HALLAM LAND MANAGEMENT LIMITED
ST ALBANS SCHOOL
ST ALBANS SCHOOL WOOLLAM TRUST

Woollam Park

Environmental Statement
Non-technical summary

February 2025

LRM PLANNING LIMITED

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Appendices

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1 Introduction

THE PLANNING APPLICATION

1.1 Hallam Land Management Limited, St Albans School, and St Albans School Woollam Trust (the applicants) are applying for planning permission for a new development at North St Albans known as "Woollam Park", which will include up to 1000 new homes including market housing, affordable housing, age restricted specialist accommodation for the elderly, and adult disability service units, an 80-bed care home, a local centre, a two-form entry primary school, pedestrian and cycle routes, and a new means of access onto Harpenden Road and Sandridgebury Lane. The proposals also include the relocation and replacement of three existing rugby pitches which are overlain with a cricket pitch, and the creation of a new changing facility.

1.2 The site measures approximately 50.30ha and is shown in the site location plan at Figure 1.

1.3 The site makes up the majority of the North St Albans Broad Location which is allocated at Policy LG1 of the emerging Local Plan for a mixed-use scheme, comprising 1,146 proposed residential units, an 80-bed extra-care facility, an 80-bed nursing home, four supported living units for people with disabilities, a two-form entry primary school, a new local centre to include a medical centre, replacement playing pitches, sports provision, highways contributions, public transport upgrades, transport network support, pedestrian and cycle links, and public right of way improvements.

1.4 This Broad Location has a considerable planning history; it was first identified as a potential development location during the preparation of a new Local Plan in 2014 and was a proposed allocation in the 2018 Local Plan. Neither of these Local Plans were adopted by St Albans District Council, however North St Albans remains a proposed Broad Location in the Local Plan submitted for examination in November 2024.

1.5 Hallam Land Management, St Albans School, and St Albans School Woollam Trust are bringing forward these proposals on land they control at the emerging North St Albans Broad Location. A small portion of the Broad Location falls outside of the applicants' site, on land to the immediate west referred to as "Sewell Park" which benefits from outline permission for up to 150 dwellings. A reserved matters application has been submitted by Cala Homes in September 2024, and is pending determination.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1.6 An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried as part of the preparation of this planning application.

1.7 EIA is a procedural requirement under the terms of the European Union Directive on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. The Directive is enacted into English legislation through the Town and Country Planning Act Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

1.8 The likely significant environmental effects of the proposed development identified by the EIA process have been documented in an Environmental Statement (ES). This document provides a Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the ES.

1.9 The following sections provide detail on what is included in the EIA, the EIA methodology, the site and its surroundings, the proposed development and how it has been designed, measures proposed to avoid, reduce or compensate for predicted significant impacts (known as mitigation

measures) and the likely significant remaining environmental effects of the proposed development with mitigation measures implemented.

2 Environmental Impact Assessment

SCOPE OF THE EIA

2.1 The environmental topics included in the EIA are termed the "EIA scope" and are dependent on the type of development proposed and the nature of the surrounding area.

2.2 The Applicants submitted a Screening Request and Scoping Report in 2019 and St Albans District Council provided advice on the necessary scope of the EIA. Given the passage of time, the Applicants resubmitted a Scoping Report in 2024 which re-established the topics to be "scoped in" to the ES.

2.3 As part of this process, the following topics have been included in the EIA:

- **Ecology and biodiversity** – impacts to both on and off-site habitats and protected species.
- **Landscape and visual –** visual impacts and impacts on landscape character.
- **Agriculture and soil –** impacts on soils and agricultural resources.
- **Heritage and archaeology** – impacts to off-site built heritage assets and on-site below-ground archaeology.
- **Ground conditions –** impacts to ground conditions.
- **Water resources –** impacts on waterbodies and flood risk to existing and future residents on and off-site.
- **Socio-economics, including a separate Health and Impact Assessment –** impacts on human health and population.
- **Waste and material assets** – impacts on waste.
- **Climate change –** impacts of the development on climate change.
- **Traffic and movement –** including impacts on drivers, pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Noise and vibration –** noise impacts on existing and future residents.
- **Air quality** - air quality impacts on existing and future residents.

2.4 The EIA has also assessed the potentially significant cumulative effects of the proposed development with the Sewell Park scheme, to ensure these effects are taken into account.

ASSESSING SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

2.5 Each technical assessment within the EIA firstly establishes the existing conditions e.g. traffic levels, habitats, flood zones etc and this is the basis against which the potential impacts of the proposed development are then assessed.

2.6 Environmental impacts can be positive (known as 'beneficial') or negative (known as 'adverse'), temporary or permanent and vary in their extent and duration.

MITIGATION

2.7 Mitigation measures can be put in place to avoid, reduce or compensate for potential adverse impacts, or to enhance beneficial impacts.

2.8 The EIA has identified appropriate mitigation measures based on the assessment of potential significant impacts. These are either designed into the scheme, delivered through standard construction measures, or will require further work or a controlling mechanism to deliver them.

2.9 Before construction commences, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be agreed with the local authority and the contractors will need to adhere to the measures set out within it.

2.10 The measures will be based on the EIA.

DESCRIBING SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

2.11 After the likely significant impacts of the development have been assessed taking into account the proposed mitigation measures, the remaining (residual) significant effects are then described in the ES.

2.12 There is no statutory definition of significance, but it is generally based on a combination of the level of impact and the sensitivity of the environment that is being impacted.

2.13 In this EIA the following standard descriptive terms are used to describe the significance of the effects:

- Substantial;
- Moderate;
- Minor;
- Negligible.

2.14 The following terms are also used to aid the description of the effect:

- Beneficial/adverse – positive / negative effects;
- Short/medium/long Term – length of the effect;
- Temporary/permanent – effect can / cannot be reversed;
- Direct – effects that are a direct result of the proposed development;
- Indirect – effects that may be a ‘knock-on’ result of direct effects.

3 The site and surroundings

THE APPLICATION SITE

3.1 The application site, shown at Appendix 1, measures approximately 50.30 hectares in area and predominantly comprises arable land which is sub-divided into five field parcels. Four of the parcels are agricultural fields which are defined by hedgerows and tree belts, with the fifth parcels comprising the existing playing pitch land which is leased to the Old Albanian Sports Association (OASA). The pitches include three rugby pitches which are overlain with a cricket pitch.

3.2 It is located to the north of St Albans, and is contained by Harpenden Road to the west and the Midland Main Line railway line to the east. Longspring Wood and Sandridgebury Lane are to the south, and agricultural land and pitches associated with Woollam Playing Fields are to the north.

3.3 Sandridgebury Lane bisects the site, extending from the south-western corner towards the north-eastern portion of the site. Valley Road connects Sandridgebury Lane with the wider St Albans area to the south.

SITE CONTEXT

Ecology

3.4 The site comprises four arable field parcels under agricultural cultivation and one amenity grassland parcel. All field parcels are bounded by hedgerows, with the exception of the south-eastern boundary which is bounded by Longspring Wood, and the eastern boundary which comprises the railway line and its associated embankment.

3.5 A comprehensive suite of protected species surveys has been conducted on site over many years. The application site provides habitats suitable for badgers, bats, reptiles, dormouse, breeding birds and wintering birds.

3.6 The site falls beyond the zone of influence of the Chiltern Beechwood Special Area of Conservation which is approximately 14.5km from the site.

3.7 The nearest locally non-statutory site within proximity of the site is the Longspring Wood Local Wildlife Site. There are eight additional designations within 1km of the site.

Landscape features

3.8 The site is gently undulating, sloping from west to east. Sandridgebury Lane separates the site and forms part of the network of valleys present between Harpenden and Wheathampstead. The site is enclosed by landform and vegetation to its north and south, and bounded by development land and infrastructure to the east and west.

3.9 This folding topography allows for clear views across the site, albeit these are limited to some boundaries by neighbouring landscape and vegetation. Mid distance and distant views are possible from within the site to open countryside to the north and east, above and beyond field boundaries and the embankment of the rail line which bounds the east of the site. Isolated properties are visible at distance.

Heritage

3.10 The site does not contain, nor do its boundaries comprise, any listed building or designated heritage asset. In closest proximity, the Beech Bottom Dyke scheduled monument is situated some 450m

south of the site, albeit this is visually and physically separated from the site by intervening development.

3.11 A single Grade II* and a number of Grade II listed buildings exist within a 2km radius of the site, however the site does not contribute to the setting of any of these assets.

Flood risk

3.12 The Flood Map for Planning confirms that site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1, which means that it is outside of the maximum flood extents of nearby Main Rivers in the 1 in 100 year and 1 in 1,000 year flood events.

3.13 The site is also predominantly identified to be at very low risk of surface water flooding, according to a review of the Flood Risk from Surface Water Mapping system. Two overland flow routes are identified; the first flows from north west to east and is shown to be at low to medium surface water flood risk, and the second flows from south west to east and is identified to be low to high surface water flood risk. The mapping system only incorporates local estimates for sewer and infiltration loss and does not allow for local geology or hydraulic constraints and improvements. Local geology is likely to be underrepresented. The site is underlain with a Bedrock geology of Kesgrave Catchment Subgroup – Sand and Gravel.

3.14 A 225mm diameter combined sewer bisects the site within the north western parcel before flowing south along Harpenden Road, with an additional public 300mm diameter surface water sewer situated along Harpenden Road.

Geology

3.15 In terms of geology, the site is underlain by chalk. As for superficial deposits, the majority of the north of the site is shown to be overlain by clay, silt, sand, gravel of the Clay-with-Flints Formation. The majority of the southern part of the site is overlain by the Kesgrave Catchment Subgroup, comprising of sand and gravel. The Kesgrave Catchment Subgroup is also identified as outcrops in the centre and northern portions of the site.

3.16 In terms of groundwater vulnerability, the site falls within an area of indicative medium risk.

Accessibility

3.17 Harpenden Road is a key route within the area. It connects the site with St Albans city centre and serves bus route 321, a primary inter-settlement route which operates between Luton and Watford. It is also proposed to accommodate a series of walking and cycling roues within the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP). Sewell Park also proposes a series of connection links which will allow increased pedestrian permeability to and from the site.

3.18 The site benefits from access to employment and commercial opportunities at Porters Wood Industrial Estate, as well as good education providing with three primary schools (Margaret Wix Primary School, Batchwood School, and Wheatfields Junior School) within 3km of the site. Secondary education is also available at St Albans Girls' School, Sandringham School, and Townsend Church of England School.

3.19 A number of recreation and leisure opportunities exist, with Public Right of Way route 096 extending through the site wards Sandridgebury Lane, and another route extending from New Greens to Sandridge to the north of the site. Woollam playing fields accommodate a number of local club activities, and informal grounds are also present at New Greens.

EMERGING ALLOCATION

3.20 The site makes up the majority of the North St Albans Broad Location which is a proposed allocated at Policy LG1 of the emerging Local Plan for a mixed-use scheme. A small portion of the Broad Location falls outside of the applicants' site, on land to the immediate west known as "Sewell Park" which is separated from the applicants' site by a linear tree and hedgerow belt. This smaller site is broadly rectangular in shape, comprising land to the rear of existing dwellings along Harpenden Road.

4 The proposed development

4.21 The submitted application seeks planning permission for the following development:

(1) Relocation and replacement of existing playing fields and erection of pavilion annex; and

(2) Construction of up to 1000 new homes (Use Class C3) to include a mix of market housing, affordable housing, age restricted specialist accommodation for the elderly, adult disability service units; a care home (Use Class C2); a local centre (Use Classes E and F); a primary school (Use Class F); the laying out of green infrastructure including habitat creation; drainage infrastructure; earthworks; pedestrian and cycle routes; new means of access and alterations to existing accesses.

4.22 The application is submitted as a "hybrid" application. Part (1) is submitted as a full application. Part (2) is submitted as an outline application with approval of means of access sought at the present time, and all other reserved matters to be approved at a later date.

4.1 In order to define the scheme, a suite of development parameters shown at Appendix 2 have been proposed, and planning consent is sought for these as follows:

- Up to 1000 new homes (C3) of which 40% shall be affordable housing and 3% self and custom build and shall include four adult disability service units and up to 80 apartments for age restricted specialist accommodation for the elderly;
- An 80 bed care home (C2);
- A local centre providing retail, employment and community facilities [healthcare], and a mobility hub;
- A two-form entry primary school;
- New areas of accessible greenspace including a linear park providing areas of amenity open space, children's playspace, habitat creation, sustainable drainage, and community growing space/allotments;
- The relocation of an area of playing fields to Longcroft and the construction of a two changing room pavilion annex;
- Formalisation of this existing over-spill car park for temporary and occasional use;
- A new all modes access constructed onto Harpenden Road and the introduction of modal filters on Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road;
- Internal roads, cycleways, footways and drainage infrastructure; and
- The creation of a new footway and cycleway extending from Sandridgebury Lane to the Hertfordshire Way.

4.2 These proposed land uses have been informed by the expectations of the emerging Local Plan and the requirements set by emerging Policy LG1 for the Broad Location.

4.3 An Illustrative Framework Plan for the proposed development is shown at Appendix 3 and demonstrates how the various components fixed by the parameter plans can be delivered.

4.4 It is anticipated that the proposed development will be brought forward in a number of phases which will span a construction period of 10 years.

ALTERNATIVES

4.5 The site is identified as a Broad Location for development in the emerging Local Plan. Although not adopted, this Broad Location has a considerable planning history and was first identified as a potential development location during the preparation of the Local Plan in 2014.

4.6 As part of their plan process, the District Council considered alternative options for large-scale residential development. They undertook a comparative site assessment to determine the suitability of other potential development sites, and the continued allocation of North St Albans demonstrates that because of its locational characteristics and the limited extent of environmental constraints, other sites would be less preferrable with poorer locational characteristics and greater environmental constraints.

5 Summary of potential environmental impacts

ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

5.1 Nine local wildlife sites are located within a 1km radius of the site, with the location of Long Spring Wood within the site meaning that there is a potential for it to be negatively impacted. The other sites are over 0.5km rom the site, and support features such as footpaths, waste bins and car parking. In combination with the proposed provision of a green infrastructure hub, circular walking routes, and amenity and recreational facilities, it is expected that any further impacts on these sites will be mitigated It is assessed that impacts on these designations will be **negligible.**

5.2 The inclusion of a 15m buffer from the Long Spring Wood ancient woodland, in addition to signposting the route, providing further waste bins and wildlife information posts, and introduction further mixed scrub and woodland vegetation will allow a **minor positive** effect on the woodland area.

5.3 The site is beyond the zone of influence for the Chilterns Beechwood Special Area of Conservation. The impact of development on this internationally designated site is therefore **negligible**.

5.4 A number of protected species have been recorded as utilising the current habitats onsite, including badgers, bats, birds, farmland bird assemblages and reptiles. Due to the current low populations and activity of these species' groups recorded across the site it is considered that appropriate mitigation measures implemented will ensure that the impacts from the construction phase are **negligible**.

5.5 The majority of habitats to be lost are considered to be of low intrinsic value, whilst the woodland and majority of hedgerows are to be retained and reinforced. Calculations reveal that this will allow the scheme to achieve an on-site biodiversity net gain greater than the minimum requirement of 10% required by the Environment Act. The proposals will also increase the diversity and availability of habitats across the site, and further specific actionable mitigation measures will result in a **negligible** to **minor positive** impact across the majority of species groups.

5.6 Due to the loss of arable habitats, farmland bird assemblages could be negatively impacted by the proposals however the incorporation of an additional area of agricultural land to the north to be enhanced through the creation of farmland bird plots and managed within the existing agricultural rotational management will ensure that there will be a **minor positive effect** in the long term.

5.7 Overall, with the documented appropriate mitigation measures the proposals will result in **negligible** and **minor positive effects** to the designated sites, habitats and protected species recorded throughout the assessment.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

5.8 The proposed development will introduce activities and built form which will cause localised harm to landscape character and detract from the pre-existing scenery experienced by those within the surrounding landscape during both construction and operational phases.

5.9 In regard to landscape effects specifically, during construction, effects on the Ayres End Valleys and Ridges Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) are expected to be **moderate-major adverse,** as the proposed development would directly change part of the landscape. This includes impacts to the receptor itself and landscape elements within the site.

5.10 During the first operational phase, landscape effects on the LCA will continue to be **moderate-major adverse** as the development will remain as distinctive and uncharacteristic features of the LCA at this stage.

5.11 By the 15th year of operation, landscape effects on the LCA will reduce to **moderate adverse,** which is not significant in landscape terms. Although there will be change to the landscape, mitigation planting and changes to landscape management would strengthen vegetation coverage and public access within the LCA. Hedgerow losses adjoining Harpenden Road would be largely restored at this point in time, and mitigation planting would have established to increase overall vegetation cover. The proposed stewardship measures can be expected to bring various landscape features into enhanced management.

5.12 In regard to visual effects specifically, receptors include users of various footpaths, bridleways and Public Rights of Way (PRoW), visitors to Heartwood Forest, St Albans Girls' School, and Jersey Farm Park Woodland, and residents of Harpenden Road and Childwick Green.

5.13 At construction phase, visual effects are assessed as being between **minor** and **major adverse,** with those within and in closest proximity to the site being most significant. This is a result of the site hoarding and new built form being introduced, in addition to the construction activities to be experienced across the site.

5.14 At the first stage of operation, visual effects will be **moderate-major adverse** for users of public footpath 096, bridleway 009, the permissive path through the site, Sandridgebury Lane (within the site), and Harpenden Road. The remaining visual receptors are not likely to experience significant effects in this phase, as a result of the operational scheme being more visually permeable as a result of tree and vegetation planting.

5.15 During the 15th year of construction, visual effects will only be **moderate-major adverse** at bridleway 009, as the inherent mitigation planting will only be capable of partially screening and softening the appearance of the new built form as a result of the landform. All other effects will reduce to between **no effect** and **moderate adverse.**

AGRICULTURE AND SOILS

5.16 The development will require the permanent and irreversible use of 40.8ha of agricultural land, of which, 31.7ha of subgrade 3a, and 9.1ha is subgrade 3b. The significance of the effects of the proposed development on agricultural land and soil receptors is therefore assessed as being between **moderate adverse** and **major or substantial adverse.**

5.17 The loss of agricultural land is irreversible and therefore impacts will remain **moderate adverse** for the duration of the development, but through mitigation and use of a Soil Resource Management Plan, the residual effects on soils will reduce to **moderate minor adverse.**

HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

5.18 A Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment has been prepared and is informed by the results of an archaeological fieldwalking survey undertaken in 2019, and a geophysical survey undertaken in 2024.

5.19 The implementation of a programme of archaeological work will result in the preservation by record of archaeological deposits impacted by the proposed development, and will result in the overall effects on archaeology being **minor adverse.**

5.20 The proposed travel improvements at Ancient Briton junction are considered to have a **neutral** effect on the nationally significant Iron Age territorial boundary known as Beech Bottom Dyke, both in terms of construction and operation.

5.21 An assessment of potential effects to designated assets in the vicinity of the development has taken place. The assessment concludes that the designated assets within the wider vicinity of the site have low sensitivity, due to distance and intervening topography and vegetation. As such, the anticipated

magnitude of change is considered **neutral**, and the significance of this effect is considered to be **negligible.**

GROUND CONDITIONS

5.22 An Envirocheck Report and Geo-Environmental Phase 1 Desk Study Report have been prepared to assess the geotechnical and chemical characteristics of the soil and groundwater environment.

5.23 During the demolition and construction phases, human health may be affected through contamination, with the use of heavy machinery, excavation, stockpiling and filling having potentiation to affect sensitive receptors via pathways. This could cause **substantial adverse** effects should no mitigation measures be implemented. These activities also present a potential risk for fauna and flora, which could experience **minor adverse** effects without mitigation.

5.24 Contamination also poses a risk to surface water and ground water conditions, with potential for **minor adverse** impacts on surface water, and **moder adverse** impacts on groundwater should no mitigation be adopted. During construction, there I also a risk of **minor adverse effects** on flora and fauna.

5.25 During operational phases of development, there is potential for **major adverse** effects on new end users in the absence of any mitigation, and **moderate adverse** effects on below ground structures and services from contaminated soil, end users to ground gas, proposed soft landscaping, flora and fauna. There is also risk for **major adverse** effect as a result of leakages if no mitigation is introduced.

5.26 Mitigation in the form of a Construction Environment Management Plan will ensure measures are put in place to safeguard against contamination that would cause harm to sensitive receptors. Subsequently, the residual effect decreases to **negligible** for all risks, save for risk to groundwater and surface water which is likely to be **minor adverse.**

WATER RESOURCES

5.27 A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared to assess the extent to which the site is at risk of flooding.

5.28 The current hydrological system results in untreated surface water runoff infiltrating into the existing groundwater source protection zone 3. The introduction of sustainable drainage systems will provide attenuation storage allowing a surface water treatment train to be implements, which will itself increase the quality of surface water infiltrating into the ground.

5.29 During the operational phase, there is always likely to be a residual effect in terms of flooding and drainage where a storm and/or flood event can exceed the design standards of the development. This residual risk cannot always be mitigated for, so to mitigate as far as reasonably practicable, a sequential approach to the site layout will be adopted which steers vulnerable development towards areas of the site at lowest flood risk.

5.30 The mitigation will ensure that any operational effects are of between **negligible** and **minor adverse** effect.

SOCIO ECONOMICS

5.31 An assessment of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on human beings has been undertaken, taken into account the effects of population, housing, education, healthcare, open space, community facilities, and the local economy.

5.32 Development of the site will offer some beneficial impacts in terms of construction work and associated benefits to the local economy, although the construction itself is likely to result in a

number of noise, air quality and construction traffic impacts for future and existing residents. The scheme will deliver a mix of uses and infrastructure provision is intend to respond to a suitable phasing strategy, and the population of the scheme will gradually increase over time. This population increase will give rise to community needs that will in time be satisfied through existing community facilities and those to be delivered by the scheme. There will be a period of time as the development evolves that **minor adverse** effects will be experienced when new residents occupy the site, and new facilities are not yet fully operational.

5.33 During operational phase, the increase in housing stock, a significant amount of which is affordable housing, offers a **substantial benefit.** The range of housing offered is similarly considered to offer a **substantial beneficial** effect.

5.34 The provision of a new two-form entry primary school in combination with the existing school capacity is expected to result in a **negligible** impact on primary education and early years provision, with the majority of future pupils of the development anticipated to utilise the onsite facilities. The provision of financial contributions for secondary education if required will also result in a **negligible** effect on secondary education provision.

5.35 The scheme will retain a large portion of green space and deliver a mix of open space typologies. The provision of amenity green space, natural and semi-natural green space, parks and gardens, allotments, children's play areas, and teenage areas will be available to future and existing residents of North St Albans, offering a **moderate beneficial** impact. The on-site provision of sports pitches in combination with the financial contributions to be made at Toulmin Drive also offer a **minor beneficial** effect.

5.36 The provision a local centre, which includes a range of retail facilities, community facilities and business space will offer a **minor beneficial** effect. The inclusion of healthcare provision which will serve the needs of the future population will result in a **negligible** effect on healthcare services.

WASTE AND MATERIAL ASSETS

5.37 In the absence of any mitigation, there is a risk of impact from waste on human health and contamination, which could lead to **moderate** significant effects on waste treatment and recycling facilities, non-hazardous and hazardous landfill sites, ground contamination, water contamination, and visual impact of the surrounding areas. It could also lead to **major** effects on human health for existing site users, and **minor** effects on site works, contractors, and future residents.

5.38 Through the implementation of actionable mitigation, the risk of these effects is assessed as reducing to **negligible.**

CLIMATE CHANGE

5.39 The proposed development has the potential to cause a **minor adverse** significant effect on the global climatic system during construction as a result of the greenhouse gas emissions released on and offsite from a range of activities. This impact is considered to remain **minor adverse** during operation, which is not considered to be significant.

TRAFFIC AND MOVEMENT

5.40 A robust assessment to data collection and traffic forecasting has been undertaken to establish the construction and operational impacts of the proposed development. This has included reviewing potential demolition and construction motor vehicle traffic volume and classification for construction, and volume and classification of motor vehicle traffic generated by new land uses.

5.41 An extensive package of off-site mitigation measures are proposed that will target reduction in severance and fear and intimidation that non-motorised users may otherwise experience. On

Harpenden Road to the south of the site access, improvements are proposed to deliver a continuous segregated cycle route between the site and uni-directional infrastructure proposed by Sewell Park. Improvements are also proposed to the existing pedestrian crossings, and new cycle crossing provision is also proposed, at the Ancient Briton and King William junctions. Additional crossing points on Harpenden Road are also proposed to help address severance and delay. The anticipated impact of severance of communities and non-motorised user delay therefore is considered to be **minor adverse** on Harpenden Road. The impact experienced at Ancient Briton, the King William IV junction, and Townsend Drive, are also considered to be **negligible** with mitigation.

5.42 In terms of road vehicle driver and passenger delay, actionable mitigation comprises a number of measures targeting increases in walking, cycling and public transport trips, thereby offsetting the additional vehicle trips forecast in connection with the proposed development. It also includes improvements to Ancient Briton and the King William IV junctions. With this mitigation, effects on Ancient Briton will be **minor adverse** whilst those at King William IV will be **negligible.**

5.43 When considering road user and pedestrian safety, mitigation comprises extensive improvements to pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, the implementation of modal filters and traffic calming across the local highway network surrounding the site, resulting in a **minor adverse** impact as a result of the proposed development.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

5.44 The construction noise assessment has considered an assumed plant list for four construction activities, minimum and average distances from the nearest worksites to the nearest noise sensitive receptors, and worst-case and typical construction activity noise levels. The construction activities considered include earthworks, roadworks, general construction, and fitout and landscaping.

5.45 It is considered that the majority of impacts will be **negligible,** but some low impacts are anticipated during earthworks, roadworks, fit out and landscaping, and general construction stages across a number of receptors, and medium impacts are anticipated at Sewell Park during earthworks and general construction activities. Considering the worst case scenario however, these impacts will be **minor adverse.**

5.46 When considering vibration, the assessment identifies a **low** impact at an area to the west of the site at the existing garage, with the rest of the receptors being **negligible.**

5.47 During operation, there will be some noise generated from sports activity at the playing fields. This will be below 50dB at all receptors and will therefore have a **negligible** effect. There will also be some off-site road traffic noise associated with this use, but this will be below 1dB, and will therefore also be **negligible.**

5.48 There will also be noise associated with building services, but this is also assessed as being **negligible** and not significant.

5.49 A Site Suitability Assessment has identified that the site is generally suitable for residential development subject to good acoustic design measures being implemented in respect of residential development adjacent to Harpenden Road, the Midland Main Line railway line, and the substation at Porters Wood Industrial Estate. It also reveals that vibration levels are not significant in terms of the suitability of the site for development. The area of the site allocated for the primary school is also generally suitable or such development in terms of external noise levels.

5.50 Mitigation in terms of noise include best practicable means comprising site hoardings, which could reduce noise levels by up to 5 dB. The application of such mitigation is likely to reduce the worse-case noise level to below Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level. Subject to the development of the construction programme and methods of working, secured through a CEMP, construction noise and vibration monitoring could be implemented at key locations during specific activities to provide further management of noise generated by those activities.

5.51 No actionable mitigation is identified for the operation phase of the proposed development, however standard measures including the relocation of external plant, selection of quieter models, and enclosure or attenuation of plant will be considered. Good acoustic design measures are however considered, specifically for residential development adjacent to Harpenden Road, the Midland Main Line railway, and Porters Wood Industrial Estate. These include maximising the distance between dwellings and sources of road traffic, railway and industrial noise, orientating non-habitable rooms towards these noise sources, using the building massing to shield external amenity areas aware from these sources, using localised screening to provide further screening of these sources, and the design of buildings themselves in terms of glazing and ventilation.

5.52 The substation transformers will be enclosed as part of the acoustic mitigation scheme, and no actionable mitigation is identified for railway vibration or the school development parcel.

5.53 It is assessed the residual effects will remain the same as initially assessed above.

AIR QUALITY

5.54 Construction traffic is likely to comprise approximately 20 two-way HGV movements and 55 light vehicle movements per day. This peak traffic generation is below the criteria for development proposals outside an Air Quality Management Area and in reality, will be significantly lower as an annual average. It is therefore not considered necessary to assess the impacts of traffic emissions during the construction phases, and it is concluded that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on local roadside air quality as a result of emissions.

5.55 In terms of on-site exhaust emissions, the majority of the site is more than 50m from any sensitive receptor, the nearest being the existing residential properties to the west of the site. During construction, the siting of non-road mobile machinery will consider the proximity of those nearby receptors, including any new sensitive uses that are occupied during the construction phase. When not in use, all vehicles and plant will be switched off, and the distance between mobile machinery and sensitive properties will be maximised as much as possible. It is therefore considered that there is no risk of significant effects as a result of these emissions.

5.56 Construction works will also give risk to a risk of dust impacts during earthworks and construction, and assessment work has been completed to establish this level of risk. Earthworks and construction works are assessed as having a high risk on dust soiling, a medium risk on human health, and a low risk on ecology, whilst trackout is assessed as having a medium risk on dusk soiling, and a low risk on human health and ecology.

5.57 When operational, the development will generate traffic volumes that exceed the EPUK/IAQM screening thresholds and therefore a detailed assessment has been undertaken and concluded that the impacts at all receptors will be **negligible.** It concludes that impact of construction dust, operational road traffic, and proposed residential properties, will all lead to a **negligible** impact.

5.58 Actionable mitigation during construction phase relates to communications work, a dust management plan, site management measures, monitoring, preparing and maintaining the site, measures to operate vehicles and machinery, waste management, and specific measures for earthworks, construction, and trackout. A Travel Plan is also proposed to manage impacts at operational stage.

5.59 At construction stage, the residual effects are likely to not be significant. It is however recognised that, even with a rigorous dust management plan in place, it is not possible to guarantee that the dust mitigation measures will be effective all of the time. Notwithstanding this, the scale would not normally be considered sufficient to change the conclusion that, overall, the effects will be not significant.

5.60 During operation, the effects will also remain **negligible** as a result of construction dust, operational road traffic impacts, and proposed residential properties.

CONCLUSIONS

5.61 The assessment of the likely significant effects of the proposed development has concluded that the development can proceed without causing unacceptable impacts on either the local or wider environments. In many respects, the scheme will be beneficial.

5.62 Through appropriate mitigation measures which are either inherent within the proposed development and shown on the parameter plans, standard measures identified in the ES to be secured as part of the planning permission either by means of planning condition or planning obligation, or actionable mitigation to be secured by the Applicant in conjunction with others, the environmental effects of the proposed development are minimised.

5.63 For these reasons, the Environmental Statement concludes that the measured environmental consequences of the proposed development support the granting of planning permission.

6 Further information

6.1 Copies of the Environmental Statement, together with the planning application documents, will be made available for inspection at:

St Albans City and District Council, Civic Centre, St Peters Street, St Albans, AL1 3JE

6.2 Details of the applications and electronic copies of the documents will also be made available on the SACDC website at:

https://planningapplications.stalbans.gov.uk/planning

6.3 Comments on the ES and the planning application can be submitted via the Council's website or at the above address.

6.4 Copies of this Non-Technical Summary (NTS) are available free of charge. Hard copies of the full ES (three volumes) can be purchased for a cost of £150 and electronic versions on USB are £5. The non-technical summary can be made available for free of charge.

6.5 For any of these copies, please contact LRM Planning at:

Telephone: 02920 349737

Email: admin@lrmplanning.com

Address: 22 Cathedral Road, Pontcanna, Cardiff, CF11 9LJ

Appendix 1. Site location plan

Appendix 2. Parameter plans

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