, between the A10 and A47 also known as the ‘Hopkins Homes’ development.

2.5.4 Area 3: WWHAR: ‘A47 to Metacre Roundabout’ and Area 4: ‘Metacre Roundabout to A10 tie in’ of the Proposed Scheme had both been designed to integrate with the adjacent Hopkins Homes development and walking/cycling networks proposed. Further details regarding how the design



of the Proposed Scheme responds to the Hopkins Homes development is provided in the accompanying DAS.

2.5.5 Further considerations to ensure that the Proposed Scheme and Hopkins Homes developments align, will be addressed during the detailed design stage.

2.5.6 The Proposed Scheme will not only facilitate the delivery of the Hopkins' Homes development, but will provide a strategic connection for the urban expansion of the South East King's Lynn Strategic Growth Area (SEKLSGA), also known as the West Winch Growth Area (WWGA), supporting economic and housing growth objectives of the allocation and enhancing the resilience of the local road network.

2.6 Sustainable Transport Strategy

2.6.1 A Sustainable Transport Strategy (STS) has been developed alongside the Proposed Scheme's highway design and is submitted as a separate document (Document Ref: 4.02.00).

2.6.2 The STS aims to identify a complementary package of sustainable travel measures facilitated by the Proposed Scheme to encourage a mode shift to active and sustainable travel choices as well as improving connectivity for NMUs.

2.6.3 The vision for the STS is essentially to enhance sustainable access for existing residents of West Winch whilst also accommodating the need of a future expanded settlement as envisaged within the Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council Local Plan. Therefore, the range of measures presented within the STS are both within the Red Line Boundary in the immediate vicinity of the Proposed Scheme and within a suitable radius of the new road at a more strategic level. The measures are expected to be taken forward by the Highways Authority alongside the WWHAR.



2.7 Biodiversity Net Gain

- 2.7.1 A BNG Assessment Report (as set out in Environmental Statement Chapter 8: Biodiversity - Appendix 8.5: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Document Ref: 3.08.05)) has been undertaken for the Proposed Scheme in accordance with best practice guidance and has been prepared using the Biodiversity Metric 4.0 published by Natural England. Baseline habitat data collected as part of habitat surveys have been used to inform the habitat calculations for the BNG assessment. This included an updated habitat condition assessment undertaken in June 2023. The assessment measures the change in biodiversity through development (expressed as biodiversity units), with a target to achieve a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity units in line with the Environment Act.
- 2.7.2 The 10% BNG requirement has not been achieved within the Proposed Scheme Boundary due to the constraints around land acquisitions. As a result, a BNG strategy will be devised and consulted on with the LPA and key stakeholders on how to deliver a 10% BNG outcome for the Proposed Scheme, either through off-site provision, third party provision of land for offsetting or habitat banking and commuted sum contributions, to be secured by planning condition.
- 2.7.3 It should be noted that any offsite habitat creation requirements set out in the BNG Assessment Report does not contribute to mitigation measures within the accompanying Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) (as set out in Environmental Statement Chapter 8: Biodiversity). These measures have not yet been committed to, although they will be committed through the application process and secured by planning condition. Regulations for Biodiversity Net Gain, required through the Environment Act, are not yet released and there is uncertainty regarding the length of time that offsite habitat creation measures will be secured. Offsite habitat creation and management to achieve BNG will need to be committed to for at least of 30 years in line with the requirements of the Environment Act, however it is currently not clear whether these offsite habitat creation areas will be secured



beyond this timeframe (for example by Conservation Covenants).

Compensation measures to mitigate significant effects of the Proposed Scheme would need to be for the lifespan of the Proposed Scheme and as such any offsite habitat creation measures are not considered as mitigation for significant effects within this assessment.

- 2.7.4 A continued influence in the design process will allow the requirements of BNG to be understood and reflected in the post-development landscape designs at detailed design stage.

2.8 Use of Rochdale Envelope

- 2.8.1 The Proposed Scheme has been assessed against the description, design principles and tolerances and supporting plans as detailed in ES Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Scheme. The maximum extent of the planning application boundary and scheme footprint has been assessed as the worst-case situation. There is therefore some degree of flexibility to allow the Proposed Scheme to evolve (i.e. reduce in size) if necessary.

- 2.8.2 This ensures that the ES can be an effective assessment tool even in the event of minor changes being applied to the scheme as the design progresses and gives certainty that in the event of such design changes, the ES findings are still valid.

- 2.8.3 For this reason, some plans (such as those showing embankments, which will depend on the exact volume of material that the Proposed Scheme will have to incorporate) are submitted simply to illustrate the Proposed Scheme, with final details to be dealt with by planning condition. Where this is the case, this is clearly marked on the plans.

2.9 Flood Risk

- 2.9.1 The majority of the Proposed Scheme is located in the low-risk Flood Zone 1. There is a small area located towards the east of Hardwick roundabout adjacent to the A47 that is located within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3. A



Flood Risk Assessment (Document ref: 3.11.01) is submitted as an appendix to the Environmental Statement.

2.10 Land Ownership

2.10.1 The land to which the application relates is in shared ownership between the Applicant and other known landowners. Therefore, the appropriate Certificate B under Article 13 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 has been completed and notice has been served on those parties with an interest in the land.

2.11 Planning Application Fee

2.11.1 The planning application fee is based upon the relevant parts of Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended [Fees for applications](#)). The application is considered to be in the category of "*other operations (not coming in one of the above categories)*". The application fee is therefore £2,028.00 based a site area of 69 hectares.

2.12 Compulsory Purchase Order

2.12.1 Alongside the planning application, NCC as the promoter of the Proposed Scheme is negotiating with relevant landowners to be able to acquire the land required to deliver the Proposed Scheme. If these negotiations are not successful, then NCC will look to acquire the land via a Compulsory Purchase Order. This will likely be brought to Cabinet [shortly after] submission of the Planning Application.

2.13 Side Roads Order

2.13.1 A series of alterations to the local highway network will be required if planning permission is granted for the Proposed Scheme. This will be dealt with by way of a Side Roads Order application under the Highways Act 1980 to give NCC the statutory authority to divert and alter the local highway network.



2.13.2 Proposals at Chequers Lane and Rectory Lane are expected to be the subject of the Side Roads Order.



3 Transport Case for the Scheme

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section sets out the background to the planning application, the scheme objectives and the need for the Proposed Scheme. It also identifies how it will fulfil the objectives of the Government's Major Road Network (MRN) programme.

3.2 Background to the Proposal

3.2.1 The Proposed Scheme is required to allow for the access to the proposed housing development east of West Winch which has been identified within the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan as the primary site for substantial housing development. The housing development cannot come forward without new highway infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of the additional traffic demand.

3.2.2 This site is located within the South East King's Lynn Strategic Growth Area (SEKLSGA), also known as the West Winch Growth Area (WWGA) as referred to above. This development comprises 4,000 new dwellings on land between the A10 and A47. A planning application (entitled 'Land West of Constitution Hill, Constitution Hill, North Runcton, Norfolk PE33 0QP' (Ref.13/01615/OM)) has been submitted by Hopkins Homes Ltd for development of the northern extent of this land, also referred to as the Hardwick Green development.

3.2.3 The site has been selected as the only location available in the area for such levels of growth due to flooding constraints elsewhere, and its proximity and links to King's Lynn. The town is home to the Port of King's Lynn which can be accessed by road from the A10 and A47 from the south. The housing development cannot come forward without new highway infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of the additional traffic demand. Considering King's Lynn is up to 50 miles away from the regional centres of Peterborough, Cambridge and Norwich, the town is therefore an important service centre and economic



driver to a sub-region with a population of over 150,000. King's Lynn is a hub for many neighbouring, smaller rural settlements and offers employment opportunities as well as a range of services in terms of retail, healthcare, and social. The strategic importance of King's Lynn will continue to grow as the town supports significant residential development in adjacent rural settlements such as West Winch.

- 3.2.4 The village of West Winch lies to the west of the existing A10, 4km south of King's Lynn. The existing A10 connects King's Lynn to Ely, Cambridge, and further south to London, it is therefore strategically important to the region and is heavily used by commuters, visitors and haulage companies. A traffic count undertaken in 2019 on the A10 immediately to the south of West Winch identified a daily flow of approximately 20,000 vehicles, of which over 11% are HGVs. As a result of this many vehicles travel through West Winch as part of their journey, causing severance, difficulty for residents to emerge from side roads and impacts on the amenity of the village.
- 3.2.5 With many residential properties within the village bordering the road there is an ambition to provide a bypass of the village for through traffic. Further, additional capacity is required to cater for the increase in travel demand as a result of the planned housing growth.
- 3.2.6 NCC is working in partnership with the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKLWN) to expedite housing delivery and coordinate the provision of the required highway infrastructure in the West Winch area. This comprises the WWHAR which includes improvements to the Hardwick Interchange, dualling of a section of the A47 and a new housing access road between the A47, just east of Hardwick Interchange, and the A10, to the south of the village of West Winch. The BCKLWN has carried out viability work for the growth area and produced an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This has identified significant infrastructure requirements including a new housing access road to enable the delivery of new homes in the WWGA. The quantum of new homes to be delivered is expected to be in the region of up to



4,000 new homes, with this figure to be confirmed as part of a review of the BCKLWN Local Plan which is currently underway.

- 3.2.7 The WWHAR scheme will deliver a number of highway interventions within the vicinity of the development ensuring the site is connected and that the highway network can cope with the increase in demand. A description of the Proposed Scheme is provided in Section 3.3 of this Statement.

3.3 Need for the Scheme

- 3.3.1 The Proposed Scheme is required to support the development of the WWGA and connect it to the existing road network. The delivery of the road would help to unlock new homes in this strategic housing site. The A10 is part of the MRN which connects into the Strategic Road Network (SRN), including the A47. The SRN is made up of the nation's motorways and major A roads and is 'arguably the largest and single most important piece of infrastructure in the country.' (Page 6 of 'The Strategic Road Network Initial Report', published by Highways England: [Strategic Road Network Initial Report Overview](#)). The village of West Winch lies to the west of the existing A10, 4km south of King's Lynn. The existing A10 connects King's Lynn to Ely, Cambridge, and further south to London, it is therefore strategically important to the region and is heavily used by commuters, visitors and haulage companies. A traffic count undertaken in 2019 on the A10 immediately to the south of West Winch identified a daily flow of approximately 20,000 vehicles, of which over 11% are HGVs (DfT Road Traffic Statistics). As a result of this, many vehicles travel through West Winch as part of their journey, causing severance, difficulty for residents to emerge from side roads and impacts on the amenity of the village. With many residential properties within the village bordering the road, there is an ambition to provide a bypass of the village for through traffic. Further, additional capacity is required to cater for the increase in travel demand because of the planned housing growth.
- 3.3.2 NCC has identified the need for the access road to reduce congestion and improve reliability and safety of travel within the A10 and A47(T) corridors,



and this includes prioritising the delivery of a bypass for West Winch and junction improvements. NCC and BCKLWN had prepared an Outline Business Case (OBC) for the WWHAR scheme and this was submitted to Government in September 2023. The OBC sets out the case for change, confirming the need for intervention, which was set out at SOBC stage, as well as outlining the option development process to date. An updated Options Assessment Report (OAR) had been produced for the WWHAR scheme. It reconfirmed the suitability and feasibility of the preferred option identified at SOBC stage.

- 3.3.3 The preferred scheme option identified at SOBC stage enables the full housing allocation on the West Winch Housing Allocation site to come forward. The preferred option has been revisited to include active travel, travel management, and bus priority options. This is in response to increased policy emphasis on carbon savings, climate change and increased requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain since the preparation of the SOBC in early 2021.
- 3.3.4 The OBC's strategic case for the scheme had been developed in line with HM Treasury Business Case guidance and the DfT's Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG). BCKLWN is working closely with partners to address needs for the strategic growth area of West Winch, with securing funding for the new housing access road a priority.
- 3.3.5 Transport East, the Sub-national Transport Body for the area, included the WWHAR as one of its priorities for Major Road Network improvements when it submitted its Regional Evidence Base (REB) in July 2019. Transport East has recently reconfirmed its support for the scheme.
- 3.3.6 The Government has set out five objectives for the Major Road Network Programme [Objectives](#), as follows:
- Reduce congestion;
 - Support economic growth and rebalancing;
 - Support housing delivery;



- Support all road users; and
- Support the Strategic Road Network.

3.3.7 Table 3-1, below, considers how the Proposed Scheme responds to these objectives.

Table 3-1 How the Proposed Scheme Fulfils the Objectives of the Major Road Network Programme

Objective	How the Proposed Scheme Fulfils the Objective of the MRN Programme
O1 – Reducing congestion	<p>Transport infrastructure is one of the key challenges in King’s Lynn and West Norfolk. There is a high dependency on private car in King’s Lynn, particularly within its large rural hinterland, with driving the most common primary mode of transport to work at 69%. Congestion is consequently a key issue throughout the town.</p> <p>The Hardwick roundabout is a key junction in the regional network and a gateway to Kings Lynn – prone to rush hour and seasonal congestion which backs up onto surrounding roads, especially the A10.</p> <p>The current A10 in West Winch is heavily congested and the West Winch Housing Access Road will take the HGV's and heavy through traffic out of the village onto the SRN. This will allow the current A10 traffic to be calmed, improving existing levels of congestion, delays and unreliable journey times.</p>



Objective	How the Proposed Scheme Fulfils the Objective of the MRN Programme
<p>O2 – Support economic growth and rebalancing</p>	<p>The Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy, published by the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership in 2022, details the approach for growing the local economy. The Strategy recognises that to support growth in the economy a significant number of houses need to be constructed.</p> <p>The WWHAR scheme will support these ambitions by enabling housing provision to attract new residents to live and work in West Winch. The new access road will support the workforce, and ensure this housing is well connected to key employment locations.</p> <p>In addition, the new access road will reduce existing traffic congestion on the existing A10, helping to enhance the A10’s role as a strategic link supporting the wider King’s Lynn economy. The reduced journey times along the existing A10 will make the local area more attractive for businesses wanting to invest, boosting the local economy and supporting the new levelling up agenda for the local population.</p>
<p>O3 – Support housing delivery</p>	<p>The Proposed Scheme is required to unlock the West Winch Growth Area housing allocation and make the King’s Lynn and West Norfolk area more attractive for growth.</p>



Objective	How the Proposed Scheme Fulfils the Objective of the MRN Programme
O4 – Supporting all road users	As well as reducing congestion and providing greater certainty over journey times for motorists, the Proposed Scheme also supports Non-Motorised Users (NMUs), including pedestrians and cyclists, through the provision of new active travel infrastructure. This will include a segregated cycle route, leading to a safer environment for NMUs and an increase in active mode connectivity with the wider public transport network to encourage a mode shift from car to active modes.
O5 – Supporting the SRN.	The Proposed Scheme will provide a direct connection between the SRN (i.e. the A47) and the A10. It will support the connectivity between the SRN and the MRN networks.

The Government’s Transport Investment Strategy (DfT, 2017)

3.3.8 In July 2017, the Transport Investment Strategy was published, which sets out the Government’s planned approach to investment in transport infrastructure. The Transport Investment Strategy prioritises the importance of transport investment in the development of housing. It states that *“transport infrastructure is one of the keys to unlocking development and delivering places people want to live”*. The WWHAR scheme recognises that in order to bring forward the housing development proposals, a housing access road must also be developed, to ensure that the local transport network has the road capacity to accommodate the expansion. This will help improve regional road capacity, improve safety and make better connections between communities and businesses. In turn it can contribute towards unlocking further regional growth, due to the road capacity improvements attracting additional investment through the increased productivity and efficiency benefits of less delays.



The Government's Road Investment Strategy 2020 – 2025 (2020)

3.3.9 The Government's Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) sets a long-term strategic vision for the SRN network. The RIS has identified points on the A47 that require investment. It recognises that the A47 has a number of current constraints, which include congestion hotspots stemming from insufficient road capacity, a lack of alternative routes and inadequate junction design, resulting in heavy rush hour delays and queues.

3.3.10 The WWHAR scheme targets improvements to the A47 and Hardwick Interchange, both of which are recognised within the RIS.

Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2022 (Norfolk County Council, 2022)

3.3.11 The Council's Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan (NSIDP) seeks to establish what additional infrastructure is required to support the planned increase in new homes and jobs, and the projected population growth within the Borough up to 2038. This plan focuses on regional transport infrastructure initiatives and highlights the importance of linking planned and existing infrastructure to housing. It recognises this as being an essential step towards promoting economic growth.

3.3.12 The WWHAR scheme is directly cited in this Infrastructure Delivery Plan, demonstrating the importance of this project within the region. The Delivery Plan highlights that to facilitate planned housing growth in West Winch a new road is required between the A47 and A10. This will enable the distribution of trips from the new development and alleviate congestion on the A10 through West Winch.

Summary

3.3.13 In summary, the proposed housing access road is an essential part of NCC's wider plans to create new housing in the area and resolve traffic issues on the existing A10. The Proposed Scheme would enable the West Winch housing allocation to come forward and minimise delay to its delivery.



4 Planning Policy Context

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 In accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) section 38(6), the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the local development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Other material considerations include the NPPF and the associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

4.1.2 This section of the Statement therefore sets out the development plan policies that are relevant to the determination of the application. It also identifies the relevant material considerations that should be considered in the determination of planning applications.

4.2 The Development Plan

4.2.1 The Proposed Scheme is located within the Local Planning Authority area of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council (BCKLWN) and as such, the policies of the adopted BCKLWN Core Strategy (2011) as well as the BCKLWN Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016), the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan (2017) and Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework (2011) comprise the development plan for the determination of the application.

4.2.2 Within the regional planning hierarchy, Norfolk County Council (NCC) acts as the county planning authority. NCC publishes relevant policy guidance documents such as the 'Transport for Norwich Strategy' (December 2021), but these sit outside of the defined Development Plan.

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk Core Strategy (2011)

4.2.3 The Proposed Scheme is located within the Local Planning Authority area of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and the Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council local plan comprises the following documents:

- The BCKLWN Core Strategy (2011); and



- The BCKLWN Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016).

Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework (2011)

4.2.4 As well as the policies of Core Strategy, the development plan includes the documents of the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework (MWDF). This framework contains the following three minerals and waste planning policy documents, and a policies map as follows:

- Core Strategy and Minerals and Waste Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) 2010-2026 (adopted September 2011);
- Minerals Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) (adopted October 2013, amendments adopted December 2017);
- Waste Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) (adopted October 2013); and
- Revised policies map which includes the Site-Specific Allocations and an interactive map of Mineral Safeguarding Areas.

4.2.5 The policies of the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework relate primarily to applications for Minerals and Waste developments and are of less direct relevance to the Proposed Scheme. The Proposed Scheme does however bisect an area of land that is identified as a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Silica Sand and Sand and Gravel Extraction in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The compliance of the Proposed Scheme with draft Minerals Policy MP11 of the MWDF (2022) is set out in Chapter 5, below.

4.2.6 Table 4-1, below, identifies development plan policies that are considered relevant to the determination of the planning application.



Table 4-1 Relevant Development Plan Policies

Policy	Title
Core Strategy (2011)	No data
Policy CS03	King's Lynn
Policy CS09	Housing
Policy CS11	Transportation
Policy CS12	Environmental Assets
Policy CS13	Community and Culture
Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016)	Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016)
Policy E2.1	West Winch Growth Area Strategic Policy
DM12	Strategic Road Network
North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan (2017)	North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan (2017)
Policy WA01	Protecting sites of local value
Policy WA03	Protecting and replacing natural features
Policy WA04	Providing sustainable drainage
Policy WA05	Providing GI management resources
Policy WA06	Protecting agricultural land and soils
Policy WA07	Design to protect and enhance local character
Policy WA09	Enhancing the A10 road corridor



Policy	Title
Policy WA10	Adequate provision for cars
Policy GA02	Providing green infrastructure
Policy GA03	Ensuring transport infrastructure
Policy GA04	Design of relief road
Policy GA05	Principles of new development design
Policy GA07	Cycle and footpath provision
Policy GA08	Provision for public transport
Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework (2011)	Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework (2011)
Policy MP11	Provision for minerals extraction

Emerging Policy

The King’s Lynn & West Norfolk Local Plan Review Pre-submission draft (2016-2036) (Emerging Plan)

4.2.7 Paragraph 48 of the NPPF states that “*Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans*”. The weight given is determinate on the stage of preparation of the emerging plan, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF. The relevant emerging plan for BCKLWN council is:

The King’s Lynn & West Norfolk Local Plan Review Pre-submission draft (2016-2036)

4.2.8 The Local Plan in the Borough currently consists of the Core Strategy (adopted in 2011) and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (SADMP, adopted in 2016). These two documents have been reviewed and the new combined draft document sets out a strategy and detail



for delivering growth in the Borough, identifying where development should be located and how it should be delivered up to 2036.

4.2.9 The draft Local Plan Review 2016-2036 was prepared and consulted on between August 2nd 2022 to 27th September 2022. The emerging plan is now at pre-submission or 'Regulation 19' stage, which means that the LPA will publish a version of the Local Plan Review in the form that the Borough Council wishes to submit for Examination and provide an opportunity for representations to be made about it. The emerging Plan and is therefore at a late stage in the plan-making process, meaning it has significant material weight in the decision-making process. Table 4-2, below, identifies emerging plan policies that are considered relevant to the determination of the planning application.

Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan Review Pre-submission draft (2022)

4.2.10 NCC is currently preparing an updated Minerals and Waste Local Plan to consolidate the three adopted DPDs into one Local Plan and to extend the plan period to the end of 2038. The draft Local Plan Review 2022 was prepared and consulted on between September 28th 2022 to 19th December 2022. The emerging plan is now at pre-submission or 'Regulation 19' stage and is therefore at a late stage in the plan-making process, meaning it has significant material weight in the decision-making process.



Table 4-2 Relevant Emerging Plan Policies

Policy	Title
The King's Lynn & West Norfolk Local Plan Review Pre-submission draft (2016-2036)	No data
Policy LP11	Strategic Road and Major Road Network Policy
Policy LP13	Transportation Policy
Policy LP19	Environmental Assets - Green Infrastructure, Landscape Character, Biodiversity and Geodiversity Policy
Policy LP36	Community and Culture Policy
Policy LP38	King's Lynn Policy
Policy E2.1	West Winch Growth Area Strategic
Policy	Title
Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan Review Pre-submission draft (2022)	No data
Draft Policy MP11	Provision for minerals extraction

Material Considerations

4.2.11 In addition to the policies of the development plan there are a number of policy documents that are material considerations in determining the planning application. As well as the fulfilment of the Scheme Objectives and the Government's Objectives to the Major Road Network Programme, which are set out in Chapter 3 of this Statement, the objectives of the NCC's Local Transport Plan are also considered to be material considerations.



Norfolk Local Transport Plan 4 Strategy 2021-2036

4.2.12 NCC’s fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP) 4 Strategy was adopted in July 2022 and covers the period 2021-2036. This document sets out NCC’s plans, policies and programmes on transport and transport infrastructure for the region.

4.2.13 Page 3 of the LTP confirms that the A10 West Winch Housing Access Road will be taken forward by NCC to support accelerated housing growth in the County. Explicitly, the supporting text for Policy 8 (Enhancing Connectivity, and what it means in practice (p48)) identifies the West Winch Housing Access Road as a priority in ensuring quick, reliable journey times for longer-distance journeys.

4.2.14 The strategic objectives of Norfolk Local Transport Plan 4 are set out in Table 4-3 below:

Table 4-3 Objectives of Norfolk Local Transport Plan 4

Objective	Title
Objective 1	Embrace the Future
Objective 2	Delivering a Sustainable Norfolk
Objective 3	Enhancing Connectivity
Objective 4	Enhancing Norfolk’s Quality of Life
Objective 5	Increasing Accessibility
Objective 6	Improving Transport Safety
Objective 7	A Well Managed and Maintained Transport Network

Local Transport Implementation Plan 4 (2022)

4.2.15 The accompanying Local Transport Implementation Plan 4 (published July 2022) confirms that:



'Our approach to implementation will therefore be to...

Take forward schemes that are included in the current government large local major and major road network funding streams. These are Long Stratton Bypass, Norwich Western Link, West Winch Housing Access Road, A47/ A17 Pullover Junction, King's Lynn.'

Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2022)

4.2.16 The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan (NSIDP) was published in December 2022, and pulls together information on the *'key infrastructure needed to deliver economic growth in Norfolk (NSIDP, Introduction, Page 1)'*. Page 41 of the NSIDP identifies the strategic importance of the Proposed Scheme *"to facilitate planned housing growth in the West Winch Growth Area and provide a strategic improvement to the A10 to enhance resilience on the Major Road Network (MRN)"*.

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2022)

4.2.17 The BCKLWN has carried out viability work for the growth area and produced an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This has identified significant infrastructure requirements including a new housing access road to enable the delivery of 4,000 new homes.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan for South East King's Lynn Strategic Growth Area (West Winch Growth Area) (SEKLSGA) (2018)

4.2.18 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan for South East King's Lynn Strategic Growth Area sets out the key strategic infrastructure that is required to support the housing and identifies where and at what time that infrastructure is required.

4.2.19 The IDP considers the provision of new homes in the West Winch Growth Area as a 'trigger point' for transport infrastructure and this includes the A10 West Winch Bypass (Phases 1 and 2), improvements to the Hardwick interchange, an expanded A47 and traffic calming through West Winch Village.



The King's Lynn Area Transport Strategy, Draft for Consultation (2019)

4.2.20 Page 51 of the draft Strategy identifies options to reduce delay and congestion on the local highway network. This includes the West Winch Housing Access Road and its associated benefits including management of through traffic in King's Lynn town centre, improved journey times and air quality management.

4.3 National Planning Policy

The National Planning policy Framework (2023)

4.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2012 and subsequently revised, the latest time in December 2023. The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental, and social planning policies for England.

4.3.2 Paragraphs 2 of the NPPF confirms that the Framework is a material planning consideration in determining planning applications, but that this does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan as the starting point for decision making:

4.3.3 *'Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements.'*

4.3.4 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states:

*'The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the **provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.**'*

4.3.5 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out how the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be applied in practice, confirming that:



‘Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development...’

For **decision-taking** this means:

(c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

(d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

(i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

(ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.’

4.3.6 Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states:

“The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.”

National Networks - National Policy Statement 2014

4.3.7 National Policy Statements are policy guidance documents that are produced by the incumbent national government and seek to give reasons for the policy set out in the statement, including an explanation of how the policy takes account of government policy relating to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. They comprise the government’s objectives for the



development of nationally significant infrastructure in a particular sector and state, including:

- *How this will contribute to sustainable development.*
- *How these objectives have been integrated with other government policies.*
- *How actual and projected capacity and demand have been taken into account.*
- *Consideration of relevant issues in relation to safety or technology.*
- *Circumstances where it would be particularly important to address the adverse impacts of development.*
- *Specific locations, where appropriate, in order to provide a clear framework for investment and planning decisions.*

4.3.8 They also include any other policies or circumstances that ministers consider should be taken into account in decisions on infrastructure development.

National Policy Statements undergo a democratic process of public consultation and parliamentary scrutiny before being approved / published. They provide the framework within which Examining Authorities make their recommendations to the Secretary of State.

4.3.9 The National Networks National Policy Statement (NN-NPS), published December 2014, sets out the need for, and Government's policies to deliver, development of nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs) on the national road and rail networks in England. It provides planning guidance for promoters of nationally significant infrastructure projects on the road and rail networks, and the basis for the examination by the Examining Authority and decisions by the Secretary of State. The thresholds for nationally significant road, rail and strategic rail freight infrastructure projects are defined in the Planning Act 2008 ("the Planning Act") as amended (for highway and railway projects) by The Highway and Railway (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project) Order 2013 ("the Threshold Order"). For the purposes of this NPS



these developments are referred to as national road, rail and strategic rail freight interchange developments.

- 4.3.10 The Secretary of State will use this NPS as the primary basis for making decisions on development consent applications for national networks nationally significant infrastructure projects in England. Other NPSs may also be relevant to decisions on national networks nationally significant infrastructure projects.
- 4.3.11 Where a development does not meet the current requirements for a nationally significant infrastructure project set out in the Planning Act (as amended by the Threshold Order), but is considered to be nationally significant, there is a power in the Planning Act for the Secretary of State, on application, to direct that a development should be treated as a nationally significant infrastructure project. In these circumstances any application for development consent would need to be considered in accordance with this NPS. The relevant development plan is also likely to be an important and relevant matter especially in respect of establishing the need for the development.
- 4.3.12 In consideration of the proposed scheme, understanding how the NPS policy guidance interacts with regional policy on climate change is critical as it helps establish the applicable hierarchy of policies relating to climate change and greenhouse gases. Carbon policies enshrined in national guidance such as NPS or the NPPF itself, sit above regional policies, with the lower tier policy guidance then passing down through the 'Norfolk Local Transport Plan' (2022), and then further down the hierarchy of policy guidance such as the subsidiary plan 'Transport for Norwich'.

Emerging Revised National Networks – National Policy Statement (March 2023)

- 4.3.13 The current NN-NPS was designated in 2014 and covers the strategic road and rail networks and strategic rail freight interchanges. The government are currently seeking views on revisions to the NN-NPS to ensure that it remains fit for purpose in supporting the government's commitments for appropriate



development of infrastructure for strategic road, rail and rail freight interchanges. This means whether it provides a suitable framework to support decision making for nationally significant infrastructure road, rail and strategic rail freight interchange projects.

4.3.14 The previously held consultation sought views on the following, which have been carried out in relation to the emerging draft NN-NPS:

- Appraisal of Sustainability
- Habitats Regulations Assessment

4.3.15 Consultation on the revised draft closed on the 6 June 2023, with the following relevant period for parliamentary scrutiny running from 14 March 2023 to 20 October 2023.

Other Relevant and Emerging Policy Documents that may impact the Proposed Scheme

4.3.16 Chapter 5 assesses the Proposed Scheme against the policies of the development plan and emerging policies identified above.

5 Material Considerations

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section identifies the relevant policies from the development plan applicable to this planning application and use the conclusions of the ES, DAS and other supporting documents to assess the impacts of the Proposed Scheme against the relevant parts of these policies.

5.1.2 In the context of the consideration of the main effects of the Proposed Scheme, the main planning and environmental issues for consideration are:

- The Principle of the Proposed Scheme;
- Transport and Accessibility;
- Air Quality;



- Ecology;
- Noise and Vibration; and
- Landscaping.

5.1.3 Each issue is discussed below with other environmental considerations discussed also.

5.2 Principle of The Proposed Scheme

5.2.1 The principle of the Proposed Scheme at this location is supported by NCC through its recognition of the scheme as an enabling development for the sustainable urban expansion of the WWGA allocated in Policy CS03 and Policy CS09 of the Core Strategy and Policy LP38 of the Emerging Plan. The Proposed Scheme will provide a strategic connection for the urban expansion of the WWGA and would enable the allocation to come forward and minimise delay to its delivery.

5.2.2 The planned growth will logically increase existing pressure on the road network around West Winch and likely exacerbate existing issues in the road network. The Proposed Scheme will both address the existing issues in the road network as well as provide capacity to help support the economic and housing growth objectives of the WWGA allocation.

5.2.3 The proposal for a housing access road benefits from land allocated for strategic growth in the vicinity of West Winch in Policy E2.1 of the SADMP (2016) and Emerging Plan (2021). This allocation seeks to provide a number of strategic outcomes including *“a new road linking the A10 and A47 to provide a degree of relief of traffic on the existing A10 around West Winch, and access new development”*.

5.2.4 SADMP and Emerging Local Plan Policy E2.1 is likely considered the most relevant adopted development plan policy in the determination of this application which provides in principle policy support for the Proposed Scheme.



- 5.2.5 The need for a bypass road is also identified in Core Strategy Policy CS11 as a priority transport improvement scheme to improve connectivity within King's Lynn to reinforce its role as a regional transport node. The principle of the Proposed Scheme is reinforced through the DfT's approval of the SOBC for the scheme in Summer 2022. This has allowed the scheme to be progressed to the next stage which will see the OBC developed and submitted to the DfT. As part of the DfT's programme for the MRN, the scheme can access funding for improvements to the A10. The scheme's strategic importance to enhance resilience on the MRN is identified in the Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan (NSIDP). The Scheme also has the support of Transport East, the sub-national transport body for the region.
- 5.2.6 Paragraph 74 of the NPPF acknowledges the critical role of 'necessary infrastructure' in the delivery of new homes. The proposed housing access road should be considered as such to enable the supply of new homes. This national policy requirement for necessary infrastructure is reflected in King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council's aspirations to deliver a sustainable transport network to facilitate and support the regeneration and development priorities as identified in Core Strategy Policy CS01 Spatial Strategy. Similarly, the Norfolk Local Transport Plan 4 recognises the need to bring forward strategic infrastructure to support large growth areas.
- 5.2.7 NCC, the determining authority for the Proposed Scheme, has been engaged extensively throughout the evolution of the Proposed Scheme. Fundamentally, NCC accepts the principle of the Proposed Scheme, and this has remained their position throughout the pre-application discussions.
- 5.2.8 The evidence from the various public consultations that have been undertaken is that there is public support in the local area for the proposals to address existing transport issues and the traffic impacts associated with the planned growth. The design of the Proposed Scheme has responded to key themes identified through consultee feedback and relevant policy relating to design.



5.2.9 The remainder of this chapter will assess the relevant environmental considerations which will confirm the proposals are acceptable in detail.

5.3 Transport & Accessibility

5.3.1 This planning application is accompanied by a Traffic and Transport assessment. This document can be found at ES Chapter 16: Traffic and Transport. This chapter reports the outcome of the assessment of likely significant effects arising from the Proposed Scheme on Traffic and Transport.

Policy Context

5.3.2 Paragraph 108 (Promoting sustainable transport) of the NPPF states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals so that problems can be identified and assessed. Paragraph 110 highlights the need for LPAs to identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice.

5.3.3 Policy CS11 (Transportation) of the Core Strategy states that:

“the Council will work with partner organisations.....to deliver a sustainable transport network which improves connectivity within and beyond the borough, and reinforcing the role of King's Lynn as a regional transport node...”. Priority will be given to reducing congestion, improving the reliability and safety of travel within the A10 and A47(T) corridors which will include seeking a bypass for West Winch and junction improvements at key interchanges including A47(T). Additional priorities include: “Achieving a balanced package of highway, traffic management (including car parking) and public transport improvements.....Improving accessibility and connections between (and within) towns and villages.... Provide integrated and safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists...Promote sustainable forms of transport”.

5.3.4 Policy DM12 (Strategic Road Network) of the SADMP will not permit new development if it would result in increased traffic and have a significant adverse effect on the SRN.



- 5.3.5 Neighbourhood Plan Policy WA09 (Enhancing the A10 road corridor) requires that development proposals within the neighbourhood plan area that are anticipated to have traffic impacts on the A10 shall provide or help to provide improvement to that road corridor.
- 5.3.6 Neighbourhood Plan Policy GA03 (Ensuring transport infrastructure) requires that infrastructure proposed within the West Winch Growth Area is delivered in line with the Borough Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 5.3.7 Neighbourhood Plan Policy GA04 (Design of relief road) requires specific design elements to be included in designing the proposed relief road, where possible. This includes amongst other measures: a roundabout at Gravehill Lane, Cycle and/or pedestrian paths to be provided along both sides of the relief road corridor and safe cycle and pedestrian crossing points.
- 5.3.8 Policy GA07 (Cycle and footpath provision) requires that:
- “Development proposals coming forward as part of the West Winch Growth Area should contribute towards the design, delivery and funding of an integrated network of cycle paths, footpaths and dual-use paths throughout the Neighbourhood Plan area”.*
- 5.3.9 Draft Policy LP11 (Strategic Road and Major Road Network) of the Emerging Plan seeks to protect the SRN from development which would cause an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 5.3.10 Draft Policy LP13 (Transportation Policy) of the Emerging Plan states that priority will be given to development which improves connectivity within and beyond the borough, to reinforce the role of King's Lynn as a regional transport node. Development proposals must be designed to support a mode shift to active and sustainable travel choices.
- 5.3.11 Policy 8 of the Norfolk Local Transport Plan (LTP) 4 Strategy states:



“Our priority will be to improve major road and rail connections between larger places in the county, and to major ports, airports and cities in the rest of the UK”.

5.3.12 LTP4 identifies the West Winch Housing Access Road as a priority in ensuring quick, reliable journey times for longer-distance journeys and more broadly, to support accelerated housing growth in the County. Commitments to take forward the WWHAR are also set out in the accompanying Local Transport Implementation Plan 4 (published July 2022).

5.3.13 The strategic importance of the WWHAR is recognised in a number of Infrastructure Delivery Plans and Transport Strategy documents including: The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2022), Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2022), Infrastructure Delivery Plan for South East King’s Lynn Strategic Growth Area (West Winch) (SEKLSGA) (2018) and The King’s Lynn Area Transport Strategy, Draft for Consultation (2019).

Existing Conditions

A10

5.3.14 The A10 is single carriageway road routing north to south between Cambridge and King’s Lynn. The A10 forms a key strategic link in the area, providing a connection to residents of Milton, Waterbeach, Ely, Littleport, Downham Market and West Winch.

5.3.15 The speed limit along the A10 varies significantly along its stretch. On approach to more populated areas, it varies between 30 and 40mph from 60mph.

A47

5.3.16 The A47 is a key section of carriageway, routing east to west across Cambridgeshire and Norfolk. It forms a key part of the strategic road network connecting Leicester, Peterborough, King’s Lynn and Norwich to the port of Lowestoft.



5.3.17 For the majority of its length, the A47 is single carriageway and is subject to a national speed limit of 60mph. Around Norwich the A47 forms a section of dual carriageway that is subject to a national speed limit of 70mph.

5.3.18 On approach to King's Lynn, the A47 intersects with both the A10 and the A149 at a grade-separated junction known as the Hardwick Interchange. The Hardwick Interchange is a complex 6-arm grade-separated junction that is subject to change as part of the Proposed Scheme.

5.3.19 The Proposed Scheme will provide access to the A47 north of the 4,000 home West Winch Housing allocation, helping to relieve the pressure on the existing A10 as a result of the development.

Existing Public Transport

Bus Services

5.3.20 There are bus services available throughout the study area and bus stops located on the radial routes into King's Lynn. Within West Winch there are bus stops along the A10, Rectory Lane, and the A47.

Rail Services

5.3.21 There are no rail stations within the immediate vicinity of the Proposed Scheme. The nearest railway line is the Fen Line to the west of West Winch. The other railway line is a freight-only line to the north of West Winch.

5.3.22 The closest stations to the Proposed Scheme are King's Lynn station which is approximately 5km to the north west and Watlington station which is about 7km to the south of the Proposed Scheme.

Walking Accessibility and Pedestrian Network

5.3.23 The area is currently served by a network of existing pedestrian footways and Public Rights of Way (PRoW) predominantly passing through Rectory Lane and Chequers Road. These links provide access to several settlements in West Winch within a 30-minute walk.

5.3.24 West Winch benefits from a shared use path along the east side of A10, which provides pedestrian and cycle access to southern King's Lynn



connecting via Hardwick Roundabout. The path also continues south to the A134/A10 roundabout north of Watlington.

5.3.25 The Hardwick Roundabout itself has a mix of controlled and uncontrolled crossings on the southern arms, allowing pedestrian and cyclists to access King's Lynn. There is no NMU (Non-Motorised User) provision on the A47, with no dedicated facilities along Constitution Hill. However, it is safer for east-west cyclists and pedestrians to travel via rural lanes such as Rectory Lane and Chequers Lane between West Winch and North Runcton.

5.3.26 There are numerous single-lane rural roads within this study area with no dedicated pedestrian facilities but with low traffic flows, usually less than a 1000 AADT which LTN1/20 identifies as suitable for cycling in mixed traffic where speeds are low.

Cycling Accessibility and Network

5.3.27 West Winch benefits from existing, dedicated cycling infrastructure, mainly centred around the shared footway and cycleway along the A10.

5.3.28 This consists of a wide footway/cycleway between Oakwood Corner Roundabout to the South and Hardwick Roundabout to the north, providing a safer route for cyclists into King's Lynn and most of the way to Watlington.

5.3.29 On the Hardwick Roundabout, there are a number of toucan crossings which provide a walking and cycling route across the roundabout under the A47.

5.3.30 The shared path on the A10 continues north across Hardwick Roundabout onto the A149 Hardwick Road, this continues towards South Gates Roundabout, where the shared path links to other cycle tracks for destinations across King's Lynn. The shared space path continues to the south until the Oakwood Corner Roundabout.

5.3.31 The National Cycle Network (NCN) routes 1 and 11 are near West Winch. National Cycle Route (NCR) 1 joins NCR 11 south west of West Winch on Mill Road, east of Wiggshall. NCR 1 runs parallel to the A10 to the west of West Winch on the other side of the River Nar.



Personal Injury Collision (PIC) Data

5.3.32 The Chapter presents findings of the most recently available seven-year Personal Injury Collision (PIC) Data. The period covered 2016 to 2022.

5.3.33 A total of 300 incidents were recorded on the road network in the 7-year period studied.

5.3.34 Of all collisions between 2015 and 2022, 14% occurred during the morning peak period (0700-1000), while 23% occurred during the evening peak period (1600-1900).

Potential Impacts/Mitigation

Construction Phase

5.3.35 The assessment of the impact of construction traffic within the ES Transport chapter had concluded that there were not expected to be any significant adverse effects during construction. Only School Road is expected to see a significant effect given the high sensitivity of the area and a high magnitude of traffic impact due to relatively high HGVs movements. Alternative HGV routing via East Winch Road is proposed to mitigate this effect. Routing will be set out within the Construction Transport Management Plan to ensure drivers routes via specific links which avoid other high sensitivity areas like School Road.

Operation Phase

5.3.36 The assessment of the impact of operational traffic within the ES Transport chapter had concluded that there were not expected to be any significant adverse effects during the operational phase.

5.3.37 Generally, across the network within the study area, there will be a 'negligible' to 'minor' impact from traffic and transport on receptors due to the Proposed Scheme. However, the Proposed Scheme itself is expected to see a 'moderate adverse' effect as a worst case, thus without the embedded mitigation. Following the embedded mitigation i.e. segregated walking and cycle routes with safe crossing points, the effect of the redistributed traffic on



the Proposed Scheme is expected to be 'permanent minor' to 'negligible adverse' which is 'not significant', as such no mitigation is proposed.

Residual Effects

5.3.38 Based on the assessment within the chapter, the Proposed Scheme will not see significant residual effects during the operational phase. The redistribution of trips will mean that the A10 will see a reduction in traffic flow following the Proposed Scheme, whilst the A47 will see additional traffic. The adjacent junctions on the A10 and A47 however have capacity as per the modelling results, hence the level of effect is therefore 'not significant'.

Policy Compliance

5.3.39 The Proposed Scheme responds to NPPF (Paragraphs 108 and 116) sustainable transport requirements and includes provision for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, such as new green bridges crossing the highway and new sections of PRoW which join up and enhance the existing network and connect with National Highways Improvement Scheme Proposals.

5.3.40 The Proposed Scheme will be delivered with embedded mitigation to meet Core Strategy Policy CS11 (Transportation) requirements centred on providing a balanced package of measures to address road safety, accessibility, connectivity and a shift to active travel modes. Similar requirements are echoed in draft Policy LP11 (Strategic Road and Major Road Network) and draft Policy LP13 (Transportation Policy) of the Emerging Plan and relevant Neighbourhood Plan Policies in relation to traffic and transport referred to above.

5.3.41 The Proposed Scheme has been designed to include segregated walking and cycle routes and additional crossing points on A10. These are to be positioned close to desire lines. This will address severance, fear and intimidation, walking and cycling amenity, pedestrian and cycle delay and road safety.

5.3.42 Rectory Lane and Chequers Lane will be physically severed by the Proposed Scheme however, Rectory Lane will have a bridge for vehicles and NMUs



crossing over the WWHAR alignment and Chequers Lane will have a signalised at grade NMU crossing to retain east-west connectivity. The small number of daily users of Chequers Lane will be diverted to alternative routes. A dedicated private haulage access will also be installed close to the proposed Chequer's Lane crossing to prevent the need for HGVs to divert through the village of North Runcton.

5.3.43 Policy DM12 (Strategic Road Network) of the SADMP will not permit new development if it would result in increased traffic and have a significant adverse effect on the SRN. The Proposed Scheme is not expected to generate new trips on the SRN but rather result in the redistribution of vehicle journeys. As such it is consistent with Policy DM12 in this regard.

5.3.44 The Proposed Scheme is therefore consistent with the policies of the development plan in relation to traffic and transport.

Air Quality

5.3.45 This planning application is accompanied by an Air Quality assessment. This document can be found at ES Chapter 6: Air Quality. This chapter reports the outcome of the assessment of likely significant effects arising from the Proposed Scheme regarding air quality.

Policy Context

5.3.46 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF (2023) states:

“Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health....”;

5.3.47 Paragraph 192, states:

“Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas.



Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan”.

5.3.48 Policy CS11 (Transport) of the Core Strategy identifies that the Council will seek to achieve improvements to air quality in Kings Lynn where issues have been identified.

5.3.49 Policy DM15 (Environment, Design and Amenity) of the SADMP requires that development must protect and enhance the amenity of the wider environment. Air quality is considered to have a significant negative impact on the amenity of residents. In cases where the development has uncertain potential for a negative impact on amenity, mitigation measures may be sought.

5.3.50 Similarly draft Policy LP21 (Environment, Design and Amenity) of the Emerging Plan seeks to protect the amenity of the wider environment from significant adverse impacts. Factors such as air quality will be assessed in terms of its potential environmental impact.

Existing Conditions

5.3.51 Roadside concentrations modelling had reported no exceedances of limit values for pollutant concentrations within the study area in the 2019 base year.

5.3.52 Background concentrations across the study area were reported well below the respective air quality standards and were considered to reflect the predominantly rural nature of the study area.

5.3.53 Pollutant concentrations in the future are anticipated to decrease. This is due to the replacement of older, more polluting vehicles with newer, cleaner vehicles as emissions technologies improve and with the introduction of



electric vehicles into the fleet. This was reflected in the assessment predictions modelled for roadside and background concentrations.

Potential Impacts/Mitigation

5.3.54 Embedded mitigation measures and best practice included within the Proposed Scheme during construction as detailed in the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP) (Doc ref. 3.18.01), include:

- Storage of potentially dusty materials as far as practicable from sensitive receptors and with appropriate screening/containment to minimise dust emissions;
- Promptly clear any spillages of potentially dusty materials;
- Minimise material drop heights and avoid double handling;
- Enforcement of vehicle speed limits on site;
- Regular inspection and maintenance of haul road surfaces;
- Damping down of unpaved surfaces during dry conditions to minimise dust emissions;
- Wheel washing;
- Regular inspections of unpaved surfaces;
- Ensure all loads of potentially dusty materials leaving the site are covered to prevent dust emissions/loss of materials during transit;
- Regular inspection and cleansing of all paved surfaces including the public highway in the vicinity of site access points; and
- Use vacuum sweepers for cleaning of hard paving/public highway as deemed required.

5.3.55 No design measures have been specified to mitigate operational effects in relation to air quality.



5.3.56 For the construction dust, the sensitivity of the receiving environment is considered. This comprises residential properties and ecological receptors.

Construction Phase

5.3.57 The assessment of dust impacts and effects as a result of the Proposed Scheme during construction is set out in Table 6-10 of the assessment. With the embedded mitigation measure proposed the effect associated with construction dust is 'not significant'. The contractor will be required to routinely monitor the effectiveness of dust mitigation. Regular inspections will be undertaken to monitor dust.

Operational Phase

5.3.58 The assessment predicts residual impacts to human receptors during the Opening Year 2027 and Design Year 2042.

Opening Year 2027 - Human Receptors

5.3.59 The assessment of impacts in relation to human receptors in the opening year is predicted 'not significant'. Therefore, no monitoring is required.

Design Year 2042 - Human Receptors

5.3.60 The assessment of impacts in relation to human receptors in the design year is predicted 'not significant'. Therefore, no monitoring is required.

Ecological Receptors

5.3.61 The assessment of impacts in relation to ecological receptors is provided in ES Chapter 8: Ecology. Section 10: 'Significant Effects' of Chapter 8 details the assessment of significant effects taking into account of the embedded mitigation detailed in Section 7: Embedded Mitigation of the Chapter and additional mitigation measures detailed in Section 9: Additional Mitigation Measures. Key findings are summarised below.

Non-statutory designated sites

5.3.62 Dust emissions during the construction phase on non-statutory designated sites (Sheep's Course Wood) are considered to have no significant effects at a Local scale.



5.3.63 Air emissions during the operational phase on non-statutory designated sites (Sheep's Course Wood) are considered to have a significant effect at a Local scale.

Ancient Woodland / Veteran Trees

5.3.64 Air quality modelling had identified no significant effects upon ancient woodland and veteran tree during the operation phase.

Policy Compliance

5.3.65 The Applicant has considered the significant effect upon Sheep's Course Wood that is likely to arise from air emissions from the Proposed Scheme and it is concluded that on balance, it is not feasible to fully protect all ecological receptors and therefore that the Proposed Scheme is in general accordance with Policy CS11 (Transport) of the Core Strategy and Policy DM15 (Environment, Design and Amenity) of the SADMP.

5.4 Ecology

5.4.1 This planning application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). This document can be found at ES Chapter 8: Biodiversity. Chapter 8 assesses the impacts of the Proposed Scheme on biodiversity, including statutory and non-statutory designated sites, important or protected habitats, and legally protected species and species of conservation concern.

5.4.2 The impacts of the Proposed Scheme on internationally designated sites located within 10km of the Scheme Boundary are assessed in an accompanying Habitats Regulations Assessment ('HRA') that has been completed for the Proposed Scheme. The 'West Winch Housing Access Road Habitats Regulations Assessment: No Significant Effects Report' (WWHAR HRA) (Appendix 8.18) should therefore be read in conjunction with Chapter 8.



Policy Context

- 5.4.3 When assessing compliance with National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), the NPPG states that, with reference to the NPPF, “Where a development cannot satisfy the requirements of the ‘mitigation hierarchy’, planning permission should be refused”. The NPPF itself conveys this narrative at paragraph 186 a) stating that: “If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused”.
- 5.4.4 Policy CS12 (Environmental Assets) of the Core Strategy identifies that the Council will seek to: “...protect and enhance County Wildlife Sites, ancient woodlands, Biodiversity Action Plan Species and Habitats, Regionally Important Geological Sites and designated sites of historical value from development which damages their interest or significance unless the need for, and public benefits of the development outweigh the loss of interest or significance”. This policy stance is echoed in draft Policy LP19 (Environmental Assets - Green Infrastructure, Landscape Character, Biodiversity and Geodiversity Policy) of the Emerging Plan.
- 5.4.5 Draft Policy LP27 (Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)) of the Emerging Plan requires that: “Proposals for development must not adversely affect the integrity of European sites either alone, or in combination with other plans and projects, unless the tests set out under the Conservation and Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended) are met”.
- 5.4.6 Regulation 5 of the Hedgerow Regulations (1997) seeks that LPAs are required to protect hedgerow and that they are to be retained unless ‘satisfied, having regard in particular to the reasons given for its proposed removal, that there are circumstances which justify the removal’. Regulation 6 of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 suggests that important hedgerows can be removed if planning permission is granted.



Existing Conditions

- 5.4.7 A number of internationally and nationally designated sites and their qualifying habitats and species are located within 10km of the Proposed Scheme boundary which are described in the ES chapter.
- 5.4.8 A total of 10 non-statutory sites were identified within a 2km buffer of the Scheme Boundary. Each of these was a designated County Wildlife Site (CWS).
- 5.4.9 One area of ancient woodland is located within 5km of the Proposed Scheme. No ancient trees were recorded through field surveys.
- 5.4.10 There are a total of six distinct hedgerows present within the Scheme Boundary. All hedgerows recorded meet the criteria for inclusion as a Habitat of Principle Importance (HPI) as they contain more than 80% native species. Five of these hedgerows would qualify as important hedgerows under the Wildlife and Landscape criteria described in The Hedgerow Regulations.
- 5.4.11 Japanese Knotweed *Reynoutria japonica* was recorded in the north of the Proposed Scheme.

Potential Impacts/Mitigation

- 5.4.12 Chapter 8 of the ES sets out that there are likely significant effects to ecological receptors during the construction and operation of the Proposed Scheme, and therefore mitigation measures will be implemented to minimise impacts. This includes the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) during construction, habitat creation to replace areas lost by the Proposed Scheme, habitat enhancement of areas within and adjacent to the Proposed Scheme, and the translocation or displacement of ecological features. Drainage systems have also been designed to intercept and divert run-off away from watercourses.
- 5.4.13 It is anticipated there will be significant residual effects (minor adverse) at a local scale on terrestrial habitats as a result of site vegetation and clearance during construction. The effect on terrestrial habitats may change however,



depending on whether offsite measures to achieve BNG can be secured for the lifespan of the Proposed Scheme, in which case a long-term positive effect may be achievable.

5.4.14 During operation, significant residual effects (minor adverse) at a local scale are anticipated on one non-statutory designated site (Sheep's Course Wood) as a result of air pollution.

5.4.15 Bats within the scheme boundary and up to 25m for tree roosts and all buildings within 50m of the scheme boundary would be impacted by the Proposed Scheme during operation. Significant residual effects (minor adverse) at a local scale are anticipated on bats as a result of road traffic collision and road mortality and lighting and noise. Landscape mitigation features are proposed to reduce collision risk and a sensitive lighting strategy to reduce lighting impacts upon bat roosting, foraging and commuting routes.

5.4.16 No significant adverse effects are predicted on all other statutory and non-statutory designated sites, important or protected habitats, and legally protected species and species of conservation concern during both construction and operation.

Internationally Designated Sites

5.4.17 The following internationally designated sites (the subject of a HRA) were identified within the Ecological Zone of Influence (EZoI) of the Proposed Scheme for habitat fragmentation and loss of functionally linked land through site clearance during construction and through noise and visual disturbance during operation:

- The Wash and North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC);
- The Wash Special Protection Area (SPA); and
- The Wash Ramsar Site.

5.4.18 The following sites are not designated for mobile species for which the Proposed Scheme could act as functionally linked land and they do not fall



within 200m of the affected road network (ARN) where they could be impacted by changes in air quality.

- Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog SAC.
- Roydon Common Ramsar.
- Norfolk Valley Fens SAC.

5.4.19 'Stage 1 – Screening' for the HRA was undertaken and identified that none of the internationally designated sites would suffer potential likely significant effects from the identified potential impact of habitat loss, fragmentation and/or loss of functionally linked land, either in isolation or in combination with other plans or projects.

5.4.20 Given that no likely significant effects were identified and/or screened out, the Proposed Scheme was not subject to 'Stage 2 - Appropriate Assessment'.

5.4.21 There are therefore no anticipated impacts upon internationally designated sites during construction or operation of the Proposed Scheme.

Hedgerows

5.4.22 The design of the Proposed Scheme has been refined where possible to minimise the loss of important habitats such hedgerows. Indicative landscaping and habitat creation and enhancement proposals for the Proposed Scheme are provided in the current landscape proposals. Proposals for habitat compensation within these plans have been conceived with regard to the impacts on HPI, primarily lowland mixed deciduous woodland and hedgerows.

5.4.23 Habitat features such as hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland will be interrupted by the Proposed Scheme where it intersects these habitats within the landscape. These habitats are typically used by bats to navigate the landscape and construction of the Proposed Scheme will permanently sever these habitats. The landscaping strategy has been designed to replace existing bat foraging and commuting habitat to be lost to the Proposed Scheme (i.e., hedgerows, tree lines and grassland), and to provide habitat



enhancement. The Proposed Scheme will result in a net increase in the length of hedgerow (priority habitat) with approximately 1.79km of additional hedgerow habitat post development. The residual effects on hedgerows following mitigation is predicted to be not significant.

5.4.24 The EclA concludes therefore, that no significant residual effects are predicted on hedgerows.

5.4.25 Chapter 8 of the ES, confirms that the design of the Proposed Scheme, where possible, has included for embedded mitigation to avoid potential adverse effects to biodiversity, with this embedded mitigation including:

- The proposed alignment of the Scheme is designed to avoid ecological features, where possible. The Scheme boundary includes land for the provision of compensatory habitat.
- Provision of woodland habitats to complement existing woodland outside of the Scheme boundary.
- Planting of woodland, trees and hedgerows in order to minimise disruption of flight paths for bats through the landscape.
- The sensitive location of drainage and attenuation ponds to reduce the loss of Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI).
- Maintaining the function of the existing underpass for bats.
- Construction and environment management measures through the implementation of a CEMP.
- Protection of trees.
- Pollution prevention measures.

Policy Compliance

5.4.26 In response to green infrastructure requirements set out in Core Strategy Policy CS12 and draft Policy LP19 of the Emerging Plan, the design of the Proposed Scheme includes landscape planting, habitat creation and habitat



enhancement. These design elements will contribute to the existing green infrastructure network, minimise habitat fragmentation, and provide replacement for habitat loss from the Proposed Scheme.

5.4.27 Policy CS12 and draft Policy LP19 seek to protect and enhance the interest and significance of CWS' and ancient woodlands. All four veteran trees within the Proposed Scheme boundary or adjacent will be retained through the implementation of embedded mitigation measures to protect retained trees. Only minor adverse effects upon the CWS at a local scale are predicted during operation. These effects are considered to be offset by the benefits that would be afforded by the Proposed Scheme.

5.4.28 The HRA concludes that the Proposed Scheme will have no adverse impacts on the integrity of the internationally designated sites, meeting draft Policy LP27 requirements.

5.4.29 Regarding Hedgerow impacts, the applicant directs readers to refer to the accompanying ES Chapter Section 7: Embedded Mitigation, looking specifically at proposals to replace impacted hedgerows. Whilst the proposed alignment of the Scheme is designed to avoid loss of ecological features including hedgerows, those hedgerows to be lost to the Proposed Scheme would be compensated for with hedgerow planting proposed adjacent to the new road alignment. Taking account of the embedded mitigation measures, no significant effects are predicted on hedgerows, thereby satisfying the relevant provisions of the Hedgerow Regulations.

5.4.30 Chapter 8 of the ES provides an assessment of the potential impacts and residual effects on bats as a result of the Proposed Scheme. The ES identifies that the effects of road traffic collision and road mortality and disturbance through lighting during operation would likely result in a minor adverse effect upon bats. The chapter confirms that the design of the Proposed Scheme, where possible, has included for Additional Mitigation to address the potential adverse effects to bats, with this additional mitigation including:

- Landscape mitigation features to reduce collision risk; and



- Lighting strategy to reduce lighting impacts upon bat roosting, foraging and commuting routes.

5.4.31 However, it is anticipated that lighting along the dualled section of the A47 will be required and mitigation options will be limited. When assessing compliance with the NPPG's '*mitigation hierarchy*', the ES highlights that the Scheme adheres to the mitigation hierarchy, avoidance measures have been considered and applied to the Scheme design, where feasible. This process commenced during the route alignment and has been continued throughout the design process. With respect to bats however, where harm cannot be avoided, the Applicant considers that the public benefits of the scheme would demonstrably outweigh impacts to the bat population, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF as a whole. In helping to present the case for providing public benefits that "*outweigh the loss of interest or significance*" to environmental assets as described in Policy CS12, the Scheme is identified as a regionally important infrastructure project that would bring about substantial benefits as set out in Chapter 3 of this Statement, these include:

- A reduction in congestion along the A10;
- Supporting economic growth in King's Lynn;
- Unlocking the West Winch Growth Area housing allocation;
- Supporting all road users; and
- Supporting the connectivity between the SRN and MRN networks.

5.4.32 When the alternatives options are reviewed (please refer to supporting ES chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered Document Ref: 3.04.00), we find that the alternate routing options would have resulted in environmental outcomes that are likely worse than the preferred option, and that the current route has been adapted to cause least negative impacts. The Proposed Scheme promoted as part of this application therefore offers the best approach to achieve the intended scheme goals whilst also limiting environmental harm. The Reasonable Alternatives ES chapter states:



“This chapter has demonstrated that extensive consideration has been given to potential reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Scheme prior to reaching a preferred option.

The Proposed Scheme has been refined in response to known constraints and there is an evidence base of surveys and background data underpinning the option selection and refinement. Considerable effort has been made to assess the potential environmental effects of the scheme throughout the design process. Relevant surveys and data have been collected holistically to inform the detailing of the design and mitigation measures, so that the Proposed Scheme adequately meets the legislative requirements applicable to protected species and habitats that may be affected by the scheme.

Due regard to applicable policy and environmental legislation has been taken into account so that a sustainable design in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) can be achieved”.

5.4.33 Based on the above findings of the ES it is considered that the Proposed Scheme can demonstrate that the public benefits afforded by it, outweigh “*the loss of interest or significance*” of environmental assets with respect to Policy CS12 and draft Policy LP19. The Proposed Scheme can be seen to be consistent with the requirement of Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy, and draft Policy LP19 of the Emerging Local Plan and the NPPF, meeting the requirements for the application of NPPF paragraph 12 and 180.

5.5 Noise & Vibration

5.5.1 This planning application is accompanied by a Noise and Vibration assessment which reports on the outcome of the assessment of likely significant noise and vibration effects arising from the construction and operation of the Proposed Scheme. This document can be found at ES Chapter 10: Noise and Vibration.

Policy Context

5.5.2 Paragraph 180 of the NPPF seeks to prevent new development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely



affected by noise pollution. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve the local environment by taking into account relevant information.

5.5.3 Paragraph 191 of the NPPF requires *“new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:*

- *mitigate and reduce to a minimum the potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;*
- *identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and*
- *limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.”*

5.5.4 Policy DM15 (Environment, Design and Amenity) of the SADMP states that development proposals should aim to create a high-quality environment without detrimental impact on the amenity of new and existing residents.

5.5.5 Similarly, draft Policy LP21 (Environment, Design and Amenity) of the Emerging Plan seeks to protect the amenity of the wider environment from significant adverse impacts. Factors such as noise will be assessed in relation to relevant standards and national guidance.

Existing Conditions

5.5.6 Seven noise important areas had been identified within the operational noise study area. These important areas are all located along the A10. Full details are provided in Section 10.4 of the Noise and Vibration Assessment.



Potential Impacts/Mitigation

Construction Phase

Noise

- 5.5.7 In summary, the assessment predicts that impacts of mostly moderate magnitude (significant adverse effect) are anticipated during the worst-case scenario for daytime construction noise. This is due to the separation distance between the works and nearest noise sensitive receptors which is small in most cases.
- 5.5.8 Night works may be required for certain critical construction activities along the A47 upgrades, in order to minimise disruption to traffic along this route. On account of the location of the night-time works, the assessment focusses on receptor C1 – East Anglia House, located at the northern end of the Proposed Scheme. Only worst-case predictions have been undertaken for the night-time works, meaning that for the majority of night-time working, the noise levels are likely to be lower than predicted.
- 5.5.9 Whilst the magnitude of impact at C1 is Moderate for both activities, these noise levels would only result in significant adverse effects if the noise levels exceed specified durations (10 out of any 15 days or 40 days in 6 months). Given the uncertainty around the night works at this stage, residual significant adverse construction noise effects are anticipated at C1 – East Anglia House, during the night-time.

Vibration

- 5.5.10 The predicted vibration levels and magnitude of impact is presented in Table 10-20 of the Assessment. In summary, the assessment predicts that the effect of construction vibration on nearby receptors is 'not significant'.

Operational Phase

Residual Effects

- 5.5.11 Absolute levels and noise level changes had been assessed for both the short-term and long-term. For the short-term, a comparison was made between noise levels with the Proposed Scheme in the opening year (2027)



and noise levels without the Proposed Scheme in the opening year. This comparison considered only the change in noise levels due to the Proposed Scheme. For the long-term, a comparison had been made between the noise levels with the Proposed Scheme in the design year (2042) and the noise levels without the Proposed Scheme in the opening year. This comparison included the change in noise level as a result of the Proposed Scheme as well as general traffic growth.

5.5.12 Noise predictions had been carried out for 1,366 residential receptors and 14 non-residential sensitive receptors within a detailed calculation area. In summary, the assessment predicts that there would be both 'significant adverse' and 'beneficial' impacts resulting from the Proposed Scheme and therefore further consideration would be required.

5.5.13 The assessment proposes additional mitigation where significant adverse effects are predicted in order to reduce those impacts. Mitigation was considered for the following two areas of the Proposed Scheme:

- Significantly affected receptors that are located to the west of the Proposed Scheme (includes receptors in Group 8); and
- Significantly affected receptors to the east of the Proposed Scheme along Rectory Lane (includes receptors in Groups 7 and 8)

5.5.14 In summary, the assessment considered that mitigation measures beyond those already embedded into the Proposed Scheme would not be practical. Subsequently no additional mitigation measures had been recommended for these receptors.

Policy Compliance

5.5.15 On the basis that the assessment concludes that further additional mitigation measures would not be sustainable, the Proposed Scheme is considered to be compliant with NPPF Paragraph 180 & 191, Policy DM15 of the SADMP and draft Policy LP21 of the Emerging Plan.



Landscaping

5.5.16 This planning application is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. This document can be found at ES Chapter 9: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Document Reference: 3.09.00). Chapter 9 reports the outcome of the assessment of likely significant effects upon the landscape and visual receptors arising from the construction and operation of the Proposed Scheme.

Policy Context

5.5.17 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that in making planning decisions, LPAs are to ensure that developments *“are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change...”*.

5.5.18 Policy CS12 (Environmental Assets) of the Core Strategy identifies that the Council will seek to protect and enhance landscape character. Proposals for development should seek opportunities to protect, conserve and enhance landscape setting and landscape features. Similar requirements are echoed in Policy DM15 (Environment, Design and Amenity) of the SADMP and draft Policy LP19 (Environmental Assets – Green Infrastructure, Landscape character, Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Emerging Plan.

Existing Conditions

5.5.19 The Proposed Scheme is located within two Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) at the national scale, being the Fens and the North West Norfolk and within three local character areas, being Walpole, Terrington and Clench Warton and Saddlebow and Wormegay.

Potential Impacts/Mitigation

5.5.20 The residual effects of the Proposed Scheme on the identified landscape character areas and visual receptors have been assessed against the existing baseline conditions. In summary, significant effects upon two of the four landscape receptors assessed, are anticipated to be in the range of ‘Major-Moderate’ and ‘Medium-high’ during the construction phase, those being ‘G2:



Middleton' and 'G4: West Winch'. Effects upon the remaining two receptors are anticipated to be 'not significant'. During the operation phase, it was assessed that there will not be any significant effects on any of the landscape receptors.

5.5.21 Significant ('Major-Moderate adverse') effects upon visual receptors are anticipated mainly during the construction phase. These receptors include: CRoW Land and Common Land, Bridleways, Byways and leisure.

5.5.22 Significant effects upon residential receptors are anticipated for some properties during construction and/or during Year 1. However, the majority of effects are anticipated during operation of the Proposed Scheme at Year 15 for 11 out of 41 properties. The effects would be experienced mostly by properties located at Rectory Lane, where it is assessed that given the scale and proximity of the Proposed Scheme, the Rectory Lane Overbridge will still be a visible incongruent feature in the view, and traffic may be glimpsed moving along the Housing Access Road where vegetation is thinner.

5.5.23 The proposed landscape scheme has been designed to deliver greater structural and species diversity than is currently provided by the largely intensive agricultural management that exists within and adjacent to the boundary of the Proposed Scheme.

5.5.24 The following specific landscape mitigation measures are embedded within the Proposed Scheme:

- Retention, protection and enhancement of existing trees, hedgerows and woodland where possible, to maintain the existing landscape character of the local area;
- Provision of new native tree belts to provide visual enclosure and to screen views from sensitive receptors in close proximity with the Proposed Scheme;
- Provision of new lengths of native hedgerow, some with native trees, surrounding the Proposed Scheme, to provide visual enclosure and



mitigate effects upon the setting of nearby residential properties and public rights of way within or in close proximity to the Proposed Scheme;

- Provision of scattered native tree planting to break up the massing of the Proposed Scheme; and
- Planting/landscaping of site boundary margins, through proposed species rich grassland in line with ecological requirements.

5.5.25 Additional measures that could be secured by planning condition include the management of existing and proposed landscape features during the lifetime of the Proposed Scheme.

Policy Compliance

5.5.26 As detailed in Chapter 9 of the ES and supporting DAS, the alignment of the Proposed Scheme has been chosen to minimise the visual impacts, consistent with Paragraph 135 of the NPPF and Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy.

5.5.27 In response to national and local policy requirements, the design of the Proposed Scheme, where possible, has included for primary mitigation embedded into the Proposed Scheme design to avoid potential adverse landscape and visual effects, and a robust landscape-led approach to the Proposed Scheme has been employed to ensure that it is successfully integrated into the landscape.

5.5.28 This includes the retention of existing vegetation to protect the existing landscape character of the local area and incorporating landscape mitigation planting to provide screening and visual amenity.

5.5.29 One of the aims of the proposed landscape mitigation within the Proposed Scheme is to avoid adverse effects of the Scheme and assimilate it into the landscape. By doing so, the visibility of the Scheme will be significantly reduced within surrounding views. As confirmed in Chapter 9, the design of the Proposed Scheme incorporates embedded mitigation into the layout to



avoid likely adverse landscape and visual effects, such as through incorporating native species planting to provide screening and visual amenity to nearby residential properties.

5.5.30 The potential adverse effects would be limited mainly to residential properties at Rectory Lane. Where harm cannot be avoided, the Applicant considers that the identified public benefits of the scheme would demonstrably outweigh the impacts to those affected properties, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

5.5.31 Therefore, on balance it is considered the Proposed Scheme is consistent with Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy, draft Policy LP19 of the Emerging Plan, Policy DM15 of the SADM and the NPPF, meeting the requirements for the application of NPPF paragraph 12 and 135.

5.6 Other Environmental Considerations

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

5.6.1 This planning application is accompanied by a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emission assessment. This document can be found at ES Chapter 14: Greenhouse Gas Emissions. This chapter reports the outcome of the assessment of likely significant effects arising from the Proposed Scheme upon GHG emissions. It assesses the potentially significant effects arising from GHG emissions from both activities and traffic associated with both the construction and operational stages.

Policy Context

5.6.2 Paragraph 157 of the NPPF sets out the core planning principle of supporting “*the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate...*”:

5.6.3 NPPF Chapter 9: ‘Promoting Sustainable Transport’ considers how people should be offered a choice of transportation modes, encouraging a movement away from the use of single private vehicles, the latter being understood to contribute to a significant proportion of total UK carbon emissions.



5.6.4 Core Strategy Environment Objective 13 states that West Norfolk is meeting the challenges of climate change and reducing or mitigating carbon emissions.

5.6.5 Policy CS08 (Sustainable Development) of the Core Strategy identifies that there is a need to find innovative solutions to maximise opportunities to help cut our carbon emissions.

5.6.6 Policy E2.1 (West Winch Growth Area Strategic Policy) Section E.2.45/ E.2.46 of the SADMP states that development should seek to meet high standards of sustainable construction and design in terms of making efficient use of resources.

5.6.7 Similarly, draft Policy LP06 (Climate Change) of the Emerging Plan requires that new development contribute to climate adaptation and mitigation.

Measures to achieve this include:

- *“Locating new development in areas to minimise the need to travel and maximise the ability to make journeys via sustainable modes of transport, such as through public transport (bus and rail);*
- *Supporting the development of sustainable transport systems to reduce the reliance on fossil-fuelled private cars and contribute to more walkable and cyclable localities;*
- *Incorporating and encouraging blue/green infrastructure schemes, such as tree planting, to help sequester carbon from the atmosphere;*
- *New development shall minimise and mitigate pollution during both the construction and operational phases of development to reduce potential impacts on existing pollution levels;*
- *New development will be located and should be designed to be better adapted to climate change and flood risk;*
- *Minimising and mitigating air pollution so as to reduce the potential for higher temperatures which in turn leads to poorer air quality; and*



- *Protecting and encouraging proposals that enables biodiversity (animals and plants) to adapt and adjust to a changing climate.”*

Existing Conditions

5.6.8 The GHG assessment only considered instances in which the Proposed Scheme resulted in additional or avoided emissions in comparison to the baseline scenario and its assumed evolution. The baseline conditions therefore focused on those emissions sources subject to change between the baseline scenario and the Proposed Scheme.

5.6.9 Without the Proposed Scheme, construction would not take place, and as such during construction there are no baseline emissions. The future baseline scenario involves no construction activities and therefore the future construction baseline is also zero emissions.

5.6.10 The baseline for operational end users’ emissions from the Proposed Scheme comprises the ‘Do Nothing’ scenario, under the existing conditions. This is a future baseline where the Proposed Scheme is not constructed, and emissions are generated by vehicles on the existing road network in the future.

5.6.11 The total baseline end-user emissions for the affected network are presented below in Table 5-1 in the assessment for the year 2027 (the first operational year of the Proposed Scheme) and the future modelled year 2042. In addition, the average annual and total GHG emissions from 2027 to 2086 are presented for comparison with the 60-year operational period of the Proposed Scheme.

Table 5-1 Baseline operational stage emissions - traffic

Scenario	2027 (operational year)	2042 (future year)	Average per year (2027-2086)	Total (2027-2086)
Baseline (Do Minimum)	597,130	382,911	411,473	24,688,387



5.6.12 The baseline for operational emissions for the current energy use (e.g. lighting) comprises the 'Do Nothing' scenario. This is also the future baseline where the Proposed Scheme is not constructed, and emissions are assumed to be the same as they are at present.

5.6.13 Table 5-2 in the assessment shows the baseline emissions for the carbon storage in the Do Minimum scenario for the opening and final year of the 60 year modelled lifespan.

Table 5-2 Do Minimum (2027) and Do Minimum (2086) scenario for habitat carbon storage

Scenario	Total tCO ₂ e sequestered
Do Minimum (2027)	10432
Do Minimum (2086)	11179

Potential Impacts/Mitigation

5.6.14 The preliminary assessment of predicted impacts and effects for the Proposed Scheme during both the construction and operational phases, pre-mitigation is provided in Section 14.6 of the assessment. A summary of key findings is presented below.

Construction Phase

5.6.15 In summary, the magnitude of GHG emissions from the embodied carbon of materials, transport of materials, transport of waste from site, plant and equipment use and habitat loss for the Proposed Scheme are predicted to be Moderate adverse (significant) during construction.

5.6.16 The magnitude of GHG emissions associated with the design and construction phase of the Proposed Scheme can be minimised by, amongst others:

- Minimise any expected tree loss during the construction of the Proposed Scheme; and



- Using more efficient construction plant and delivery vehicles, and/or those powered by electricity from alternative/lower carbon fuels; contractor to ensure high performance of plant and equipment through strong record of, and ability to ensure correct maintenance and servicing of vehicle fleet to avoid polluting emissions.

5.6.17 Due to high construction emissions, there is still likely to be moderate adverse (significant) residual GHG emissions after mitigation measures have been implemented. The assessment concludes that if all of the best practice and mitigation measures are implemented, this has the potential to reduce the impact of the construction phase of the Proposed Scheme to Minor Adverse (not significant).

Operational Phase

5.6.18 The magnitude of GHG emissions from the end user traffic as a result of the operation of the Proposed Scheme is predicted to have a Moderate adverse (significant) effect.

5.6.19 The magnitude of GHG emissions associated with the eventual operation of the Proposed Scheme can be minimised by, amongst others:

- Opportunities to sequester carbon through increased tree planting in addition to the current plans, which have been taken into account in this assessment; and
- Use road surface options with greater longevity, to reduce frequency of replacements throughout use phase.

5.6.20 There is still likely to be significant (moderate adverse) residual GHG emissions after mitigation measures have been implemented.

Policy Compliance

5.6.21 The Applicant has considered the significant effect of GHG emissions likely to arise from the Proposed Scheme during the operational phase. Overall, it is considered that the Scheme will have wider planning benefits through the offering of a choice of transport modes (shared footway/cycleway) in



accordance with Chapter 9 of the NPPF and mitigating carbon emissions during the construction stage through the use of innovative construction methods to reduce plant use during the construction of the Proposed Scheme in accordance with Core Strategy Environment Objective 13, Policy CS08 (Sustainable Development) of the Core Strategy and Policy E2.1 (West Winch Growth Area Strategic Policy) of the SADMP.

Cultural Heritage

5.6.22 This planning application is accompanied by a Heritage Desk Based Assessment (HEDBA), Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) and Geophysical Survey Report (2023). The HEDBA has been undertaken to look at the likely impacts and associated effects of the Proposed Scheme on heritage assets (built heritage and archaeology) during construction and operation. This document can be found at ES Chapter 7: Archaeology and Heritage, Appendix 7.1.

5.6.23 The WSI details the agreed methodology for proposed intrusive archaeological investigation works, commencing with a programme of post-consent trial trenching, within the Site. This document can be found at ES Chapter 7: Archaeology and Heritage, Appendices 7.2 – 7.2.C.

5.6.24 The Geophysical survey report details findings of the 2023 non-intrusive survey, which covered all accessible areas of the Site, revealing archaeological activity in the proposed new access road between the A47 and the A10. This document can be found at ES Chapter 7: Archaeology and Heritage, Appendix 7.3.

Policy Context

5.6.25 Paragraph 209 of the NPPF states:

“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset”.



5.6.26 Policy CS12 (Environmental Assets) of the Core Strategy identifies that the Council will seek to ensure that its historic sites are protected and that opportunities for enhancement sensitive to the area and feature are grasped. In addition, development should seek to avoid, mitigate or compensate for any adverse impacts on heritage as well as seeking to enhance sites through the creation of features of heritage interest.

5.6.27 Policy DM15 (Environmental Assets) of the SADMP states that development must protect and enhance the amenity of the wider environment including its heritage and cultural value.

5.6.28 Similarly, draft Policy LP20 (Environmental Assets – Historic Environment) of the Emerging Plan seeks to protect the archaeology of the Borough from ‘inappropriate development’ or change.

Existing Conditions

5.6.29 The Site does not contain any nationally designated (protected) heritage assets, such as scheduled monuments, listed buildings or registered parks and gardens. There is one listed building adjacent to the Site: The Old Rectory. A two-storey brick house and former rectory is located 20m east of the Site (Listed at Grade II (NHLE ref: 1077652)).

5.6.30 There are no built heritage assets within the Site. Within 1km of the Site, are some built heritage assets comprising Grade I and Grade II listed buildings and one non-designated asset (medieval moated enclosure) that is currently under consideration for scheduling.

5.6.31 Within the 500m study area there have been nine archaeological excavations. Roman remains have been found at two sites, medieval remains at one site, post-medieval remains at two sites and either post-medieval or modern remains at another site.

Potential Impacts/Mitigation

5.6.32 Table 7-18 in the HEDBA identifies the heritage assets and residual effects.



5.6.33 Some temporary impacts are predicted during construction associated with enabling works, site strip, new services/utilities and temporary ground works as well as highway construction. However, these are expected to be temporary and not have a significant residual effect on the assets.

5.6.34 A significant residual effect (moderate adverse) during operation was predicted on the Old Rectory (Listed Grade II) asset. No additional mitigation is proposed. However, in terms of the other assets, the residual effects are considered not significant.

Policy Compliance

5.6.35 No significant residual effects are predicted on heritage assets, besides Old Rectory. Therefore, on balance, it is considered that the Proposed Scheme is in accordance with Policies CS12 and DM15 of the Local Plan, Policy LP20 of the Emerging Plan and Paragraph 209 of the NPPF.

Geology and Soils

5.6.36 This planning application is accompanied by a Geology and Soils assessment. This document assesses the effect on both the geology and soils of the area to arise from the construction stage and the operation stage of the Proposed Scheme. This document can be found at ES Chapter 12: Geology and Soils, Appendices 12.1 – 12.4.

Policy Context

5.6.37 Paragraph 180 of the NPPF states:

“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: (a) protecting and enhancing....soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)”.

5.6.38 Policy CS12 (Environmental Assets) of the Core Strategy identifies that the Council will ensure that geodiversity is protected, and that opportunities for enhancement sensitive to the area and feature are sought.



5.6.39 Policy WA06 (Protecting agricultural land and soils) of the Neighbourhood

Plan states that:

“Where possible, proposals involving the loss of agricultural land should be accompanied by information which demonstrates how the following has been taken into consideration in the development of the proposal:

- *Development site boundaries have been defined so as to ensure, as far as possible, the retention of viable parcels of agricultural land adjacent to, and outside of, the development site.*
- *Where appropriate, development on locally available brownfield sites has been considered over greenfield sites.*

5.6.40 Policy CS16 (Safeguarding mineral and waste sites and mineral resources) of the Norfolk Core Strategy MWDF seeks to protect mineral safeguarding areas unless there are compelling planning reasons for over-riding this safeguarding.

5.6.41 Draft Minerals Policy MP11 (Minerals Safeguarding Areas and Minerals Consultation Areas – Strategic Policy) of the MWDF (2022) seeks to ensure that mineral safeguarded areas are not sterilised by non-mineral development where this can be avoided.

5.6.42 Similarly, draft Policy LP19 (Environmental Assets – Green Infrastructure, Landscape character, Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Emerging Plan states that the Council will take full account of the impact on soils, their intrinsic character and the sustainability of the ecosystem services they deliver.

Existing Conditions

5.6.43 Details of historical land use, geology and hydrogeology and hydrology are provided in Section 12.4 of ES Chapter 12.

5.6.44 The Proposed Scheme is located within agricultural land, classified as Grades 2 and 3.



5.6.45 No landfills have been identified to lie within the footprint of the Proposed Scheme. Two historical landfills have been identified within 500m of the Proposed Scheme.

5.6.46 The entire Proposed Scheme area is located within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone.

5.6.47 The assessment identified that the Proposed Scheme is not located within an EA groundwater Source Protection Zone and no groundwater abstractions are located within 500m of the Proposed Scheme.

5.6.48 The Proposed Scheme has a low risk of Unexploded Ordnance.

5.6.49 Proposed Scheme lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area. Draft Minerals Policy MP11 of the MWDF (2022) seeks to ensure that mineral safeguarded areas are not sterilised by non-mineral development where this can be avoided. However, the assessment concludes that the majority of the site is not viable for extraction and that the development overrides the presumption for mineral safeguarding such that sterilisation of the mineral can be permitted.

5.6.50 The existing on-site contaminative sources identified in Table 12.8 of ES Chapter 12 are predominantly associated with the historical use of the site. On-site sources of contamination are detailed in Table 12.8.

5.6.51 The existing off-site contaminative sources identified in Table 12.9 of ES Chapter 12 are predominantly associated with the historical use of the site.

5.6.52 The plausible contamination pathways for the Proposed Scheme are detailed in Section 12.4 of ES Chapter 12.

Potential Impacts/Mitigation

5.6.53 The assessment predicts that the following receptors may be impacted by potential sources of contamination within the Proposed Scheme. These include: Human Health, Controlled Waters, Below Ground Services and Agricultural Land.



Construction Phase

5.6.54 Findings of ground conditions and contamination effects on receptors during the construction phase are mainly 'not significant'. The residual effect on Agricultural Land is predicted to be 'significant'. However, the impact will be managed by the correct handling and storage of the soils and consideration for temporary land use to be restored as much as possible.

Operational Phase

5.6.55 Findings of ground conditions and contamination effects on receptors during the operational phase are 'not significant'.

5.6.56 Embedded mitigation measures which will be delivered through the implementation of the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The Principal Contractor will be required to implement the measures summarised below to minimise the risk of contamination from construction activities.

Policy Compliance

5.6.57 Mitigation to manage the predicted impacts on Agricultural Land seek to ensure that affected areas remain viable for modern agricultural production, in line with Policy WA06 of the Neighbourhood Plan. The design parameters of the Proposed Scheme minimise land-take to reduce direct impacts on agricultural land.

5.6.58 Additionally, the sterilisation of minerals within the MSA as a result of the Proposed Scheme, is considered by the applicant to be permissible owing to the majority of the site not being viable for extraction.

5.6.59 On balance, it is therefore considered that the Proposed Scheme is in accordance with Paragraph 180 of the NPPF, Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy, Policy WA06 and Policy GA04 of the Neighbourhood Plan, Policy CS16 of the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework, Draft Minerals Policy MP11 of the MWDF (2022) and draft Policy LP19 of the Emerging Local Plan.



Material Assets and Waste

5.6.60 This planning application is accompanied by a Material Assets and Waste assessment which assesses likely significant effects arising from the Proposed Scheme upon material assets and waste. This document can be found at ES Chapter 13: Material Assets and Waste.

Policy Context

5.6.61 Paragraph 216 of the NPPF requires that planning policies should safeguard mineral resources by defining Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSA) and ensuring that specific mineral resources are not sterilised by non-mineral development where this can be avoided.

5.6.62 Policy CS08 (Sustainable Development) of the Core Strategy requires that all new development in the borough should promote and encourage opportunities to achieve high standards of sustainability and energy efficiency through measures including the innovative use of re-used or recycled materials of local and traditional materials to decrease waste and maintain local character. This policy stance is echoed in draft Policy LP18 (Design and Sustainable Development) of the Emerging Plan.

5.6.63 Core Strategy Policy CS16 (Safeguarding mineral and waste sites and mineral resources) of the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework states that *“the Minerals Planning Authority will object to development which would lead to the sterilisation of the mineral resource, and it would be for the relevant district council to decide whether there are compelling planning reasons for over-riding this safeguarding”*. In relation to sand and gravel resource, Policy CS16 states *“Mineral Planning Authority will expect to see appropriate investigations carried out to assess whether any mineral resource there is of economic value, and if so, whether the material could be economically extracted prior to the development taking place.”*

5.6.64 Draft Minerals Policy MP11 (Minerals Safeguarding Areas and Minerals Consultation Areas – Strategic Policy) of the MWDF (2022) seeks to ensure



that mineral safeguarded areas are not sterilised by non-mineral development where this can be avoided.

Existing Conditions

Material Resources Availability

5.6.65 Table 13-5 of the assessment provides a summary of the availability of the main construction materials in the East of England region and the UK. The materials listed are considered to be appropriate to the bulk construction materials required for typical highway construction works, such as the Proposed Scheme. The assessment confirms good availability of the majority of construction materials typically required for highways construction schemes in the East of England region.

Mineral Safeguarding Areas

5.6.66 The development study area passes over an MSA. The MSA in the region of the Proposed Scheme is currently partially sterilised by the existing road networks and existing dwellings.

Site Arising and Waste Recovery

5.6.67 The current land use within the development study area is expected to generate negligible volumes of site arisings, limited to potential earthworks on agricultural land and minor repairs to roads.

5.6.68 The assessment considers that there is likely to be regional infrastructure and capacity for managing construction, demolition and excavation wastes from the Proposed Scheme. Overall, it is confirmed that there is currently a variety of waste management infrastructure available in the East of England to enable suitable recovery of waste generated by the Proposed Scheme.

Waste Generation and Disposal

5.6.69 The current agricultural land use within the development study area may generate plastic waste for disposal, however it is not anticipated to generate waste in significant quantities. Small volumes of waste may be generated from road maintenance, such as minor repairs to the pavement, littering,



signage replacement, and vegetation from verge clearance. Therefore, the anticipated magnitude of impact associated with disposing of waste in the baseline situation is deemed negligible in the context of available regional capacity.

Potential Impacts/Mitigation

5.6.70 Embedded design measures to re-use site arisings (earthworks) are considered prior to the assessment of potential effects, where practicable.

5.6.71 The anticipated diversion of waste from landfill through maximising onsite reuse of earthworks and off-site recycling will reduce the adverse effects of the Proposed Scheme on remaining landfill capacity and are important to consider in the assessment of likely effects on remaining landfill capacity.

5.6.72 The assessment details the predicted impacts and effects of the Proposed Scheme on the following sensitive receptors during the construction stage:

- Material Resources – consumption impacts on materials' immediate and long-term availability, and results in depletion of natural resources; and
- Landfill Void Capacity – reductions in regional and national infrastructure result in unsustainable use and loss of resources, and temporary or permanent degradation of the natural environment.

5.6.73 The residual effects for Material Resources would remain Slight Adverse ('not significant') and therefore no additional mitigation measures are required. However, it is recommended that best practice design and construction measures are incorporated as detailed in the assessment.

5.6.74 The Proposed Scheme is considered to give rise to a potential significant adverse effect on remaining Landfill Void Capacity, due to the proposed disposal of waste to landfill. In order to mitigate the significant effect, the assessment proposes a suite of measures to be implemented by the Principal Contractor through a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) and Material Management Plan (MMP).



5.6.75 The residual effects for Waste Generation and Disposal are predicted to be 'not significant' following implementation of the SWMP and MMP.

Policy Compliance

5.6.76 The development study area passes over an MSA. The MSA in the region of the Proposed Scheme is currently partially sterilised by the existing road networks and existing dwellings and it is therefore considered that this demonstrates a compelling planning reason for over-riding this safeguarding in accordance with Policy CS16 of the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework and draft Policy MP11 of the MWDF (2022).

5.6.77 Overall, it has been concluded that there will be no significant impacts for Material Resources and Landfill Void Capacity as a result of the construction phase of the Proposed Scheme.

5.6.78 Therefore, providing the recommendations are followed, it is considered that the Proposed Scheme is in accordance with Paragraph 216 of the NPPF, Policy CS08 of the Core Strategy, Policy CS16 of the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework, Draft Policy MP11 of the MWDF (2022) and draft Local Plan Policy LP18 (Design and Sustainable Development) of the Emerging Plan.

Water Environment

5.6.79 This planning application is accompanied by an assessment of likely significant effects arising from the Proposed Scheme upon the Water Environment. The assessment findings are reported in ES Chapter 11: Water Environment and accompanying Appendices 11.1 (Flood Risk Assessment) and 11.2 (Drainage Network Water Quality Assessment).

Policy Context

5.6.80 Chapter 14 Paragraph 159 of the NPPF requires new development to be planned for in such a way that will avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. It states: *"When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure*



that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure”.

5.6.81 Policy CS01 (Spatial Strategy) of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that new development is guided away from areas at risk of flooding now or in the future, however recognising development may be required within flood risk areas to deliver regeneration objectives within King’s Lynn.

5.6.82 Policy CS08 (Sustainable Development) states that the Council’s Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will be used to guide planned growth and future developments away from areas of high flood risk.

5.6.83 Policy DM21 (Sites in Areas of Flood Risk) of the SADMP and draft Policy LP25 (Sites in Areas of Flood Risk) of the Emerging Plan requires the preparation of a site specific flood risk assessment in sites allocated in flood risk Zones 2 and 3. This should demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime, taking climate change into account, and with regard to the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere and, where possible, reducing flood risk overall.

Existing Conditions

5.6.84 The submitted Flood Risk Assessment assesses flood risk from fluvial (River Great Ouse), surface water, groundwater and artificial sources.

Fluvial flood risk

5.6.85 The majority of the Proposed Scheme is located in the low-risk Flood Zone 1. There is a small area located towards the east of Hardwick roundabout adjacent to the A47 that is located within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3.

Surface Water flood risk

5.6.86 Review of the Environment Agency’s Flood Risk from Surface Water maps indicates that there are small pockets of high, medium and low flood risk from surface water along the Proposed Scheme.



Groundwater flood risk

5.6.87 The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2018) gives an indication of the risk of groundwater flooding in the flood risk maps in Appendix F. The maps indicate the lowest level of risk in the north and east of the Site (<25%) and a higher level of risk in the south (25%<50%). More information regarding groundwater flood risk is available in the standalone FRA in Appendix 11.1 accompanying ES Chapter 11.

Artificial flood risk

5.6.88 The Environment Agency's Flood Risk from Reservoirs mapping indicates that the Proposed Scheme is not at risk of flooding reservoirs.

Potential Impacts/Mitigation

5.6.89 During construction, the FRA concludes that the Proposed Scheme is not at risk of flooding, following implementation of additional mitigation measures. Embedded mitigation measures proposed within the construction phase include:

- The OCEMP which sets out how construction activities would be undertaken in accordance with appropriate good practice guidance, such as CIRIA's control of water pollution from construction sites; and
- Areas for temporary use during construction which include the construction compounds are generally located away from the unnamed land drains and are located away from the named watercourses. The areas for temporary use during construction are described in ES Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Scheme.

5.6.90 Once operational, the FRA concludes that the Proposed Scheme is not at risk of flooding, following implementation of mitigation measures. Embedded mitigation measures proposed within the operation phase include:

- Implementation of a new surface water drainage system prepared in accordance with latest standards and guidance;



- Surface water drainage system which includes attenuation ponds to provide a buffering and filtration mechanism, such that particulates and contaminants within the surface water discharge are removed prior to entering underlying groundwater; and
- Existing drainage ditches and channels flows will be maintained by the installation of culverts under the new road.

Policy Compliance

5.6.91 Given that appropriate mitigation measures have been incorporated in the design of the Proposed Scheme to ensure that flood risk will not increase as a result of the Proposed Scheme, and measures will be in place during construction to manage risk from flooding, it is considered that the Proposed Scheme is consistent with Policy CS01 and Policy CS08 of the Core Strategy, Policy DM21 of the SADMP and draft Policy LP25 of the Emerging Plan and Paragraph 159 of the NPPF.

Population and Human Health

5.6.92 This planning application is accompanied by an assessment of likely significant effects arising from the Proposed Scheme upon Population and Human Health receptors. This document can be found at ES Chapter 15: Population and Human Health.

5.6.93 The assessment covers the construction and operational effects of the Proposed Scheme on the Population and Human Health receptors broadly categorised as 'Land Use and Accessibility' and 'Human Health'.

Policy Context

5.6.94 Paragraph 96 of the NPPF states that planning decisions *“should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places”*.

5.6.95 Paragraph 97 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should provide *“the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs”*.

5.6.96 Paragraph 104 of the NPPF states that planning decisions *“should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to*



provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails". This policy stance is echoed in draft Policy LP23 (Green Infrastructure) of the Emerging Plan.

5.6.97 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that in making planning decisions, LPAs are to ensure that developments "are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change".

5.6.98 Policy CS12 (Environmental Assets) of the Core Strategy identifies that the Council will seek to protect and enhance landscape character. Proposals for development should seek opportunities to protect, conserve and enhance landscape setting and landscape features. Similar requirements are echoed in Policy DM15 (Environment, Design and Amenity) of the SADMP and draft Policy LP19 (Environmental Assets – Green Infrastructure, Landscape character, Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Emerging Plan.

5.6.99 Core Strategy Policy CS13 (Community and Culture) seeks to protect, enhance and promote community facilities and cultural assets in growth areas. A similar policy stance is echoed in SADMP Policy DM 9 (Community Facilities) Draft Policy LP36 (Community and Culture) and Draft Policy LP37 (Community Facilities) of the Emerging Plan.

Existing Conditions

Private Property and Housing

5.6.100 The Proposed Scheme is located within land allocated for development as part of the WWGA Strategic Policy. This land has been designated under the Emerging Plan for development of up to 4,000 dwellings to the east of West Winch.

Community Land and Assets

5.6.101 There are no community assets which fall within the Proposed Scheme Boundary.



Development Land and Businesses

5.6.102 No development land has been identified within the Proposed Scheme Boundary or the 1km study area Boundary. A number of businesses are located within 1km of the study area.

Walkers, Cyclists and Horse Riders

5.6.103 There are two PRow aligned north to south which intersect the Proposed Scheme Boundary: North Runcton RB 3, a restricted byway north of Rectory Lane; and North Runcton BR 4, a bridleway north of Chequers Lane. There are several other PRow within the 1km study area.

5.6.104 There are no National Trails, designated Recreational Routes or National Cycle Network routes within 1km of the proposed Scheme Boundary. The closest designated Recreational Route; the Nar Valley Way, is approximately 1.3km from the Proposed Scheme Boundary. The closest National Cycle Network route; the northbound Sustrans Local Cycle Route, is approximately 1.9km from the Proposed Scheme Boundary.

Population and Economy

5.6.105 The four Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) within which the Proposed Scheme Boundary and surrounding 1km study area lie have a total combined population of 7,393 according to the most recently published data (2020) (The most recently available data at the time of writing). This compares with the total resident population at borough level of 154,900 (BKLWN), and 918,400 at county level (Norfolk).

5.6.106 The proportion of the resident population aged 16-64 as a percentage of the total resident population in the four LSOAs, KLWN, and Norfolk is shown in Table 15.8. People within this age group are considered to be of 'working age' and economically active, as defined by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).



Potential Impacts/Mitigation

5.6.107 A summary of population and human health effects reports no significant residual effects are anticipated upon Land Use and Accessibility receptors during the construction and operation phase.

5.6.108 Significant residual effects (Moderate adverse) arising from landscape and noise impacts are predicted upon Human Health receptors during the construction phase. There are no construction phase mitigation measures proposed within the respective Landscape and Visual and Noise ES chapters.

5.6.109 Significant residual visual effects (Moderate adverse) are predicted upon Human Health receptors during the operation phase. Notwithstanding proposed mitigation planting, visual amenity is still anticipated to be affected as views of the Proposed Scheme will be noticeable to some extent.

5.6.110 No significant effects are predicted on Human Health receptors as a result of air quality and noise impacts during the operation phase.

Policy Compliance

5.6.111 Given that no significant residual effects are anticipated upon Land Use and Accessibility receptors during the construction and operation phase, it is considered the Proposed Scheme meets the provisions of the relevant Development Plan policy in this regard.

5.6.112 As detailed in Chapter 9 of the ES and supporting DAS, the alignment of the Proposed Scheme has been chosen to minimise the visual impacts upon human health receptors, consistent with Paragraph 135 of the NPPF and Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy. Where harm cannot be avoided upon human health receptors as a result of landscape and visual impacts, the Applicant considers that the identified public benefits of the scheme would demonstrably outweigh the impacts to those affected properties, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

5.6.113 Therefore, on balance it is considered the Proposed Scheme is consistent with relevant national and local policy.



6 Planning Balance

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This Chapter considers the planning balance given the identified conflicts with some policies in the development plan.

6.1.2 It also undertakes the exercise set out in Paragraph 11 of the NPPF of identifying whether the Proposed Scheme should benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development. In instances where the proposed scheme is seen to cause environmental harm and cannot be classed as wholly sustainable, the test against and use of NPPF paragraph 12, where a scheme can still be approved if it contravenes the adopted development plan but only if material considerations would support this. It then considers whether the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance would provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

6.2 Sustainable Development

6.2.1 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF confirms that are three overarching objectives of achieving sustainable development:

- a. *“an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b. *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open*



spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

- c. *an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”*

6.2.2 These objectives are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways, so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives. We assess below how the Proposed Scheme will deliver these objectives of sustainable development.

6.2.3 Paragraph 9 of the NPPF states:

“These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.”

6.2.4 Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making and whilst permission should typically be refused for schemes that don't accord with the approved development plan, exceptions are possible if material considerations in a particular case warrant the deviation. Specifically:

‘Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.



Economic Objective of Sustainable Development

- 6.2.5 The Proposed Scheme is required to support the economic and housing growth objectives of the WWGA allocation whilst enhancing the resilience of the local road network. In recognition of the local economic importance of the King's Lynn area as an important service centre and economic driver to the sub-region, the Proposed Scheme is essential in helping to enhance the A10's role as a strategic link supporting the wider King's Lynn economy.
- 6.2.6 The Proposed Scheme will provide key infrastructure needed to deliver the West Winch urban extension, helping to attract new investment to the local area and tackle the economic challenges facing the area over the Plan period.
- 6.2.7 The OBC assess' the Proposed Scheme to be High Value for Money for public sector expenditure with substantial monetised economic benefits realised from unlocking the housing site and alleviating congestion along the A10.
- 6.2.8 It is assessed that the overall economic impacts of the Proposed Scheme will be positive.

Social Objective of Sustainable Development

- 6.2.9 By reducing traffic congestion on the local road network, the Proposed Scheme will help support people to walk and cycle. To build on these benefits, delivery of the project will include non-motorised user provision and additional sustainable transport interventions to complement the highway scheme which are set out in the STS.
- 6.2.10 The evidence from the supporting Transport Assessment (doc reference: 4.01.00) and from the public consultations is that high volumes of traffic along the A10 immediately to the south of West Winch, is having an impact on West Winch, causing severance difficulty for residents to emerge from side roads and impacts on the amenity of the village. The traffic calming measures proposed will address severance, fear and intimidation, walking and cycling amenity, pedestrian and cycle delay and road safety. The evidence from the various public consultations that have been undertaken is that there is public



support in the local area for the proposals to address existing transport issues and the traffic impacts associated with the planned growth. It is considered that addressing this issue will have a positive impact.

6.2.11 The construction phase for the Proposed Scheme would result in some disturbance to the local community from noise and construction traffic, including:

- Daytime Construction Noise - Given the proximity of construction works, disturbance as a result of noise levels during the daytime from on-site activities could occur at some receptors.
- Nightworks construction noise – Receptor C1 – East Anglia House, located at the northern end of the Proposed Scheme. On account of the location of the night-time works, disturbance at Receptor C1 could occur, but only if the noise levels exceed specified durations (10 out of any 15 days or 40 days in 6 months).

6.2.12 Any construction works near to receptors have the potential to cause disturbance to nearby residents due to noise and vibration. Given the scale of the construction works associated with the Proposed Scheme, there is the potential for significant adverse construction noise and vibration effects to occur. In order to avoid/alleviate this, a spectrum of embedded mitigation and Best Practice Means (BPM) are proposed to offset the potential noise externality, and include, but not limited to:

- all construction plant used on the site will be in good working order and certificates of inspection and maintenance will be held on site and available on request;
- all plant items will be properly maintained and operated according to manufacturers' recommendations and in such a manner as to avoid causing excessive noise and vibration;
- as far as reasonably practicable, all plant items will be sited so that noise and vibration at nearby sensitive properties is minimised;



- all plant items operating intermittently on the site will be shut down in the intervening periods;
- all pneumatic tools will be fitted with silencers or mufflers where practicable;
- no loud music or loud radios will be played on the site;
- construction vehicles will not idle on local roads waiting to enter the site;
- works (including deliveries) will be programmed such that the requirement for working outside normal working hours is minimised;
- where construction works are occurring within 50m of a residential property, if appropriate, temporary environmental noise barriers will be installed around plant items to provide screening; and
- the importance of noise and vibration and its potential to affect those living and working nearby will be included in the general induction training for the site and specific training will be given to staff who will have particular responsibility for managing noise and vibration during construction.

6.2.13 These measures are also reported in the OCEMP. It is considered that the proposed mitigation measures contained in the OCEMP are a robust and acceptable means of acceptably addressing these impacts for the short period of construction before the ongoing Scheme benefits are delivered.

6.2.14 It is assessed that the overall social impacts of the Proposed Scheme will be broadly positive.

Environmental Objective of Sustainable Development

6.2.15 The Proposed Scheme has been developed so it can be delivered in an environmentally responsible way and this is reflected in the project objectives. The preferred route of the Proposed Scheme was selected for a number of reasons including its less pronounced effects on the environment and wildlife.



6.2.16 The Proposed Scheme seeks to achieve a BNG target of 10% in line with the Environmental Act 2021. A BNG strategy will be devised and consulted on with the LPA and key stakeholders on how to deliver a 10% BNG outcome for the Proposed Scheme.

6.2.17 The submitted HRA assesses that the Proposed Scheme will have no adverse impacts on the integrity of internationally designated sites. Whilst construction activity will result in some temporary disturbance to local wildlife, as set out in Chapter 8 of the ES, these impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated as per the OCEMP.

6.2.18 It is considered that the Proposed Scheme overall will, on balance, have a broadly beneficial environmental impact.

6.2.19 Overall, it is considered that the Proposed Scheme will help to deliver the objectives of sustainable development identified in Paragraph 8 of the NPPF.

6.3 Policies of the Development Plan

6.3.1 The policy of the development plan that is of most relevance to the Proposed Scheme relates to strategic growth in the WWGA and this includes the provision of new transport infrastructure. Policy E2.1 of the SADMP (2016) and Emerging Plan (2021) seeks to provide a number of strategic outcomes in the vicinity of West Winch including a new road linking the A10 and A47 to relieve traffic on the existing A10 around West Winch, and access new development.

6.4 Impacts on assets of particular importance / individual adverse impacts

6.4.1 The Proposed Scheme will have a number of impacts on the environment as set out in Chapter 5, above. There are a number of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance. These are defined in footnote 7 of the NPPF as:

“The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in



paragraph 181) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 68); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.”

- 6.4.2 Of these assets, the impacts of the Proposed Scheme on the Wash and North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the Wash Special Protection Area (SPA) and the Wash Ramsar Site are confirmed in the HRA that is submitted alongside this application. The Proposed Scheme is assessed as having no impacts on the integrity of the internationally designated sites, thereby supporting the case for the Proposed Scheme.
- 6.4.3 The Proposed Scheme will interrupt habitat features such as hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland where it intersects these habitats within the landscape. The landscaping strategy has been designed to compensate this loss with hedgerow planting proposed adjacent to the new road alignment.
- 6.4.4 Chapter 8 of the ES identifies that the effects of road traffic collision and road mortality and disturbance through lighting during operation which would likely result in a minor adverse effect upon bats. The chapter confirms that the design of the Proposed Scheme, where possible, has included for additional mitigation to address the potential adverse effects to bats, with this additional mitigation including:
- Landscape mitigation features to reduce collision risk; and
 - Lighting strategy to reduce lighting impacts upon bat roosting, foraging and commuting routes.
- 6.4.5 However, it is anticipated that lighting along the dualled section of the A47 will be required and mitigation options will be limited. With respect to bats however, where harm cannot be avoided, the Applicant considers that the



public benefits of the scheme would demonstrably outweigh impacts to the bat population, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF as a whole.

6.5 NPPF

6.5.1 The Proposed Scheme would result in a number of positive environmental impacts as well as some adverse impacts, as identified in Chapter 5 of this Statement. On balance the evidence of the ES that accompanies this application is that the benefits of the Proposed Scheme will outweigh the adverse impacts and that the Proposed Scheme is consistent with the NPPF taken as a whole.

6.6 Planning Balance

- 6.6.1 The Proposed Scheme is mainly consistent with the Development Plan policies and the NPPF, although there would be some adverse impacts arising from the proposals as set out in Chapter 5 of this Statement.
- 6.6.2 The need to address the highway issues in the West Winch area, the improvements to road safety that the Proposed Scheme is predicted to bring, are also strong material considerations in favour of approving the application.
- 6.6.3 The Proposed Scheme has been developed to deliver strategic outcomes of the adopted and emerging local plans that contain policies that support the delivery of major new transport infrastructure.
- 6.6.4 NCC's fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP) 4 Strategy identifies the West Winch Housing Access Road as a priority in ensuring quick, reliable journey times for longer-distance journeys and more broadly, to support accelerated housing growth in the County. Commitments to take forward the WWHAR are also set out in the accompanying Local Transport Implementation Plan 4 (published July 2022).
- 6.6.5 In terms of fulfilling the objectives of the Government's Major Road Network (MRN) programme, development of the Proposed Scheme clearly achieves this as it will:



- Reduce congestion (**Objective 1 of the MRN Programme**),
- Support economic growth and rebalancing (**Objective 2 of the MRN Programme**),
- Support housing delivery (**Objective 3 of the MRN Programme**),
- Support all road users (**Objective 4 of the MRN Programme**), and
- Support the SRN (**Objective 5 of the MRN Programme**).

6.6.6 When assessed against the policies in the NPPF as a whole, including the policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance, there are no clear reasons for refusing the application. Similarly, there are no adverse impacts of doing so that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF.



7 Conclusions

7.1.1 The Proposed Scheme is required to support the development of the WWGA and connect it to the existing road network. The delivery of the road would help to unlock new homes in this strategic housing site. The Proposed Scheme has been designed to address a number of major highways, capacity and safety issues including, but not limited to:

- Modification and re-orientation of the Hardwick Interchange: to accommodate the housing access road and provide resilience to the infrastructure adjoining the WWHAR, to optimise capacity and connectivity. Additional benefits include improvements to facilities and crossings for walking and cycling;
- Dualling of the A47 to the north of the existing alignment between Hardwick Interchange and the roundabout junction with the WWHAR: to facilitate the connection between the new WWHAR and the A47 and provide resilience to the infrastructure adjoining the WWHAR, to optimise capacity and connectivity;
- A47 to Metacre Roundabout, comprising a partially signalised roundabout connection between the A47 and the WWHAR: to provide adequate capacity for the anticipated growth. The Proposed Scheme has been designed to include walking/cycling provision parallel to the road.
- Metacre Roundabout to A10 tie in comprising the Rectory Lane overbridge, Zurich Roundabout, closure of Chequers Lane and a private access: to manage east to west movements on existing rural roads, integrate with adjacent housing development and walking/cycling networks proposed and provide continuity in walking/cycling provision parallel to the road; and
- A10 tie in at the southern end of the WWHAR: to provide a suitable connection with the A10 and Gravelhill Lane, improve safety and



connectivity for walking and cycling, facilitate the repurposing of the A10 as a local route, to provide improved crossing facilities and encourage general traffic to use the WWHAR, integrate with the surrounding context and walking/cycling networks, provide continuity in walking/cycling provision parallel to the road.

- 7.1.2 The Proposed Scheme is assessed as delivering ‘*high*’ value for money. The Proposed Scheme would offer better opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists and public transport provision.
- 7.1.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment is being carried out at each stage of the project to ensure that the proposals do not discriminate against those with protected characteristics.
- 7.1.4 The public consultation has identified that there is public support in the local area for the proposals to address existing transport issues and the traffic impacts associated with the planned growth.
- 7.1.5 The Proposed Scheme is the result of a comprehensive design evolution process that ensures that the best alignment is delivered to minimise environmental impacts.
- 7.1.6 The delivery of the Proposed Scheme is supported by a wide range of policy documents both at a local, regional and national level. The local development plans, consisting of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document and accompanying DPD Policies Map and Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD, provide a wide range of policies and development goals that the Proposed Scheme contributes towards. Outside of the development plan itself, there are a number of regional policy documents that are material considerations in determining the planning application, which are supportive of the proposals objectives including NCC’s Local Transport Plan 4 Strategy, Local Transport Implementation Plan 4, Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2022, and Transport for Norwich Strategy (2021). Support for the aims and objectives of the Proposed Scheme can be seen within national policy documents, including The National Networks National



Policy Statement (2014), and emerging Revised National Networks National Policy Statement (2023),

- 7.1.7 The Proposed Scheme is broadly in accordance with the policies of the development plan taken as a whole, although some adverse impacts that are contrary to policies are acknowledged.
- 7.1.8 The Proposed Scheme would deliver a range of positive economic, social and environmental benefits that are consistent with the definition of sustainable development as defined in the NPPF. Were the application of NPPF policy test under Paragraph 11 (*the presumption in favour of sustainable development*) to be discounted owing to the identified adverse impacts caused by the proposed scheme, then on balance we assess that the utilisation of the policy test under paragraph 12 of the NPPF can be applied as the material considerations and the significant wider benefits of the scheme, should allow for a deviation from the adopted development plan.
- 7.1.9 The proposed mitigation measures as established in the accompanying Outline Construction Management Plan mean that the Proposed Scheme is considered to be consistent with the requirements of Policy CS12 (Environmental Assets), including in relation to the Wash and North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the Wash Special Protection Area (SPA) and the Wash Ramsar Site.
- 7.1.10 The Proposed Scheme would overall have positive economic, social and environmental effects and fulfils the definition of sustainable development contained in the NPPF.
- 7.1.11 The Proposed Scheme is considered to be in accordance with the policies in the development plan as a whole, and there are strong material considerations in favour of approving the Proposed Scheme.
- 7.1.12 As such, it is considered that the planning application should be granted planning permission in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.