

The Trustees of the Standen Estate Land South of Clitheroe Non-Technical Summary

1. Introduction

This report summarises the results of an assessment that has been undertaken to determine how a proposed development to the south of Clitheroe in Lancashire would affect the environment. The findings of this assessment (an Environmental Impact Assessment, EIA) are presented in the main report (known as an Environmental Statement), to which readers requiring more technical information should refer.

This non-technical summary contains sections that describe:

- the proposed development site;
- the EIA process;
- the existing environment in and around the site; and
- the main environmental effects that the development will have.

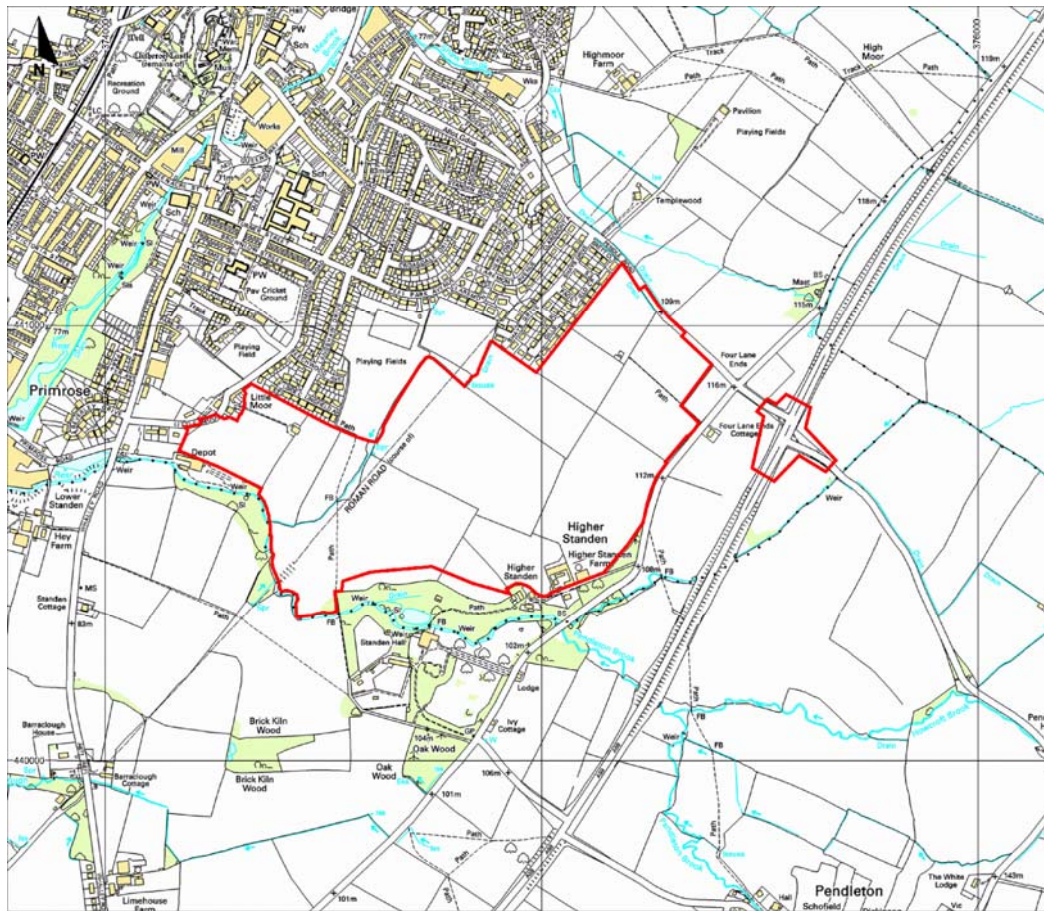
2. The Proposed Development

The Trustees of the Standen Estate are proposing (in accordance with Ribble Valley Borough Council's Draft Core Strategy) the following:

- 1 040 residential dwellings comprising:
 - 728 market homes;
 - 312 affordable homes;
 - 156 of the total (1040) would be for elderly people (i.e. over 55 years of age) of which 78 would be affordable;
 - 0.8 ha to be reserved for retirement living within the total of 1 040 homes;
- 0.5 ha for local retail, service and community facilities;

- 2.25 ha for employment (Class B1) accommodating up to a maximum gross floorspace of 5 575 m²;
- 2.1 ha of land for a primary school site;
- Public open space including green corridors and areas for tree planting and landscaping;
- An improved (roundabout) junction between Pendle Road and the A59;
- New vehicular, pedestrian and cycle accesses onto Pendle Road and Littlemoor;
- New pedestrian and cycle accesses onto Worston Old Road;
- Temporary vehicular access onto Worston Old Road;
- New pedestrian and cycle access from the end of Shays Drive;
- Roads, sewers, footpaths, cycleways, services and infrastructure including:
 - A Sustainable Urban Drainage System;
 - New services such as gas, electricity, water and telecommunications.

The location of the proposed development is shown on the following location plan.



Based upon the Ordnance Survey Map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright. 100007775.

3. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Process

EIA is a process that involves collecting information about the existing environment and assessing the potentially significant effects that new development could have on that environment. The Environmental Statement is impartial and the results are therefore presented objectively, and it is used by the Local Planning Authority (in this case, Ribble Valley Borough Council) when making a decision about whether or not the development should be allowed to proceed.

EIA is required for certain types of development under The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 SI No.1824. For this development, the landowner decided that Environmental Statement should accompany a planning application for the site.

The effects that could be significant and need to be assessed in detail are identified through a process known as scoping. To identify the scope of the assessment a Scoping Report was issued to Ribble Valley Borough Council which outlined the environmental effects that could be significant and the work required to take forward the assessment of these effects. This report requested comments on the proposed scope of the assessment from interested organisations (known as consultees) which included the Environment Agency and Natural England, amongst others). The comments were included in a document, known as a Scoping Opinion, from the Council which outlined which effects the Council considered needed to be assessed in further detail. This information was used to refine the scope of the assessment considered in the Environmental Statement. Where detailed investigation has confirmed that no significant effects are likely to occur, these effects have been scoped out of the Environmental Statement.

The potentially significant effects were then subject to detailed assessment using appropriate methodologies to the environmental topic. The following topics are reported in the Environmental Statement:

- Agricultural Land Quality and Soils;
- The Water Environment;
- Biodiversity;
- Cultural Heritage;
- Landscape and Visual;
- Noise and Vibration;
- Air Quality; and
- Community.

The assessments have been made in relation to the baseline environmental conditions that would be expected at the time of construction and permanent land use change, and operation. The assessment also considers the potential cumulative effect of other local developments that may proceed at the same time.

Having characterised the potential effects, their significance was evaluated. Significance was defined as being at one of two levels:

- significant - a significant effect is an effect could influence the decision as to whether or not the development should be granted permission; and
- not significant - most non-significant effects were scoped out of the assessment but some effects were sufficiently uncertain at the scoping stage that they needed to be assessed in detail, hence some non-significant effects have been taken right through the assessment process.

The findings of the assessment are designed to assist the Council, those that it consults and other stakeholders, in coming to a view about whether or not and how the proposed development should proceed. This decision making is part of the EIA process itself.

4. Description of the Existing Environment

The site occupies an area of approximately (~)50.1 ha of agricultural land predominantly used for grazing and mowing purposes separated into a number of medium to large sized fields bound by hedgerows with individual hedgerow trees. A further 14.3 ha of land, comprising four individual fields, have been identified near the A59 junction for potential junction improvements. These fields have therefore also been considered for assessment within the EIA.

The site is bordered to the north by residential properties off Littlemoor, Hillside Close, Lingfield Avenue and Shays Close and an area of recreational land, including an all-weather pitch. Beyond to the north lies the built-up area of Clitheroe. The site boundary to the northeast is formed by hedgerows with hedgerow trees bordering Pendle Road. The boundary then follows a south-westerly route and is defined by a hedgerow with trees dividing agricultural fields. Beyond the fields to the south is the Worston Old Road, with the A59 further beyond. The southern boundary then follows the edge of woodland which surrounds Standen Hall and its associated grounds to the south, before tracking the route of Pendleton Brook, a small tributary of the River Ribble, north-westwards towards the Dent Plant Hire Depot off Whalley Road (A671) to the west.

Two public rights of way (PRoW) cross the site, towards the western and eastern boundaries respectively, and Ordnance Survey maps show the course of a Roman road traversing the site in a northeast-southwest direction.

5. Agricultural Land Quality and Soils

The proposed development can have an effect on agricultural land quality by taking a site out of use for agricultural purposes. If the land is 'Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Land' – i.e. classified as Grade 1, 2 or 3a in the agricultural land classification – the effect of losing this land is considered more significant than the loss of lower quality agricultural land. Soils can be

affected by removing soils layers, having physical effects on the soil properties or by polluting or contaminating the soil.

Information was obtained on soils and land quality for the assessment. This includes information on the agricultural land classification, the history of the use of the site to see if there were any past uses which could have contaminated the land and whether the geology underlying of the site was protected through designations.

Reviewing the historical use of the site has shown that most of the site is unlikely to be contaminated as there is no evidence of past uses which could have already caused the land to be contaminated. The land at the site has been in agricultural use for at least the last 500 years, if not longer.

An assessment was undertaken of the potential effects on soils and land quality and from the loss of land for use for agricultural purposes. An agricultural land classification survey established that none of the land is BMV land. The assessment concluded that there would be no significant effects on soils or land quality. Measures will be implemented during construction to ensure that soils are removed, stored and protected so that the risk of contamination from construction activities is minimised and that the physical properties of the soils, such as drainage properties are maintained.

6. The Water Environment

Construction activities could affect local watercourses and groundwater if polluted run-off reaches these features or if accidental spillage occurs. There are several drainage ditches across the site which drain into Pendleton Brook, a tributary of the River Ribble, which could therefore be affected if such spillages occur. Surface watercourses and groundwater could also be affected by polluted run-off from the development once it is built and occupied. In addition, replacing the greenfield land uses at the site with built development increases the area of impermeable surfaces (such as roads and pavements) in the local area. In turn this can increase the amount and speed of water draining from the site into local watercourses which can then increase the risk of flooding to properties off-site.

An assessment was undertaken of the potential effects on water quality and flood risk and this has concluded that there will be no significant effects. The site lies over bedrock of the Clitheroe Limestone Formation and Hodder Mudstone 'Secondary A' Aquifer and superficial deposits of glacial till which is a Non-Aquifer. As only the deeper bedrock is classified as an aquifer, only operations such as the construction of deep foundations could result in contamination reaching the aquifer. Therefore to prevent this from happening several measures, to be agreed with the Environment Agency, will be implemented by the contractor to limit the likelihood of run-off reaching local watercourses or groundwater, for example by containing chemicals in a bunded area. Spillage kits will be provided on site in case of any accidents during construction.

Modelling work using specialist computer software has been used to determine the amount of water running off the site for different flood events once the site has been developed. This modelling work has then been used to determine the amount of storage needed for flood water and this information has been used to incorporate measures into the design of the scheme to

temporarily store this water, for example, attenuation ponds, being released slowly to the downstream watercourses at a runoff rate agreed with the Environment Agency. No potential impacts to existing people and property nearby have been identified. Development will also be slightly set back from the onsite watercourse to ensure that it is not placed on or adjacent to the springs that issue adjacent to this watercourse.

7. Biodiversity

A comprehensive assessment of the effects of the development on flora and fauna was undertaken in accordance with standard good practice and at appropriate times of the year. This assessment was informed by a review of existing information on flora and fauna that are known within the site, or have previously been recorded at or near the site; a survey of the habitat types within the site; a hedgerow survey; and a number of surveys specifically to assess the status of legally protected species within or near the site, including bats, badgers, great crested newt, breeding birds, otter and water vole. An assessment was undertaken of the potential effects on biodiversity and this concluded that it is unlikely that there will be any significant effects and mitigation and compensation is entirely feasible.

Full surveys did not detect great crested newt at the site or at a pond within 250 metres of the site boundary. There are no records of reptiles and little suitable habitat to support them on the site. Survey work found no evidence of otter or water voles along the surveyed section of Pendleton Brook or other on-site watercourses. No badger activity was detected within the site or within a 50 m radius from the site boundaries. Bat foraging activity is limited within the site and is concentrated around the site margins and hedgerows, and particularly Pendleton Brook. No evidence of a significant roost was detected but a minor (single bat) roost was detected at Higher Standen Farm and 38 trees have been identified to have definite bat roost suitability. The scheme will include several measures to reduce any effects on bats which include retaining several trees and areas of vegetation as part of the scheme and the implementation of a landscaping scheme introducing new areas of vegetation at the site.

Breeding birds were recorded at the site associated with the field boundary hedgerows and trees. Conservation of the hedgerows and trees, including an appropriate buffer between the development, will protect these habitats. Ground nesting farmland birds were also recorded within the fields, although in very low numbers. The fields surrounding the site offer similar and in most cases better quality opportunities for use by nesting farmland birds, and the birds found on site will simply move to these fields, and therefore will not be lost from the locality.

There will be no significant effects on nature conservation sites. None are present within the site. Designated nature conservation sites in the surrounding area will not be adversely affected.

Within the site, only 8% of the length of the existing hedgerows and treelines will be lost to the development, with existing vegetation supplemented by compensatory planting of native hedgerows and woodland belts elsewhere in the site.

A buffer will be implemented along Pendleton Brook to restrict construction activities in this area and protect its conservation status to ensure no fragmentation or destruction of the habitat along the brook will occur. A stand of Japanese Knotweed on the banks of the brook will be

eradicated regardless of the proposals, reducing the risk of this invasive species spreading along the course of the watercourse.

The loss of arable and semi-improved grassland is not considered to be significant as this is not a particularly sensitive or valuable habitat.

Potential effects on vegetation and habitats in the locality from construction works, for example dust, will be controlled through measures to limit dust and by implementation of actions described in an Environmental Management Plan.

Importantly, a sympathetically designed and implemented development proposal will secure opportunities to enhance significantly the nature conservation interests of areas of the site by habitat creation and appropriate sustainable management over the long-term. The measures described in the biodiversity chapter seek to ensure a net gain for biodiversity in accordance with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework. The measures are summarised below:

- Use of native species in landscape planting schemes including woody species, wildflower planting and herbs;
- Installation of a Sustainable Drainage System and associated habitat creation for biodiversity (swales, ditches, ponds etc.);
- Habitat creation for nesting passerine birds;
- Habitat creation and roosting opportunities for bats;
- Conversion of improved grassland to favourable habitat for use by farmland birds;
- Encouragement of an increase in area of calcareous grassland; and
- Application of long-term management in accordance with nature conservation and biodiversity objectives.

8. Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage is the term used to refer to historical features such as archaeological remains and listed buildings. New development can have an affect on such features by resulting in their destruction or removal or by changing the setting of that feature. Several studies have been completed to find out what cultural heritage features are present at the site and in the surrounding area. This work has comprised searching existing databases of information, reviewing aerial photographs and historic maps and completing survey work at the site to determine the likelihood of archaeological remains being present at the site.

A number of features have been identified within the site. However the assessment has demonstrated that there will be no significant effects on cultural heritage, following the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures. Features within the site include the earthwork of a Roman road, the mid-19th-century buildings of Higher Standen Farm, two isolated agricultural buildings, and the hedged boundaries of pasture fields. As well as these

visible features, geomagnetic survey work has identified several sub-surface features including former field boundaries, paths and tracks and two possible ring-ditches. None of these features are protected by designations. The line of the Roman road is visible in one part of the site as an upstanding earthwork, which will be retained and preserved. Over the larger part of its course the road has been damaged by centuries of ploughing. These damaged sections will be examined and recorded by archaeological excavation in advance of construction activities. The line of the road across the site will be retained as a route or an open space. Groundworks in the vicinity of the road line will be monitored for the recovery of archaeological material. The isolated agricultural buildings within the site, and at Higher Standen, will be recorded in their present state to provide a detailed picture of the structures and their former uses before any alteration or removal begins.

Basic photographic recording of the existing hedged boundaries, to complement the map record, will be undertaken. Further investigation should be carried out on the buried features to establish what they are. This can be the subject of a condition on any planning permission.

There are no scheduled monuments within or in the immediate vicinity of the site. The nearest scheduled site is Clitheroe Castle, about 1.2 km north-west of the centre of the site. Standen Hall is a listed building (Grade II*), 150 m outside the southern boundary of the site, and there is a group of smaller residential properties in Littlemoor (Grade II), on the western boundary. There will be no significant effects on these designated sites as a result of the development.

9. Landscape and Visual

The proposed development will have an effect on the landscape, including landscape features such as topography and vegetation, the overall character of the landscape and areas or features which are designated and protected because of their landscape character. This would occur as a result of the direct loss of landscape features or because the presence of the new built development would change the character of the landscape. Through survey work and reviewing several data sources, information was gathered on the landscape character and features at and around the site and about the designations present in the wider area.

There would be effects on the landscape elements within the site, which are features such as the topography of the site, land cover, hedgerows and trees. These elements or features are not very sensitive to change as they are not particularly rare and are abundant in the surrounding landscape. In addition, the development has been designed to retain many of these features and incorporate them into the new development. These features will be improved with new planting.

The assessment has considered the effects on the character of the landscape both at the site and in the wider surrounding area. The Council has assessed the landscape character of the Ribbles Valley Borough Council area and divided it up into different areas according to the type of landscape character present. The site lies within the Clitheroe and Chatburn (H1) Character Area, whilst the southern boundary is also coincident with the Higher and Lower Standen (H2) Character Area. The H1 Character Area is dominated by Clitheroe, including the suburban residential areas which bound the site to the north, whilst the H2 Area is defined by patches of woodland and a patchwork of predominantly pastoral fields. The sense of tranquillity in this

Area is described as being disturbed as a result of traffic on the A671 and A59. These roads, along with the southern edge of the built-up area of Clitheroe, effectively enclose the site, reducing effects on landscape beyond the site boundaries, including the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The assessment has considered the potential effects on the landscape from the presence of construction activities and machinery and the effects once the development is built. The assessment has concluded that the effects on the landscape during the construction phase would be significant. However, the presence of the development once built would have a significant on the landscape.

The assessment of effects on people's views of the site considers the extent to which the development can be viewed from various near, middle and long distance points around its boundary, including views of the new development from existing residential properties surrounding the site as well as from roads and Public Rights of Way. The presence of the new development will have an effect on views of the site.

Most residents in Clitheroe presently have no views of the site and would continue to have no views of either the construction activities or the development once completed as vegetation, tree cover and existing buildings prevent views of the site. Residents on the south-eastern outskirts of the town, which currently have views over open fields will however experience views of the development, during both the construction and occupation phases. The properties affected are a limited number of residences located on the following roads:

- Shays Drive;
- Peel Park Avenue;
- Gills Croft;
- Langshaw Drive;
- Hillside Close;
- Lingfield Avenue;
- Beechwood Avenue;
- Langshaw Drive; and
- Littlemoor Road.

Users of public rights of way running through or immediately adjacent to the site would also experience significant effects as a result of the development. Views of the site from elevated viewpoints, such as Pendle Hill to the east and Clitheroe Castle, will experience significant effects during the construction phase, though once planting associated with the development has established it is anticipated that these effects will be reduced.

10. Noise and Vibration

An assessment of the effects of the proposed development on noise and vibration levels in the local area has been undertaken. Traffic generated by the proposed development could affect noise levels (from vehicles) experienced by people living adjacent to the roads close to the development. During construction additional noise may be generated by construction machinery and activities and activities such as piling can also generate vibration. Once occupied, noise from the commercial buildings within the development could also generate noise which could affect both the existing local receptors and the new residents within the development. Finally, the suitability of the site has been assessed to make sure that noise from the surrounding area will not disturb the new occupants of the development, both people living in the new housing and working within the new commercial premises.

During construction, contractors will be required to work to set limits which will help to control excessive noise levels. Several other measures will also be put in place which will minimise the noise levels created by construction activities, for example, construction work will be limited to standard daytime working hours and vehicles will travel to the site avoiding Clitheroe. With these measures in place it is unlikely that noise from construction activities will have a significant effect on local people. The details of how the development will be constructed are not known at this stage of the project. If piling is needed to build the development the vibration effects from this will be assessed prior to construction taking place and measures put in place to minimise these effects if required.

Noise from traffic created by the development is unlikely to have a significant effect on local people living close to roads near the site. An increase of 3 decibels (the unit which noise levels are measured in) is needed to create an audible increase in road traffic noise and a change less than this is imperceptible to human hearing. The predictions from the noise modelling have shown that the increases in traffic along local roads where people live will produce increases in noise levels along roads of a maximum of 2.4 decibels in 2035, when it is anticipated that the highest traffic flow from the development would occur, along Pendle Road between Goosebutts Lane and the new site access road. The stretch of Pendle Road between the access point into the site and the A59 will experience an increase in road traffic noise levels of 2.5 decibels, however there are no residential properties adjacent to this section of road. Therefore there will be no significant effects from the additional traffic created by the development.

Noise from the new commercial premises could affect new and existing residents. Although these premises are likely to be used for offices they may include extractor fans or air condition units the noise from which could be audible to those living near these buildings. To control noise effects noise limits it is expected that the Council will set an appropriate noise limit and any such equipment installed as part of the commercial development will need to comply with this noise limit. This will ensure that there will be no significant effects from the commercial premises. This will also be the case for the school site.

The noise modelling has shown that the site is suitable for development as housing, offices and shops and that people living in the new properties and working in the offices and shops are unlikely to be affected by excessive noise. With appropriate mitigation, such as double- or triple-glazing, the noise levels audible inside of the residential and commercial buildings within the development will be within the recommended guidelines.

The suitability of the site for a school has also been assessed. It has been concluded that, assuming the appropriate design guidance is followed pupils and staff at the school would not experience significant noise effects.

11. Air Quality

An assessment of the effects of the proposed development on air quality in the local area has been undertaken.

The assessment has predicted the increases in certain pollutants which are present in vehicle emissions (nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter) that would occur as a result of the additional traffic the development would create. The assessment has shown that the increases in these pollutants would be very small. Pollution levels in the local area currently do not exceed government standards set in relation to these pollutants, except at two locations on Whalley Road in the centre of Clitheroe. Where these standards are currently exceeded they would not be exacerbated by the additional vehicle emissions created by the development. Any increases in pollutants as a result of road traffic associated with the development would be small or imperceptible. Therefore it is considered unlikely that the additional traffic would have a significant effect on the air quality experienced by local residents or the new occupants of the development.

During construction, several measures would be put in place to minimise and control the spread of dust. These would include measures such as covering or damping down material stockpiles and locating such stockpiles away from residential properties as well as installing wheel washing facilities so that vehicles leaving the site do not spread dust and mud onto local roads. With these measures in place, local residents are unlikely to experience significant effects from dust.

12. Community

New development has the potential to affect the local community in several ways, both positive and negative. By increasing the local population the new development could constrain local services such as schools, health care, leisure and recreational facilities. However, the development could also have beneficial effects by creating new jobs and helping to improve the local economy.

Survey data from the Office of National Statistics (2010) show that the Ribble Valley Borough Council area has a population of approximately 58 000 residents, and Clitheroe a population of approximately 15 000 residents (2007 figures). The Littlemoor ward, within which the site is located, has the same percentage of economically active people as the nation as a whole but fewer unemployed than the British average level. The ward has a lower level of people employed in the Managers and Senior Official and Professional Occupations than the national

level but a greater proportion of people employed in the process plant and machine and elementary occupations than the national average.

The assessment has considered the potential effects on the development would have on the local economy by creating new jobs and also providing new premises which could encourage new businesses into the area. Depending on the type of businesses which will be based at the site, it is estimated that the development would create a minimum 450 to 500 permanent jobs both directly and indirectly.

The provision of 1 040 new houses, which equates to a quarter of the Borough's housing needs for the next 20 years, would be a significant benefit to the Borough. The provision of a new primary school site will be beneficial at a local ward level, and will facilitate the need for school places generated by the new housing at the site.

13. Conclusions

The assessment has shown that it is likely that there will be some negative and positive significant effects resulting from the development. The proposed development will result in the following significant effects:

- Residents in some of the properties on the south-eastern outskirts of Clitheroe are likely to experience significant changes in their views across the site;
- Users of public rights of way within and near the site, and from prominent views in the area such as Clitheroe Castle and Pendle Hill during the construction phase, would also experience significant adverse visual effects;
- Initial perception of the development by the community may be negative, especially during the construction phase. Ongoing engagement and liaison with the community will be undertaken;
- The local and district economy is likely to experience significant beneficial effects as a result of the creation of new jobs;
- The provision of a primary school site will be a significant benefit of the development at the local ward level;
- Members of the Borough community with housing needs are likely to experience significant beneficial effects as the new development will provide a quarter of the Borough's housing needs for the next 20 years;
- Existing public rights of way will be reinstated upon completion of works and new green routes proposed. The development will also lead to integration with the existing built up area and town centre for pedestrians and cyclists.

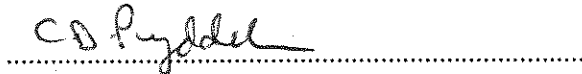
14. What Happens Next?

Prior to making a planning decision about a proposed planning application for the development, the Council will seek advice from the Environmental Agency, Natural England and other organisations.

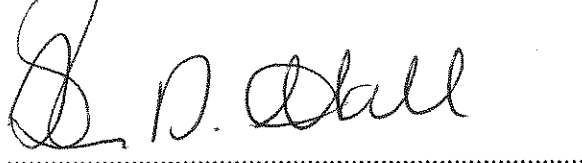
The Environmental Statement will be available for examination by members of the public on the Council's website and at an appropriate location(s).

Members of the public will also be able to comment on the proposed planning application. The normal period for determining a planning application such as this is 16 weeks.

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