

Our ref: HP/SR/ST21669/LET-001

Date: 22nd April 2025

Gravesham Borough Council
Civic Centre
Windmill Street
Gravesend
Kent
DA12 1AU

Dear Sir/Madam

Request for Screening Opinion under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 in relation to two outline planning applications for residential developments, one for up to 350 dwellings and one for up to 120 dwellings, at Meopham, Wrotham Road.

1. Introduction

We are writing on behalf of our client, Richborough (the Applicant), to request a formal Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Opinion under regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (herein the '2017 Regulations') in support of two outline planning applications for residential development to include up to 470 houses across the two sites.

Both schemes have been considered in combination within this Screening Request in order to robustly demonstrate that significant effects are not likely as a result of either scheme in isolation, or both in combination. Further information is provided within Section 4 below.

In accordance with paragraph 6(2) of the EIA regulations, we enclose a site location plan (Appendix 2), and a description within this letter of:

- The sites and the proposals;
- The aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposals;
- Any likely significant effects of the proposals on the environment (to the extent of the information available); and
- Measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.



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MINERAL ESTATES
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This letter sets out the legislative and environmental considerations of relevance to the proposals, to enable Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) to issue a Screening Opinion. It is considered that the proposals do not comprise 'EIA development' as defined in the 2017 Regulations, as the proposals are not likely to result in significant effects on the environment.

2. Description of the Sites and Surrounding Area

Site Description

Please note that all measurements of the sites and distances provided within this request are approximates.

Both sites are located on the southern edge of Hook Green, north of Meopham. Site A is 15.73 ha in size and comprises two agricultural fields east of Wrotham Road (A227) and south of Green Lane. Site B is a 5.43 ha rectangular shaped plot that comprises part of an agricultural field south of Longfield Road (B260) and 280m west of Site A. Land between the two sites is developed and includes Meopham Community Academy, Helen Allison School, a pre-school, nursery and residential development. Existing development to the north of the two sites is predominantly residential, with a parade of shops on Wrotham Road adjacent to Site A.

A public right of way (PRoW) lies along the eastern site boundary of Site B and follows a southerly direction before crossing east along the southern edge of the two schools. This PRoW then links to the wider footpath network to the east, including links to the south of Site A and Camer Country Park. Site A is bordered by an established row of trees along Green Lane to the south, and Site B is adjacent to an area of woodland on the opposite side of Longfield Road, on the western edge of Hook Green.

To the east and west of the sites land is predominantly arable agriculture, with trees and hedges dispersed throughout. Camer Country Park is located 0.28 km east of Site A at the closest point, and the village of Hanley Street 1.83 km east. Other establishments to the south, within Meopham, include: Foxendown Fruit Farm (0.24 km away); New Ifield Cricket Club (1.49 km away); Meopham Village Hall (0.92 km away); Busy Bees at Meopham Nursery school (0.72 km away); Meopham Secondary School (0.61 km away); and Meopham Leisure Centre (0.54 km away). The sites are 4.2km south of the A2 and Gravesend; and 7km north of the M20.

There are no environmental designations within the sites. Both sites lie within Flood Zone 1, and are free from areas of medium or high surface water flood risk with only very small areas of low surface water flood risk at the north western corner of Site A. The Kent Downs Area of



Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is located 0.26 km to the east of Site A. The North Downs Woodland Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located 3km east of Site A.

The Grade I Listed Parish Church of St John the Baptist and the Grade II Listed Church Cottages are located 0.19 km south of Site A, within the Conservation Area (CA) of The Street.

Figure 1 and Appendix 2 illustrates the location of the sites, and the application boundary.



Figure 1: Site Location (Source: Google Earth)

Planning History

There have been two historic residential planning applications at Site B. These include, two outline residential applications determined at appeal for the erection of 54 sheltered housing units, a community and office building and provision of a new vehicular access (application refs: 20030188 and 20030903). The appeals were dismissed in 2004 and are of limited relevance due to the change in national and local planning policy and guidance.

Other Developments in the Area

There are projects within the administrative area of GBC, of a comparable size and scale to the proposals. The developments presented below were not classed as EIA development. Environmental surveys and assessments have been carried out for the below developments where needed, and these have shown their impact on the environment to be limited. Due to the distance between the schemes and the sites, it is unlikely that there will be common receptors that could be affected by the proposed developments acting in combination with



the sites, hence no significant cumulative effects would be caused. Planning applications of a similar nature to the proposals that have been submitted to GBC include:

- Erection of 242no. residential units for Build to Rent (C3 Use Class), within three blocks ranging from 3 to 10 storeys, together with multi-storey car park as well as access, pedestrian links, landscaping, highway and other associated works, at land at Market Square and Horn Yard Car Parks, New Swan Yard, Gravesend, DA12 2EN (20200343). This application was permitted on Monday 21st December 2020.
- Erection of two buildings to provide a total of 133no. dwellings with associated vehicle parking, highway works and landscaping, comprising erection of a thirteen storey building on the north side of West Street to provide 54no. dwellings and one ground floor B1(a) unit and a second building ranging in height from four storeys to nine storeys on the south side of West Street to provide 79no. dwellings; and the restoration and adaptation of the existing two-level pier structure to provide public and private amenity space to include erection of a glazed pavilion, at Clifton Slipways (including West Street Pier and land to the north and south of West Street) West Street Gravesend Kent (20160046). This application was permitted on Wednesday 9th August 2017.
- The development of land at Ebbsfleet for mixed use up to 789,550m² gross floorspace comprising employment, residential, hotel and leisure uses, supporting retail and community facilities and provision of car parking, open space, roads and infrastructure and being for the variation/deletion of the following planning conditions of outline planning permission 20120186 (which itself was a variation of the original outline planning permission reference 19960035): D9 (affordable housing quantum), D10 (lifetime homes quantum), D15 (employment timing), F6 (Springhead highway improvement), G1 (pre-school nursery timing), G2 (primary school timing), G3 (health care provisions), G4 (family centre timing), G7 (local park timing), G8 (allotments), G9 (playing fields quantum), G10 (sports centre requirement), G11 (affordable housing timing), G12 (Lifetime Homes timing), G15 (adult education provisions) and G16 (recycling facility provisions). This site is at Ebbsfleet bounded by the A2, Southfleet Rd, Springhead Rd, North Kent Rail Line Excluding Blue Lake, Springhead Enterprise Park and CTRL Alignment, Swanscombe/North, application reference 20150155. This application was permitted on Wednesday 24th February 2016.
- Outline planning application for the development of up to 400 new homes and associated infrastructure including provision of open space, with access off Coldharbour Road, at land at Coldharbour Road Northfleet Gravesend Kent (20141214). The application was permitted on Wednesday 10th January 2018.



3. Development Description

The proposals comprise two residential developments for a combined total of up to 470 dwellings, with up to 350 dwellings proposed the eastern site (Site A) and up to 120 dwellings proposed in the western site (Site B). Initial development details are set out below. The development designs could evolve during the course of the planning application preparation, but will remain broadly in line with the below principles.

The proposals will include a variety of house types aimed at meeting the requirements set out in evidence base documents and Local Plan policies. The house type design will reflect local character and materials used elsewhere in Hook Green and Meopham.

Existing trees and planting, particularly within the boundary features, are to be retained and strengthened where possible. New planting will include trees, hedges, shrubs and wildflowers. Tree-lined streets will be incorporated into the layout to add to the street scenes and mark the initial arrival point. New tree planting will include ornamental and native species to encourage wildlife and enhance biodiversity. The open space strategy incorporates blue and green infrastructure to ensure the Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) are attractive and form part of usable open space that is attractive and suitable for habitat creation. Walking routes will be created throughout the proposals.

Site A – Land East of Wrotham Road

Site A will include up to 350 homes including 50% as affordable housing.

A vehicular and pedestrian access point from Wrotham Road, potentially located to north of the adjacent row of shops (subject to review), would provide access to the site. Pedestrian and cycle access will be provided in the north of the site off Camer Road, and pedestrian access in the southwest corner of the site via Wrotham Road as well as in the southeast corner of the site from the existing PRow. An emergency vehicle entrance will provide onsite albeit the point of access onto Wrotham Road is to be determined. In the northwest corner of the site an area has been identified for potential car park use for the local centre.

The Wrotham Road frontage has been sensitively designed to ensure the existing mature trees are retained as far as possible, with removals limited to those required for access only. The development parcels are shown to be outward facing to ensure that the Wrotham Road and Green Lane frontages provide active surveillance of the landscape buffers and the centrally located area of open space. The eastern edge includes significant planting, including retaining and reinstating hedgerows, and extensive accessible informal open space with links available to the wider PRow network. The planting on the eastern edge will filter views,



reducing intervisibility with the AONB. A new woodland edge will be created along the south of the site to create a soft developable edge and a buffer to the heritage assets to the south. A focal green space with potential children's play area will be located within the north of the site, centred among the development area. The open space and streets in the south of the site will be aligned to retain views of St John's the Baptist's Church.

Higher density development will be located within the centre of the site, with medium density areas to the north and central areas, and low density development areas to the south of the land parcel.

Site B – Land South of Longfield Road

Site B will include up to 120 homes including a 50% level of affordable housing.

The primary vehicular access is to be taken from Longfield Road. In the northwest corner of the site gateway features and speed restrictions will be implemented. Potential pedestrian access from the existing PRow can be found on the eastern border of the site.

The layout retains the route of the existing PRow along the eastern edge, as well as improving links to the wider network of footpaths. The proposed development is designed to include a green corridor through the site as well as providing landscape buffers and screening to the east, south and west. The south of the site will use green infrastructure to create a soft edge to the development, through use of buffer planting. This will ensure there is sufficient offset from the adjacent school and provide a defensible boundary to the proposed new settlement edge.

The western edge of the site is anticipated to create a gateway for people driving into the village on Longfield Road and the layout currently shows how additional landscaping and outward facing properties along this edge could enhance the character of this area.

The proposed development has potential to provide a new school car park and drop off area in the eastern area of the site.

The northern area of the site will provide outward facing development onto Longfield Road, potentially including linear drainage features. The northeastern area of the site will contain a development area with medium density, and the south and east of this land parcel will contain a low density development area.

4. Request for EIA Screening Opinion

The EIA Regulations set out the thresholds for when a project would constitute an EIA development. The proposals fall under Schedule 2 Category 10 (b) 'Urban development



projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas’ of the EIA Regulations. The relevant thresholds for Category 10 (b) are:

- i. *‘the development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or*
- ii. *the development includes more than 150 dwellings; or*
- iii. *the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.’*

Both sites exceed the development thresholds of 5 hectares. Site A also exceeds the threshold of 150 dwellings for Category 10 (b), however Site B remains under this threshold. Therefore, EIA screening must be undertaken in accordance with EIA regulations.

The following table identifies the thresholds outlined in Schedule 2 for Category 10 (b) as well as the indicative thresholds outlined within the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Proposed development type	Schedule 2 criteria and thresholds	Indicative criteria and threshold	Key issues to consider
10. Infrastructure Projects			
(b) Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas;	(i) The development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or (ii) the development includes more than 150 dwellings; or (iii) the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.	Environmental Impact Assessment is unlikely to be required for the redevelopment of land unless the new development is on a significantly greater scale than the previous use, or the types of impact are of a markedly different nature or there is a high level of contamination. Sites which have not previously been intensively developed: (i) area of the scheme is more than 5 hectares; or (ii) it would provide a total of more than 10,000 m ² of new commercial floorspace; or (iii) the development would have significant urbanising effects in a previously non-urbanised area (e.g. a new development of more than 1,000 dwellings).	Physical scale of such developments, potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise.

These projects will not include any commercial floorspace, and would also form a natural extension to the already developed areas of Hook Green, therefore reducing any urbanising effects. Therefore, the proposals only exceed the indicative criteria and thresholds of being more than 5 ha in size.



The PPG states that it should not be presumed that developments above the thresholds should always be subject to assessment, and that each development should be considered on its merits.

It is recognised that within EIA the 'project' can differ from what is proposed within a planning application, as the EIA should consider wider development which is dependent upon, or enabled by, a planning application. Key considerations for whether separate applications should be considered as a single project for the purposes of EIA are common ownership; functional interdependence; and whether works can be justified on their own merit. Only the first point is relevant to these proposals, which are otherwise capable of being developed independently of one another. However, in order to robustly demonstrate that EIA is not required and that significant effects are not likely as a result of either project in isolation or both in cumulation; this Screening Request has considered both sites in combination.

The proposals have been screened against the following selection criteria within Schedule 3:

1. The characteristics of the proposed development;
2. The location of the proposed development; and
3. The types and characteristics of any potential impact.

Appendix 1 of this letter provides an assessment of the proposals against the criteria included in Schedules 1, 2 and 3 of the EIA Regulations, to enable GBC to issue a Screening Opinion. It is considered that the proposals do not comprise "EIA development" as defined in the EIA Regulations on the basis that the proposals are not likely to result in significant effects on the environment, either in isolation or in combination.

5. Information Accompanying the Application

Although it is anticipated that there will be no significant environmental impacts because of the proposals, as a minimum the following assessments will be undertaken in support of the applications:

- Design and Access Statement;
- Heritage and Archaeology Statement;
- Air Quality Impact Assessment;
- Ecological Site Assessment including species surveys;
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculations;
- Contaminated Land Desk Study;
- Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Strategy;



- Noise Impact Assessment;
- Energy Statement;
- Transport Assessment (TA);
- Travel Plan (TP);
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment;
- Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Report; and
- Utilities Statement.

6. Summary of Appendix 1

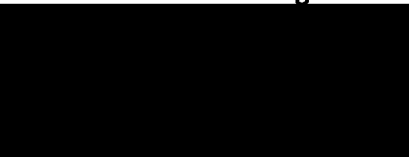
The 2017 Regulations state that the proposals fall within the criteria of Schedule 2 activity, however based on the preliminary identification and assessment of the potential impacts it is not considered likely that either development will result in significant effects on the environment (either in isolation or in combination) and as such it is not considered that either application comprises EIA development. The extent of any likely impacts can be successfully dealt with by appropriate technical study and consideration through the planning proposal, with well-established mitigation methods.

We therefore request that GBC adopts a Screening Opinion, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, that neither proposal comprises EIA development. If it is considered that one of the schemes would require EIA but not the other, could separate screening opinions please be issued to that effect.

We look forward to receiving your response within the statutory three-week timescale (set by Regulation 6(6)(a)). If you require further information to aid your decision, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

for Wardell Armstrong LLP



SUSAN RAINE

Technical Director





APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1 – SCREENING MATRIX

SCREENING MATRIX	
PROJECT:	Two outline planning applications for residential developments, one for up to 350 dwellings and one for up to 120 dwellings, at Meopham, Wrotham Road.
SCHEDULES 1 & 2	
Is it Schedule 1 development?	No The proposals are not described by any Schedule 1 development criteria.
Is it Schedule 2 development?	Yes The proposals fall within Schedule 2 category 10(b) Industrial Projects, as described as ‘ <i>Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas</i> ’.
Does the development exceed the applicable threshold?	Yes The threshold criteria for development under category 10(b) is when ‘ <i>the development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or the development includes more than 150 dwellings; or the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.</i> ’ Site A exceeds the threshold of 5 hectares (being approximately 15.73 ha) and 150 dwellings (up to 350 houses are currently proposed). Site B exceeds the threshold of 5 hectares (being approximately 5.43 ha).
Is the development located in, or partly in a ‘sensitive area’?	No The sites are not within a ‘sensitive area,’ as defined in regulation 2(1) of the EIA Regulations.
Is a Screening Opinion required?	Yes The proposals exceed the threshold criteria of category 10(b) of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations 2017. Therefore, a Screening Opinion is required. On this basis, the proposals are required to be assessed under Schedule 3 which sets out selection criteria for whether it constitutes an EIA development.



SCHEDULE 3		
Criteria	Yes / No	Is a significant effect likely?
Natural Resources		
Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the topography of the area?	Yes The proposals will involve landscaping the sites, which will physically change the sites topography.	No The illustrative masterplan will show how the sites are intended to be developed, and this will be refined as future work is conducted on the sites to minimise the negative effects that the development may pose. It is also intended to maintain the natural topography of the sites as much as possible, reducing the impacts of any changes to the sites' topography.
Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes The land/soils currently on the sites will be lost to the proposals during the construction phase of the project. During operation, the proposals will also require the use of water to provide this natural resource to inhabitants.	No <u>Land and soil</u> During construction, the use of the sites will be altered from agricultural land with this resource being lost. However, where soils are removed from the sites these will be suitably stored on site and reused on the site to landscape the proposed development, conserving the soil resource. The proposals also intend to maintain green open space, protecting the land and soil resources at these site locations. An ALC Report will be produced in support of the planning applications. <u>Water</u> The construction phase will require the use of water for building and landscaping purposes, then during the operational phase water will be needed on site for residential use. <u>Materials/minerals</u> Building materials will be required during the construction phase. During the construction phase it will be intended to use sustainable materials wherever possible. Some examples of this would be to choose suppliers who also practice sustainability and reducing the quantities of non-renewable and finite resources used.



SCHEDULE 3		
Criteria	Yes / No	Is a significant effect likely?
		<u>Energy</u> During construction, energy will be required to power the construction machinery. Where possible the energy used will come from sustainable sources and be used only when required. During operation, energy will need to be provided by the proposals for residential use. As renewable energy makes a larger contribution to the National Grid, sustainable sources will be used to provided energy to homes, reducing impacts of energy consumption on the environment.
Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project, e.g. forestry, agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?	Yes There are areas of priority habitat deciduous woodland that border the site which form part of a woodland improvement area and have been classed as woodland priority habitat network.	No Development of the sites will result in the loss of c. 20.73 ha of arable agricultural land, which is the predominant land use in the local area, hence the loss will not be significant when considering the wider area. The priority woodland habitat bordering the sites will be protected during construction of the proposals, along with the creation of areas of green infrastructure bordering the sites, that will support this priority habitat. The Air Quality Impact Assessment will consider any impacts associated with air quality pollution on the priority woodland habitats, and will also provide mitigation to reduce these impacts.
Waste		
Will the project produce solid wastes during construction, operation, or decommissioning?	Yes The construction phase will produce solid wastes in the form of construction waste, and during the operational phase domestic waste will be produced.	No During construction there may be some minimal waste produced, however the impacts of this will be mitigated by following best practice and guidance, and any waste will be disposed of appropriately at the relevant and licenced waste facility. During operation waste produced will be removed from the sites in a suitable manner and be collected by GBC in accordance with policy and guidance. The roads forming the proposed developments will allow access for refuse collection, and suitable waste collection sites including bins will be provided throughout the proposed developments in suitable quantities to allow residents to dispose of wate effectively.



SCHEDULE 3		
Criteria	Yes / No	Is a significant effect likely?
Pollution and Nuisances		
Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Yes During construction, any machinery used, and the movement of soils and materials may release pollutants into the air. During the operational phase traffic on the sites associated with the residential nature of the developments will release pollution into the air.	No Best practice will be implemented to ensure that construction impacts due to vehicle movements are minimised. Furthermore, any impacts associated with construction will be temporary in nature. The Transport Assessment (TA) supported by the Travel Plan (TP) will set out sustainable, low emission, modes of transport to and from the sites during both construction and operation. Additionally, due to the sites location several services will be provided nearby (bus and rail) which will make commuting by public transport easily accessible for residents. The nearest train stations to the sites are Meopham (1.10 km north) and Sole Street (1.13 km northeast), and Huntingfield Road 0.06 km to the north of Site A is the closest bus stop. Meopham train station can be accessed by bus services close to the sites on Wrotham Road. Meopham train station has regular services to London Victoria, Dover, Gillingham, and Ramsgate. The TA will also set out any mitigation to reduce the amount of air pollution from traffic associated with the proposals. An Air Quality Impact Assessment will assess and provide mitigation measures for any air pollution predicted to be released by the proposals.
Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes The proposals will cause noise and light, however no heat, energy, or electromagnetic radiation will be released from the proposals.	No The nearby residents may be subject to increased noise and light levels from the sites during both the construction and operational phases. During construction additional lighting may occur around working hours depending on daylight hours, and where needed occupancy detectors will be used in line with good practice. A Noise Impact Assessment will identify any noise sources associated with the proposals and set out strategies to mitigate against any noise pollution, which will become embedded into the development design as the project progresses. Any impacts associated with construction will be temporary in nature. The Noise Impact Assessment will also set out mitigation to be implemented that will reduce the effect of noise from the sites during the operational phase, if required.



SCHEDULE 3		
Criteria	Yes / No	Is a significant effect likely?
		During operation, the proposals may increase lighting levels at the sites, however a street lighting plan will set out the design of street lighting in a manner that will reduce any associated impacts. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) would also assess the effects of lighting from the proposals on the local area.
Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Yes During construction there is the risk of spills on site that would contaminate land or water.	No During construction standard best practice will mitigate the risk of contamination from activities such as spillages and leakages, such as the creation of fuel bunds. Best practice will be followed during the operational phase to reduce the risk of contamination to the local ground and water, an example of this would be keeping any fuels, oils, and other potentially harmful liquids away from waterbodies. A Contaminated Land Desk Study will be prepared in support of this planning application, that will identify and potential sources of contamination at the sites and set out methods to mitigate against any risks associated with these.
Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	No There are no areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage.	No Due to there not being any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, no significant effects will occur because of this.
Population and Human Health		
Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?	No Subject to adherence to relevant health and safety requirements, it is highly unlikely that a major accident or disaster would arise. Changes to the future climate baseline have the potential to affect the proposals through issues such as soil drying; temperature; precipitation; snow and ice; gales and	No Due to the site's stable location, it is unlikely that any significant effects will be caused by/on the proposals because of major accidents. The proposals will be constructed considering future baseline conditions, hence will be resistant to the impacts of climate change. The sites lie within Flood Zone 1, therefore severe flooding will be unlikely at the sites.



SCHEDULE 3		
Criteria	Yes / No	Is a significant effect likely?
	storms; and cloud cover. However, the proposals would be designed to ensure resilience to such impacts.	
Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)	No During construction, the proposals are unlikely to pose a risk to human health, through the production of air pollution. The proposals will not present a risk to the population and their health during operation as the development will be suitable for residents to live a healthy life.	No Whilst some levels of air pollution will be produced during the construction phase, these will be suitably mitigated as set out in the Air Quality Impact Assessment to reduce this impact to a non-significant level, as well as the implementation of good practice health and safety measures. No risks to the population and their health will exist during the operational phase. In fact, the proposals will aim to improve people's standard of living through providing suitable housing and green infrastructure. The project also aims to reduce traffic past the schools adjacent to the sites, which will reduce the volume of traffic emissions in the area, improving people's health by improving local air quality.
Water Resources		
Are there any water resources including surface waters, e.g. rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?	Yes There are no surface water resources located in close proximity to the sites. Groundwater could potentially be affected by pollution events.	No A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Strategy will be developed as part of the planning application. This scope of works will mitigate any impacts on flooding caused by the proposals, and ensure that any water leaving the sites as a result of the proposals will be dealt with accordingly, reducing any consequences. The sites lie within Flood Zone 1 with only very small areas of low surface water flood risk at the north western corner of Site A. This will also reduce the impacts that the proposals will have on water resources in the local area, due to the lack of environmental features and processes at the sites and surrounding area that the proposals would interact with. The proposals are not anticipated to use any materials that may cause water contamination, and best practice and guidance will be used to mitigate the risk of pollution and water contamination.



SCHEDULE 3		
Criteria	Yes / No	Is a significant effect likely?
Biodiversity		
Are there any protected areas which are designated or classified for their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, or any non-designated / non-classified areas which are important or sensitive for reasons of their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, located on or around the location and which could be affected by the project? (e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water-bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, undesignated nature reserves or parks).	Yes There are areas of priority habitat deciduous woodland that border the sites which form part of a woodland improvement area and have been classed as woodland priority habitat network. The North Downs Woodland Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located 3 km east of Site A.	No An Ecological Site Assessment including species surveys will be undertaken as part of the planning application for this project, that will identify any habitats and species on the sites and surrounding area that could be affected by the proposals, and set out any mitigation measures to be implemented to reduce these. The proposals aim to reduce the loss of priority habitats at the sites and create green infrastructure that will provide benefits for wildlife and support any priority habitats identified on site. Based on initial appraisals it is not considered that the sites are functionally linked to the North Downs Woodland SAC, however the assessment will consider the potential impacts of increased recreational pressure and ensure this is mitigated accordingly.
Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?	Yes As mentioned above, there is suitable good quality habitats on the sites and in the surrounding area.	No The Ecological Site Assessment and any species reports produced for this project after carrying out any required species surveys, will set out any mitigation measures to be implemented that will reduce the impacts on any protected, important, or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the sites. Green infrastructure will be implemented by the proposals, that will support habitats already on site and bring benefits to the local biodiversity. The open space strategy incorporates blue and green infrastructure to ensure the SuDS are suitable for habitat creation. The scheme will achieve a net gain in biodiversity and a BNG Metric/calculations will be provided with the application submission.



SCHEDULE 3		
Criteria	Yes / No	Is a significant effect likely?
Landscape & Visual		
Are there any areas or features on or around the location which are protected for their landscape and scenic value, and/or any non-designated / non-classified areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes The Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is located 0.26 km to the east of Site A.	No Any impacts on the Kent Downs AONB will be assessed within the LVIA, and the LVIA will also propose any mitigation measures to be implemented to reduce any effects where needed. From the initial site survey it is considered that the visual envelop of the site is limited by the rolling landscape, and the existing vegetation on Camer Park Road limits inter-visibility between the sites and AONB. The eastern border of Site A will be mainly composed of green infrastructure, that will act as a landscape buffer between Site A and the AONB, reducing potential impacts. Furthermore, enhancement of the landscaped edge to the east of Site A will align the existing settlement edge with the Green Belt and AONB beyond. The proposals have been designed to respect the local character of the area surrounding the sites. The landscape strategy of the sites will be soft and native to the area to reflect the local context and the host landscape type. This includes the creation of green frontages along Wrotham Road and Longfield Road which will enable the retention of existing tree cover whilst providing space for additional roadside landscaping. Overall, development in this location would not result in significant harm to landscape character or visual amenity, and an appropriately designed scheme could meet the landscape objectives of both National and Local Planning Policy.
Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes The sites border the village of Hook Green (north of Site A and northeast of Site B) and will be visible to people there.	No Views of the construction phase will be temporary in nature, and during the operational phase site screening will develop over time as landscaping and planting throughout the buffer of green infrastructure that will border the sites, reducing the visibility of the proposals. The proposals will also tie in with the surrounding landscape and act as a natural extension to the village of Hook Green once constructed.



SCHEDULE 3		
Criteria	Yes / No	Is a significant effect likely?
Cultural Heritage & Archaeology		
Are there any areas or features which are protected for their cultural heritage or archaeological value, or any non-designated / classified areas and/or features of cultural heritage or archaeological importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project (including potential impacts on setting, and views to, from and within)?	Yes The grade I listed building of Saint John the Baptist Meopham and Grade II listed church cottages can be found 0.19 km south of Site A within the Conservation Area (CA) of The Street.	No A Heritage and Archaeology Statement will be produced to support the planning application for this project, which will assess the impacts of the proposals on heritage and archaeology and set out any mitigation required to reduce any impacts identified. Enhanced buffer planting to the south of Site A will ensure that the character and appearance of the Listed Buildings are respected and potential impacts to the CA are mitigated. A Heritage consultant is involved in the development design to ensure the development parcels retain the key views, and the landscaped development buffer provides sufficient mitigation against impacts on the Listed Buildings and their setting.
Transport & Access		
Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes A footpath is located on the eastern edge of Site B and there is a network of PRow in the wider area.	No The footpath currently passing through the site is intended to be retained and incorporated within the development, which will reduce the impacts on the provision of public access to recreation and other facilities. The proposals seek to improve pedestrian and cycle links through the sites to the wider public right of ways network, including Camer Park. The proposals have the potential to provide car parking for Meopham Community Academy and Helen Allison School, bordering the east of Site B. This provision of additional parking would provide beneficial effects of local transport routes by providing a suitable area for parking that prevents congestion caused by roadside parking.
Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Yes Meopham Parish Council have previously expressed support for a scheme that seeks to address these existing traffic related issues around the schools situated between Site A and Site B.	No The TA will identify if there are any transport routes on or around the sites which are susceptible to congestion or the cause of any environmental problems. Once identified the TA will evaluate the impacts on these and provide mitigation measures to be implemented if required. The applicant will seek to engage with the Parish Council and the two Schools (Meopham Community Academy and Hellen Allen) to understand the best



SCHEDULE 3		
Criteria	Yes / No	Is a significant effect likely?
		approach to delivering facilities that will reduce traffic on the roads outside the schools.
Land Use		
Are there existing land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project? E.g. housing, densely populated areas, industry / commerce, farm/agricultural holdings, forestry, tourism, mining, quarrying, facilities relating to health, education, places of worship, leisure /sports / recreation.	Yes The sites lie within Meopham, with the village of Hook Green lying north of the sites. These settlements contain residential properties, local businesses, and schools that could be affected by the proposals.	No The TA will set out the mitigation to be followed to reduce any direct or indirect impacts of traffic from the proposals on the local population. The TP will also set out sustainable travel methods to and from the sites during both the construction and operational phase of the proposals, which will reduce the impacts of people traveling to and from the sites on the local area and population, by reducing reliance on vehicle travel which causes emissions and congestion. Any landscape and visual effect will be identified within the LVIA, which will also provide suitable mitigation against any adverse effects of the proposals on views. The proposals have also been designed so that the character of the surrounding landscape is respected. A Noise Impact Assessment and Air Quality Impact Assessment will include mitigation to reduce the impacts of noise and air quality on the local population. Noise mitigation measures will also be incorporated into the development design where needed as the project develops, for example by landscape buffering around the perimeter of the sites. The contaminated land desk study will identify any potential contamination and pollution sources that could be released from the sites because of the proposals. If any sources of contamination are identified, then the desk study will also suggest mitigation measures to be implemented that will reduce the effects of any contamination on the nearby area and people who live and work there. Any impacts associated with the construction phase will be short term and temporary in nature. The proposals have the potential to support Meopham Community Academy and Helen Allison School, by providing car parking spaces and drop off areas



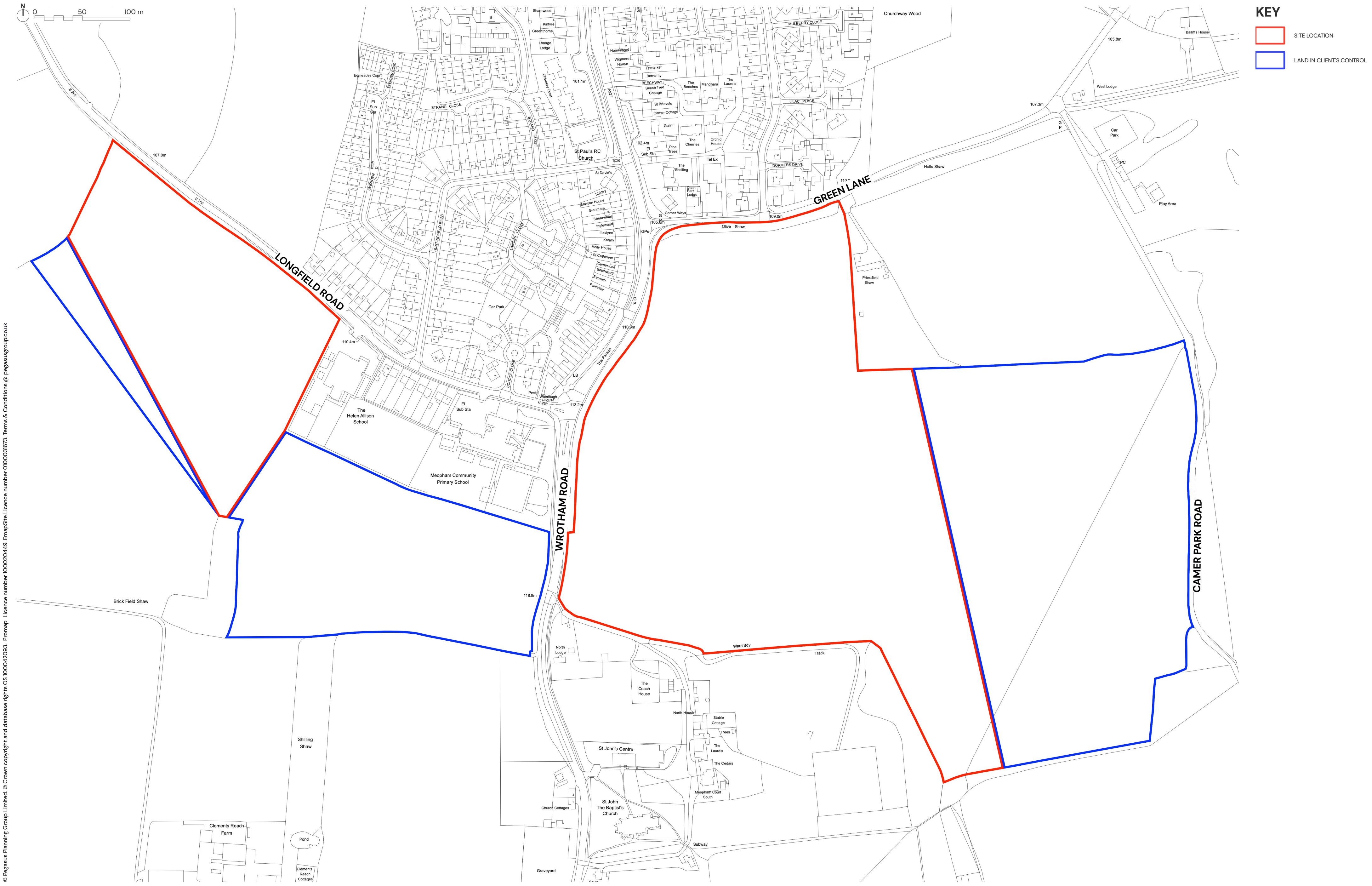
SCHEDULE 3		
Criteria	Yes / No	Is a significant effect likely?
		for the school. This will be a beneficial effect of the proposals on community facilities around the sites, additional proposals to reduce traffic issues around the schools will also come forward with this project as the development design is progressed and consultation is undertaken.
Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No There are no plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project.	No As there are no plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project, significant effects are not likely.
Land Stability & Climate		
Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	No The location is not susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme/adverse climatic conditions which could cause the project to present environmental problems.	No The proposals will be constructed so that it is resistant to the receiving environment and predicted impacts of climate change. An FRA and Drainage Strategy will be produced, considering the impacts of climate change, which will ensure that the project does not provide environmental problems associated with flood risks.
Cumulative Effects		
Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulation of impacts together during the construction/operation phase?	Yes There are no nearby existing or approved developments in the planning system which have not yet been built out (and would therefore be considered as part of the baseline). As set out within this request, the two sites will be subject to separate applications and have the potential to result in cumulative effects in combination.	No As set out within this request, it is not considered likely that the two developments will result in significant effects in cumulation due to the lack of shared sensitive receptors and mitigation measures incorporated within each development design. The other schemes granted planning permission by GBC identified earlier within this letter have either already been built out, or are considerable distance away from the sites so that no sensitive receptors will experience any cumulative effects.
Transboundary Effects		
Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects?	No There will be no transboundary effects.	No As there are no transboundary effects, no significant effects will occur in relation to this.



Summary	
Based on the above, is the project likely to have significant effects on the environment in relation to:	Yes/No:
The characteristics of the development (considering size, cumulation with other development, use of natural resources, production of water, pollution, risk of accidents/disasters and human health)	No
The location of the development, with regard to the sensitivity of the environment that could be affected.	No
The type and characteristics of potential impacts (considering magnitude, spatial extent, complexity, probability, duration, frequency, reversibility, cumulation and effectiveness of mitigation).	No



APPENDIX 2 – SITE LOCATION PLAN



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WROTHAM ROAD, MEOPHAM – SITE LOCATION PLAN

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