

SALDEN CHASE
OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION

Chapter 4: Approach

4.0 APPROACH TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

4.01 The Environmental Impact Assessment has been an integrated part of the proposal's evolution, the aim being to reduce the severity of significant environmental effects, or even, where possible, remove them, through the design process. Such mitigation is referred to as inherent or design mitigation. By following the process of positive reiteration, the potential for advantageous effects of the developments can be enhanced. In assessing the environmental impacts arising from the proposed developments, full account has been taken of both its construction and operational phases.

4.02 The ES assessment process adopted by the project team has included:

- a) an initial data trawl for site designations;
- b) environmental work conducted during the selection process of the land uses within the proposal;
- c) discussions with the land owners;
- d) study of the relevant Ordnance Survey mapping;
- e) baseline identification of sensitive receptors and resources;
- f) liaison with utility providers;
- g) liaison with the Internal Drainage Board;

- h) liaison with the Environment Agency;
- i) site visits over a three year period;
- j) impact identification;
- k) liaison with Aylesbury Vale District Council in relation to the Area Action Plan for the site;
- l) seeking a formal Screening Opinion from Aylesbury Vale District Council;
- m) scoping of the issues to be assessed with Aylesbury Vale District Council and their advisors;
- n) liaison with the Aylesbury Vale Local Strategic Partnership including
 - a. Thames Valley Police;
 - b. Aylesbury Vale Primary Care Trust;
 - c. Aylesbury Vale and North Bucks Chamber of Commerce; and
 - d. Aylesbury Vale District Council officers;
- o) liaison with stakeholders as defined by the Statement of Community Involvement that forms part of this application
- p) liaison with Councillors and Parish representing residents in Aylesbury Vale and Milton Keynes;
- q) liaison with representatives from MKSM Transform;
- r) liaison with a CABE Design Review Panel

- s) revising mitigation proposals; and
- t) the identification and reporting of any residual significant effects.

Assessment Method and Terminology

- 4.03 As highlighted by the Scoping Report this assessment process will use the term 'impact' to identify the change that a process will create over a specified period of time. For example, construction machinery will result in an increase in local noise levels while in use. This change is the impact of the activity. The term 'effect' will describe the outcome of the assessment of an impact upon a receptor. Following the same example, the impact of noise from the use of construction machinery would be assessed for its effect upon a receptor.
- 4.04 Each topic assessed, as required by the Scoping and Screening Opinion provided by the local planning authority, where possible and appropriate includes a summary matrix in the conclusions section outlining the results of the assessment process having taken into account the mitigation measures proposed as part of the planning application.
- 4.05 For any effect to be '**significant**' it must exceed a specific threshold. Wherever possible, such thresholds are set using national industry norms. Where such norms do not exist, the experience of the assessor has been used to determine the significant threshold. Effects falling below the threshold are termed 'non-significant effects.'

- 4.06 Above the threshold a simple matrix comparing the severity of the impact upon the sensitivity of the receptor will be used. The magnitude of the impact will wherever possible be based upon a measurable element but will also include factors such as duration, timing and seasonality. The sensitivity element will include the number and type of receptor.
- 4.07 The significance of the impact will be related to four terms, namely, '**Major**', '**Moderate**', '**Minor**' and '**insignificant**'. Individual specialism's have assessment guidelines developed by professional bodies, e.g. the Landscape Institute and IEMA and where it is more appropriate these will be utilized within this ES.
- 4.08 All effects will be assessed for significance based on agreed mitigation measures being in place. Some impacts cannot be directly mitigated and therefore compensatory measures may be required to offset the predicted adverse effects. Where such measures are proposed these will be described and taken into account in the assessment of significant effects.
- 4.09 The remaining chapters of the ES summarise the assessment of the environmental impacts by the agreed subjects that are likely to be significantly impacted upon by the proposal. A Non-Technical Summary (NTS) provides a concise non-technical explanation of the contents and conclusions of the ES. A number of plans and technical appendices accompany the ES and provide, where appropriate, background detailed information relevant to the assessment of significant environmental effects.