



Woodside Link, Houghton Regis

Local Pinch Point Funding Bid

Supporting Evidence

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Woodside Link, Houghton Regis Equality Analysis (Section A5)

The Equality Act 2010 contains an integrated public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It requires public bodies to have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, with the aim of making society fairer.

The following analysis deals with the aspects covered by the Equality Act, as related to the planning and implementation of the Woodside Link.

AGE

Relevant National Research:

Children and Young People

- Road Safety Education is vital for the safe use of transport by young people.
- Walking and cycling are also important ways for children and young people to maintain their independence and keep fit.
- The provision of free / subsidised transport can help promote independence

Older People

- Access to transport has long been identified as a key element in overcoming social exclusion and promoting inclusion
- Convenient, cheap, safe and reliable public transport is a priority for older people alongside the provision of specialist transport services such as dial-a-ride.
- Many older people have major concerns about the safety of using the public transport network, particularly older women and people from BAME groups.
- Badly lit streets, isolated bus stops and stations, long distances to walk, feeling intimidated by other passengers and the perceived lack of a police presence can add to the sense of fear felt by some older people.
- Older people are also restricted in their ability to use the transport system owing to mobility issues and a lack of facilities such as toilets, handrails and seating

Commentary

People of all ages will have access to the proposed road. The improvements to the National Cycle Route 6 and other rights of way as part of the scheme road will maintain and improve the use of buggies for small children. The improvements to National Cycle Route 6 will provide improved facilities for cyclists of all ages. Walking for people of all ages will be facilitated through all the rights of way improvements involved in the scheme.

DISABILITY

Relevant National Research

Barriers for disabled people to access the built environment need to be removed to enable equal access and independent mobility. These improvements will also have benefits for other groups, including people with pushchairs and older people. Barriers include:

- difficulties experienced while trying to use ramps,
- ensuring that bus drivers are trained in equality by increasing driver awareness of wheelchair users' needs,
- disagreements between wheelchair users and other passengers, such as wheelchair spaces taken up by buggies,
- how to promote better understanding between non-disabled customers and wheelchair users and other customers who may need to use priority seating.
- Cost of transport - Disabled adults are twice as likely to live in low income households
- Provision of more localised and specialist transport services, such as dial-a-ride or shopmobility schemes.
- Many disabled people have to rely on the use of the car and lack of accessible car parking space can be limiting. Provision of blue badge parking is therefore essential

Commentary

The existing public rights of way will be preserved and improved in the design of the Woodside Link. People with visual disabilities will be catered for in pedestrian crossings on the new road link through sound emitters at the crossings. People in wheelchairs will be able to use the public rights of way crossings on the road. Bus routes with wheelchair-friendly stops will be provided along the Woodside Link and adjacent proposed developments. The gradients on the footpaths in the area of the new link will be commensurate with the needs of people in wheelchairs

GENDER

Relevant National Research

- Many women's experiences are affected by concerns about crime and personal safety, particularly at night in the public realm and when travelling alone on public transport. Many urban areas are not well designed for personal safety in terms of visibility, lighting and being overlooked. This can cause feelings of vulnerability and prevent women entering certain areas at certain times.
- Women require convenient, affordable and safe public transport as well as safe and accessible walking and cycling routes to cover most local journeys from the home.
- Local bus routes are particularly important for women – both for those who live in the centre and the suburbs. Increasing provision of these services is vital because of the kind of trips that women are more likely to make – combining trips for work, local shopping, childcare as well as social and leisure.
- Women with children are also likely to be concerned about the safety of local roads.

Commentary

It is anticipated that safety and convenience for women as well as men will be catered for in the design and operation of Woodside Link, This includes the public transport and footways/ cycleways associated with the proposed road.

RACE

Relevant National Research

- 70% of people from BME groups live in the most deprived wards in the country. Living in these deprived areas often means that these groups are restricted in the level of access to essential social and employment opportunities and the transport provision to reach them

Commentary

It is not envisaged that race issues will form part of the impact of Woodside Link.

RELIGION AND BELIEF

Commentary

It is not anticipated that the Woodside Link will have any impact on matters of religion and belief.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Relevant National Research

Personal safety in public spaces and on public transport is often an issue for LGB & T people

Commentary

It is not envisaged that Woodside Link will have any impact on matters of sexual orientation.

CONCLUSION

Following the above analysis, it is considered that the Woodside Link will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Methodology for the Assessment of Jobs Created in Houghton Regis North Development (Section B2(c))

The development will include a range of employment facilities (B use class space) plus other uses, for example, retail facilities and potentially a hotel, which could create a significant number of new jobs. Below is set out how these impacts have been analysed.

B use class employment

A standard methodology is utilised for estimating the number of jobs that can be accommodated in B use class employment space. This approach combines figures for employment space in square metres (sqm) with employment densities which express the average number of square metres occupied by a worker in offices, industry and warehousing and distribution to give the estimated number of jobs that can be accommodated by the development. The following employment densities are used:

- Offices (B1a) 12sqm
- Industry (B2) 36sqm
- Warehousing (large scale) 80sqm

These employment densities are taken from the latest 2010 guidance published by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) (HCA, (2010)).

Retail employment

This standard employment densities methodology is also used for estimating the number of jobs that can be accommodated in the retail space which is proposed. As appropriate the following employment densities are used (floorspace per worker) for different retail uses. These employment densities are again taken from HCA (2010).

- High street 19sqm
- Food superstores 17sqm
- Restaurants and Cafes 18sqm

Leisure employment

This standard employment densities methodology can also be used for estimating the number of jobs that can be accommodated in the proposed leisure facilities as appropriate. These employment densities are again taken from HCA (2010).

- Cinemas 90sqm
- Other Leisure 70sqm (based on the employment density for amusement and entertainment centres)

Hotel employment

Normally employment densities for hotels are expressed in terms of the number of bedrooms per employee. These densities also differ depending on whether the hotel is budget, mid-range or luxury. The development parameters are in terms of floorspace in sqm with the hotel development being in the range 0 to 3,000 sqm.

An indicative development mix, however, indicates that a 2,800 sqm hotel is expected to contain 80 bedrooms. This indicates a ratio of floorspace to the number of bedrooms of 35sqm. The HCA (2010) guidance indicates that in mid-range or general / 3 star hotels an average of 2 bedrooms per employee. Combining these two figures gives a mid-range hotel employment density in sqm per worker of 70sqm, which is used to estimate the number of hotel jobs.

Residential care home employment

For residential care homes a 2002 Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) study (JRF, 2002) found that the most common staff to resident ratio was 1 to 4 and those homes operating with ratios of 1 to 4-5 residents appeared to operate satisfactorily. These ratios were for day shifts. Allowing for three shifts per 24 hours with the night shift operating a half roster suggests an overall ratio of staff to residents of 1 employee per 1.6 residents. This ratio is used to estimate the potential employment impact of the proposed on site residential care home.

Employment in Community facilities

Direct estimates of employment densities for community buildings are not available. However the HCA (2010) guidance referred to above gives figures for similar uses of amusement and entertainment centres, and sports centres and private clubs of 70sqm per job and 65sqm per job respectively. Hence a blended rate is used here of 67.5sqm per job.

Employment in Sui Generis uses

Sui Generis uses such as petrol filling stations and car show rooms have particularly low employment densities. Hence an employment density in line with the highest sqm per worker figure given in HCA (2010) - 90sqm per employee is assumed.

Employment in Schools

We have developed a method for estimating numbers of jobs in schools based on present employment levels in Houghton Regis First and Middle Schools, and an equivalent sized CBC High School (2010) converted to a two tier primary and secondary school arrangement.

Gross direct employment, total direct employment and net employment

The approaches set out above will produce estimates of the gross direct employment associated with the proposed development. These need to be adjusted to take account of gross induced and indirect jobs to produce an estimate of total gross jobs and then for deadweight, displacement and leakage in order to produce an estimate of the net jobs associated with the development. A composite local multiplier of 1.3 is assumed to allow for local induced and indirect jobs. Deadweight is assumed to be 20% as for non-housing development in the construction phase. Leakage is also assumed to be the same as in the construction phase that is 56% of the operational phase jobs are assumed to be filled by Central Bedfordshire residents, 21% by Luton residents and 23% by people living outside these two areas.

Displacement is expected to be higher in the operational phase than in the construction phase. Only labour market displacement is relevant in the construction phase but product market displacement will be relevant in the operational phase as goods and services will be being produced some of which will compete with existing local businesses. The evidence from the BIS research suggests overall, for all types of project, mean displacement of 21.5% and median displacement of 12.0%, and mean and median displacement for capital projects of 43.1% and 48.8% respectively.

Taking this evidence in the round product market displacement of around 30% is assumed. This is then combined with an assumption for labour market displacement of 25% as in the construction phase to give an estimate of overall displacement for the operational phase of 47.5%.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT SUMMARY (Section B2(h))

A Stage 2 assessment was carried out on three alternative route options within the corridor currently being proposed, As all the options considered pass through the same corridor the assessment applies to all three options and therefore includes the preferred option. A further Stage 3 assessment will be carried out on the preferred route to accompany the submission of an application for development consent for the scheme.

The following is a summary of the findings of the stage 2 assessment.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The most sensitive aspect of this topic is concerned with hydrogeology, and the major aquifer underlying the scheme. Other important factors include the potential for high grade soils to be lost or affected by the scheme and the potential for some areas of contaminated ground and water to be present.

Agricultural soil would be lost as a result of the scheme, though some of that soil would be retained and re-used as part of the scheme landscape works, and the remainder could be used beneficially elsewhere. There is also the potential for the mobilisation of any contamination within areas of made ground, once they are disturbed by the works, and further areas of as yet undetected made or contaminated ground may also be present.

The Stage 2 assessment found that there would be no adverse geological effects, as there are no existing designated geological sites in the study area. However, it noted that geologically important sites may develop as strata are exposed for cuttings, drainage ponds and structures. If geological features are detected, they would be compared with existing designated sites and their potential values would be assessed. In order to undertake this, geological monitoring would be undertaken during the earthworks phase of construction.

WATER ENVIRONMENT

The main watercourses within the study area are the Ouzel Brook and Houghton Brook and tributaries. There are also a number of other minor drainage ditches which are not marked on Ordnance Survey mapping. The rivers within the study area no longer show typical chalk river characteristics of sustained and moderate flow, nor support the flora and fauna associated with chalk rivers. This is due to physical modifications which constrain the channel, previous dredging works and the urban pollution associated with runoff from roads and mis-connections between the sewer and surface water systems.

Houghton Brook is the only designated Main River within the study area. The Ouzel Brook rises in agricultural land west of Chalton Cross Farm, draining in a general westerly/south westerly direction to the River Ouzel, and is fed by springs and land drainage ditches in the upper catchment.

A natural open channel runs through agricultural fields in the northern portion of the study area collecting drainage from a number of field drains. This stream connects to the Houghton Brook in the middle of the study area.

No water quality monitoring is undertaken by the EA within the study area. The nearest EA water quality monitoring point is on the River Lee approximately 12 km downstream of the study area. Monitoring indicates chemical water quality in 2008 was Class B ‘Good’ and biological water quality was Class A ‘Very Good’. The previous five years of monitoring data indicate water quality has not significantly changed.

The study area is underlain by an extensive and highly productive aquifer. Under the WFD classification this aquifer is classed as a Principal aquifer, noted to have high inter-granular and/or fracture permeability usually providing a high level of water storage.

The route also lies within a groundwater Source Protection Zone (SPZ), Zone III (Total Catchment). This is the total area needed to support the discharge from the protected groundwater source, and is designed to protect water quality within aquifers which are used for abstraction.

Groundwater monitoring as part of the Stage 2 assessment has indicated that the depth to groundwater is variable throughout the study area although generally it was found to be near the ground surface, about 1m below ground level (mbgl) over the majority of the route alignment. It deepens to about 7 to 8mbgl at the northern and southern extent of the route alignments, where the ground surface is higher. The water table is between 117 to 128m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) throughout the extent of the route alignment.

Summary of Water Features, Attributes and Indicators of Quality			
Feature	Attribute	Indicator of Quality	Possible Measure
Houghton Brook	Water quality	Chemical water quality	Maintain or improve Moderate Ecological Status
	Conveyance of flow and material	Presence of watercourses	Flow of Houghton Brook to River Lee
	Ecodiversity	Biological water quality	Maintain or improve Moderate Ecological Status
Floodplain	Conveyance of flood flow	Presence of Houghton Brook floodplain and rate of flood flow	Flooding Events – 1 in 100 year chance or greater of flooding by a river each year. Construction of structures within floodplain
Groundwater	Water supply / quality	Principal aquifer used for water supply	Groundwater quality and quantity within SPZ III
	Conveyance of flood flows	Groundwater levels	Ongoing groundwater monitoring

CULTURAL HERITAGE

The route crosses or passes close to 3 Archaeological Notification Areas (ANAs) in the arable fields to the west of the M1. ANAs represent significant surviving archaeological remains recorded in the Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER).

Within the northern part of the area there are sub-surface pits and linear features, identified by geophysical survey. Some of the linears line up with features shown on the 1797

Toddington inclosure map. Early post-medieval (16th- 17th century) pottery and medieval/post-medieval ceramic building material were recovered from the ploughsoil in this area.

In the central part of the area is the site of a suspected Roman farmstead, identified from roof tile, ceramic building materials and iron smelting slag found during fieldwalking. There are also a number of discrete and linear sub-surface geophysical anomalies, likely to represent pitting and field boundaries and small enclosures respectively. Some of the linears may represent features depicted on the 1762 Houghton Regis estate map.

Around 400m south of Chalton Cross Farm is the site of suspected Roman occupation, identified from pottery, tile and ceramic building material during fieldwalking.

A number of hedgerows within the area are first recorded on the 1796 Houghton Regis and 1797 Toddington inclosure maps or the first edition Ordnance Survey maps of 1880 and 1882 while there are other hedgerows within shown on the Houghton Regis estate map of 1762. Prominent among the few surviving elements of these pre-inclosure field-systems is the parish boundary which lies within the western part of the area

The layout of Chalton Cross Farm is first recorded on an OS map of 1880. Its layout is similar to that of a mid 19th-century model farm.

The heritage assets identified above are of low to medium value. However, to date, their characterisation has been based solely on non-intrusive survey. Trial trenching will be required in order to fully assess their value. It is also possible that there may be further sub-surface archaeological remains within the DA, which will only be revealed by the trial trenching.

The Stage 2 report indicated that the development will potentially have minor to major negative impacts on the heritage assets identified within the area. The proposed mitigation would reduce that impact to a minor negative residual effect. However, the impact of the development and its residual effects cannot be fully characterised until further work is complete.

NATURE CONSERVATION

There are no designated sites located within or immediately adjacent to the proposed route, but 9 statutory sites designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) occur within 5km. The closest statutory site is Sundon Chalk Quarry SSSI and County Wildlife Site (CWS) which is around 0.7km north of the site and is separated from it by the M1, the mainline railway and Luton Road (the B579). No direct or indirect effects are anticipated on this statutory wildlife site.

Seven County Wildlife Sites occur within 2km of the route, the closest being the River Lea CWS, located around 0.7km to the east, starting at the source of the River Lea to the east of the M1 motorway and the railway line. Whilst there would not be any direct impact on the River Lea, there is some potential for an indirect impact on this CWS, as the Houghton Brook joins the River Lea as a tributary, thus any contamination or pollution of the brook could result in off site impacts.

Surveys have found the following habitats/species of interest around the line of the route:

- Semi-improved grassland to the south of Parkside Drive.
- Areas of herb rich flora at the base the main hedgerows running north to south, in the northern part of the route.

- Small populations of scarce arable weed species in the northern part of the route. These species tend to be transient (appearing and disappearing in any one location according to agricultural practice, with the seeds remaining dormant in the soil).
- A single bat roost was confirmed at Chalton Cross Farm. This was for a lone pipistrelle bat in a gap between the bricks in the northern apex of one of the farm outbuildings. The overall level of bat activity in the wider survey area was found to be low.
- There are known to be badger populations to the north and east of the site, but badger activity observed was restricted to two outlier sets to the north west of the survey area, and occasional snuffle holes, latrines and mammal paths in the rest of the site.

It has been established that there is a small water vole population present in Houghton Brook. The breeding bird survey revealed that there is a varied population of breeding birds in the area around and including the scheme. However it was not found to be notable or significant, but adverse effects would result from removal of nesting habitat in the southern part of the route.

Survey results indicated that a very low, isolated population of slow-worm is present in the area of the site just to the north of Parkside Drive adjacent to the housing area and amongst rough grassland and scrub. This area is not crossed by the route.

The various designated sites, habitats and species which could be affected have been assessed as follows

Stage 2 Summary of Ecological Interests and Effects		
Interest	Value	Nature of Potential Effect
SSSIs	National	No effects
CWSs	County	Possible indirect effect on River Lee as a result of water quality effects in Houghton Brook
Grassland Flora	Local	Loss of semi-improved grassland at the southern end of the scheme
Scarce Arable Plants	Local / District	Direct loss of plants in some areas and also loss of soil seed bank and reduction in potential habitat.
Bats	Local	Loss of one roost site, loss or severance of flight lines, loss of foraging areas
Badgers	Local	Potential fatalities on new road, loss of foraging opportunities and dispersal routes
Water Voles	Local	Loss of burrows, loss or fragmentation of habitat.
Birds	Local	Disturbance of breeding birds, loss of nesting opportunities or habitat
Reptiles	Local	Killing of animals, loss of habitat
White-clawed Crayfish	Local	Destruction of burrows, loss of habitat

Given the proposed mitigation measures, there would be no more than minor negative effects on grassland flora, scarce arable plants, bats and badgers, and temporary minor adverse effects on water voles, birds and reptiles.

LANDSCAPE

The study area for the assessment of landscape and visual effects comprises the area from within which views of the new road can be obtained.

Views are largely limited to a relatively small area around the scheme, bounded by the urban edge of Houghton Regis and Luton to the west and south (with the visual envelope drawn very tightly around the scheme, along the edges of the wedge of open land in the area to the south of Parkside Drive) and Luton Road (just to the east of the motorway) to the east. The visual envelope is less well defined to the north, and extends to the southern edge of the village of Chalton.

There are also some more limited, longer distance views from beyond this area, with partial views from land around Chalgrave to the north west, tall blocks of flats in Luton to the south east and from the high ground of Dunstable Downs to the south. In these views, the area around the scheme can be seen, and the new road would therefore be visible, but it would form a small part only of a wide, expansive view which already contains a number of large scale and intrusive urban elements.

In general terms, the area around the scheme has two distinct characters. The area to the north of Parkside Drive is gently undulating, open arable farmland with little vegetation or enclosure and is strongly affected by the motorway and its traffic, the lines of pylons, large scale buildings to the east of the motorway and the existing urban edge. It will also be affected by the new Junction 11A on the M1 – this will be a large scale dumb-bell junction arrangement, with roundabouts to each side of the motorway. The western roundabout will be located on relatively high ground just to the north of Chalton Cross Farm.

The area to the south of Parkside Drive is much more enclosed, and is generally unmanaged with an urban fringe character; it is also strongly affected by the overhead electricity transmission lines.

In terms of wider landscape character, the site lies just within an area identified as 'The Chilterns' in the Countryside Agency's (now Natural England) 'Countryside Character Volume 7: South East and London'. This is an extensive area, strongly related to the underlying geology, running from Reading in the south west to Hitchin in the north east. Key characteristics are noted as including the scarp/dip slope topography, chalk hills and plateau and the '*enclosed and intimate landscapes of the valleys contrasting with the more open plateau top*'.

However, although the site lies within this area, it has more of the characteristics of the adjoining area to the north, the 'Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands'. This is a large area extending to Peterborough in the north and Cambridge in the east, and is described as '*an empty gently undulating lowland landscape with expansive views of large scale arable farmland, contained either by sparse trimmed hedgerows, open ditches or streamside vegetation*'.

The former South Bedfordshire District Council (SBDC) published the 'South Bedfordshire District Landscape Character Assessment', jointly with BCC, in 2009. This assessment adds detail to the BCC assessment and again places the site in the 'Rolling Chalk Farmland' landscape character type, within Landscape Character Area 10B, the 'Houghton

Regis - North Luton Rolling Chalk Farmland'. This area includes the route corridor to the north of Parkside Drive (but not to the south – that area is shown as being within the urban area), and also a larger area to the east of the M1, extending from the edge of Luton towards the villages of Sundon and Streatley.

The Stage 2 assessment found that there would be slight to moderate adverse landscape effects to the south of Parkside Drive in the winter of the first year after completion of the scheme, declining to slight adverse by the summer of year 15. Effects to the north of Parkside Drive were assessed as being slight adverse only. The assessment also found that around 250 properties would experience slight adverse or greater visual effects in year 1, reducing to around 170 by year 15. Users of public rights of way crossed by the scheme were assessed as receiving moderate adverse visual effects in year 1, reducing to slight to moderate adverse by year 15.

COMMUNITY AND PRIVATE ASSETS

Land use along the line of the scheme differs to the south and north of Parkside Drive. To the south it is urban fringe open space with no formal usage, and to the north it is open arable farmland, managed as part of the Chalton Cross Farm holding. Land to the south of the Houghton Brook (just south of Parkside Drive) is within an area subject to an Open Space Proposal (Policy R3) under the Urban Open Space Strategy of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan, and this policy has been retained and is therefore still current. The Policy proposes to improve the area for a mix of formal and informal recreation.

There are a number of community assets, including schools, within the urban areas to either side of the scheme, but none which would be directly affected by the scheme other than the area of informal open space to the south of Parkside Drive. A pedestrian count for one route across this open space as part of the Stage 2 assessment showed significant movement of pedestrians and cyclists in the morning peak.

The proposals make provision for at grade crossings to continue existing routes on their current alignments wherever possible, though some minor diversions of public rights of way may be required. The proposals have been designed to minimise conflicts with existing underground services or overhead power lines, though again some minor diversions are likely to be required.

As there would be some land take from the area to the south of the Houghton Brook which is currently used for informal recreation and proposed in the Local Plan as an area of open space, an equal area of land would be provided as Exchange Land, and the remainder of the residual areas alongside the road would be laid out as open space as part of the scheme, such that an area equal to the total proposed as open space under the Local Plan policy would be provided, either alongside the new road, or on adjacent land.

AIR QUALITY

The proposed scheme may potentially have local air quality impacts in both the CBC and LBC areas. Both these local authorities identify nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM₁₀) as the pollutants of concern in the Updating and Screening Assessment (USA) and Progress Reports for Local Air Quality Management (LAQM). Local authority monitoring data shows ongoing exceedances of the NO₂ annual

mean objective of 40µgm-3 (microgrammes per cubic metre) at a number of diffusion tube sites in the Central Bedfordshire region. Sites at Dunstable and Chalton are calculated to exceed the NO2 annual mean objective at residential receptors.

Central Dunstable has been declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) for NO2. The Dunstable AQMA incorporates Dunstable Town Centre, the A505 (from the town centre to the junction of Poynters Road/Dunstable Road), the A5 (from Union Street to B

There is the potential for air quality to be adversely affected for properties adjacent to the proposed route, where the scheme would introduce new traffic to areas which currently experience very low levels of vehicle movements. However, much of this traffic would have been displaced from existing roads, and air quality would therefore be likely to be improved on existing roads which would be relieved of traffic.

The Stage 2 Assessment established that increased traffic emissions are likely in the area around the scheme. However, there was no indication that air quality objectives would be exceeded, just that ambient concentrations of air pollution would be likely to increase.

In contrast, removal of traffic (especially HGVs) from congested roads where ambient concentrations of air pollution are already high, in particular those roads that presently comprise the AQMA within Dunstable town centre will reduce traffic emissions and represent a beneficial effect.

The scheme is unlikely to adversely affect air quality in any AQMA due to its distance from the designated areas. On the contrary, it is likely to improve air quality in the Dunstable AQMA owing to the diversion of a proportion of the traffic currently using the routes within it to the new route. This should improve air quality in Dunstable town centre through reduced traffic emissions.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

The scheme is mainly located in a suburban environment with the northern end located in a more rural locality. The noise environment throughout is dominated by the M1 motorway which runs in a general north-south direction along the eastern side of the study area. No designated sites for nature conservation are located within 600m of the scheme.

It can therefore be seen that the number of properties within 2km of the route will be very large, though in practice any noise effects would tend to be limited to the houses closest to the scheme, and noise changes would not be felt by houses which are further away, where they are shielded by intervening properties.

The area around the southern end of the scheme is densely populated with a significant number of residential properties and 28 community sensitive receptors such as schools, hospitals or old people's homes within 600m of the scheme and affected roads.

The Stage 2 noise assessment indicated that in the opening year the scheme would result in significant noise increases for approximately 1,812 properties, with slight reductions in noise levels for around 852 properties located mainly along Park Road North. These initial predictions were undertaken with no mitigation measures in place, but it is envisaged that measures such as noise barriers and a noise-reducing carriageway surface will be included in the scheme design, and these would significantly reduce overall noise levels.

The assessment indicates that the scheme will produce the most significant impacts between Chainages 400 and 1000, (i.e. at the Southern end where the road runs along a narrow corridor) for residents located both to the north and south of this section of the new

road. It is likely that a noise barrier will be required to mitigate the noise impact for residents at least between these Chainages, and possibly extending to the start of the scheme at the southern end.

EFFECTS ON ALL TRAVELLERS

The scheme contains the following features which have been designed to cater for journeys whether in vehicles or by 'non-motorised users' :

- Connectivity of side roads would be maintained in all cases apart from Wheatfield Road, where the existing link to the Park Road North/ Poynters Road roundabout would be lost, and a new junction linking Wheatfield Road with the new Woodside Connection would be provided. The remaining 200m or so of Wheatfield Road to the south west of this junction would become a dead end.
- There is also a possibility, which will be investigated further at Stage 3, that a connection from the new road into Parkside Drive to the north could be provided. The scheme would also provide a connection between the proposed Junction 11A and Sundon Road - without the Woodside Connection there would be no connectivity between the two.
- Where the route crosses existing public rights of way or other significant pedestrian routes, at grade crossing points would be provided wherever possible. Where practicable the crossing points would be located at the junctions, but dedicated at grade crossing points would also be provided.
- Where public rights of way cross the route, and at grade crossing points are not possible, diversions to maintain the connectivity of the route would be provided. In the central part of the scheme there would be the potential for some enhancement to the existing situation, with new links between the rights of way, connections to the existing informal routes and improved way-marking and surfacing for the formal and informal routes.
- It is understood that the existing National Cycle Network Route 6 (which currently runs along Kestrel Way, Pastures Way and then across the line of the route via Parkside Drive) is to be diverted (by others) to run across the open land to the north of Kestrel Way. The scheme design would enable the diverted route to pass under the new road at the Houghton Brook crossing point before continuing along the north side of the new road. This crossing would also make provision for pedestrian use.

A Summary of the environmental impacts is given below.

SUMMARY OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS - ENVIRONMENTAL							
RECEPTOR	Individual Topic Effects on Receptor					Cumulative Effects	
	Drainage	Nature Conservation	Landscape	Air Quality	Noise and Vibration	Nature	Notes
Properties around Sandringham Drive	N/A	N/A	Adverse visual effects, up to moderate to large adverse in Year 1	Some increase in pollutant levels but changes would not be significant and levels would be within air quality objectives	Significant effects predicted in the absence of mitigation	Effects would be direct and persistent, though visual effects would decline over time	Up to moderate adverse effects for visual effects, insignificant for air quality. Significant adverse effects for noise but will be reduced by proposed mitigation
Properties around Wheatfield Road	N/A	N/A			Low level effects only		
Properties on eastern edge of Houghton Regis	N/A	N/A					
Chalton Cross Farm (as a residential receptor)	N/A	N/A	Moderate adverse visual effects	Slight adverse effects	Significant noise increase predicted	Direct and persistent effects owing to proximity of new road	Moderate adverse visual effects, slight adverse effects for air quality and significant adverse effects for noise. It is likely that the property would be demolished as part of the wider development in this area
Chalton Cross Farm (as a farming operation)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Farm would experience loss of land, loss of some buildings and severance. Farm also affected by A5-M1 Link. Farm operations would be able to continue with appropriate mitigation	Farming operation would cease completely if the wider development in this area goes ahead.
Area of informal open space South of Parkside Drive	N/A	Some loss of vegetation, some low level effects on nature conversation interest	Slight to moderate adverse landscape effects and up to moderate adverse visual effects for users	Potential effects for users as they pass close to the new road but duration of exposure would be short and no significant adverse effects anticipated	Significant effects predicted in absence of mitigation	Direct and persistent effects. Would also be some disruption to usage and necessity to cross the new road.	A range of adverse effects would result but there would also be some beneficial effects in terms of improved provision of usable open space, better management and surfacing of informal access routes.
Users of public rights of way	N/A	Some low level effects on nature conversation interest may affect enjoyment of routes.	Moderate adverse visual effects for users close to crossing points		Some effects where rights of way are close to or crossing the routes		

Summary of Tendering Requirements / Evaluation (Section B7(b))

TENDER REQUIREMENTS

1. A framework for awarding contracts for the design, construction, completion, testing, commissioning, maintenance and defects correction of highways works, has been agreed through an alliance of local authorities in the east of England under the title Eastern Highways Alliance (EHA). This was founded in April 2011. and the authorities forming the alliance are currently:
 - Hertfordshire County Council (Lead Authority and Employer for the Purposes of the tendering process)
 - Essex County Council
 - Norfolk County Council
 - Luton Borough Council
 - Southend on Sea Borough Council
 - Cambridgeshire County Council
 - Suffolk County Council
 - Bedford Borough Council
 - Central Bedfordshire Council
2. Tender documents are sent to relevant Framework Suppliers and the tenders received will be evaluated using the criteria set out in the instructions for tendering.
3. In accordance with the EU Procurement Directives tender opportunities will be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). The OJEU Contract Notice (reference 2011/S 152-252483) seeking expressions of interest for this requirement was published on the 5th August 2011. In general, EHA authorities will not be responsible for, or pay for, the expenses or losses which may be incurred by any tenderer in the preparation of tenders.
4. Any local authority which is a member of the EHA that signs an inter authority agreement can then place an order with a Framework Supplier; and when that order is placed, that member of the EHA who places the order shall be the sole Employer for that order.
5. The Alliance manages the Call-Off Contracts using various governing groups including the Framework Board, the Framework User Group (FUG) and the Framework Operating Group (FOG) as more particularly described in the Framework Information.
6. The EHA Framework Arrangement will be operated under the terms and conditions of the New Engineering Contract third edition (NEC3) Framework Agreement, published in June 2005 by the Institution of Civil Engineers. Works packages issued under the Framework Contract will be carried out under the terms and conditions of the NEC3. In particular:
 - for Early Contractor Involvement or Design or other pre-construction related activities where required and ordered, use will be made of the appropriate NEC3 Professional Services contract options.
 - for Works, (including design where specifically instructed), where required and ordered, use will be made of the appropriate NEC3 Engineering and Construction Contract options
7. Tenderers are to refer to the Quotation Procedure which explains how the various conditions of contract will be used under the Framework Agreement. Tenderers must familiarise themselves with the conditions of contract and also the modifications or additions made by the EHA.
8. The tender instructions document provides a series of specific instructions, summarised as follows:

- General Provisions: The completed tender documents must have all sections complete. The Council does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any tender. Tenderers must submit a tender which complies entirely with the requirements of the tender document.
- Prices should be fully inclusive
- Arrangements for VAT are specified
- The documents shall be treated as private and confidential
- The Employer reserves the right to carry out additional financial checks
- Tenders must not be qualified or accompanied by statements or a covering letter.
- The Employer's decision on whether a tender is acceptable will be final
- Arrangements are identified for advance payments
- The Employer does not bind himself to accept any tender.
- Arrangements are identified for additional drawings and other documents not returned with the tender.
- A dispute resolution procedure is identified.
- Risk Registers should be provided, where appropriate.
- The Tender Documents are and shall remain the property of the Employer.
- Conditions are specified in which tenderers can be disqualified.
- To avoid pollution, tenderers must specify how hazardous materials will be treated.
- Arrangements for insurance cover, guarantees and claims are specified.
- Compliance with the requirements of Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 is specified.
- Compliance with Health and Safety regulations is specified.
- The conditions necessary for using Delay damages are specified.
- Price adjustment for inflation will be applied using the methodology contained within the Quotation Procedure.
- Tenderers should comply with the Site Waste Management Plans Regulations 2008.
- Tenderers are required to instigate informal partnering.
- The requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 are set out.

TENDER EVALUATION

- **Tender evaluation:** Tenders will be assessed on the basis of both quality (40%) and price (60%). Awards will be made to the tenderers in submitting the most economically advantageous offers assessed on the basis of quality and price proposals.
- **Evaluation Panels:** Each tender submission will be assessed by two separate panels, a Quality Panel and a Financial Panel.
- **Quality scoring:** Marks are awarded for quality of bids. The highest scored proposal will be awarded 100 marks with all other proposals scored in relation to the highest score. Any tenderer whose score is less than 60 or who is awarded zero against any quality aspect will have their Financial submission returned unopened.
- **Validation:** As part of the quality assessment the Quality Panel will validate with others as appropriate the statements made by the tenderers within the quality submission.
- **Financial Panel:** an appraisal of the financial submission submitted will be undertaken by the Financial Panel. Any anomalies in individual process may be drawn to the attention of tenderers to who may be requested explain the situation.
- **Financial scoring:** the ranking on a financial basis of compliant tenders will be based on the tendered prices, adjusted in accordance with Annex A. The lowest acceptable adjusted tendered total will be given 100 marks and all other adjusted totals will have one mark deducted for each percentage point by which the total exceeds that of the lowest.
- **Overall Quality /Price Tender Assessment:** marks for each tenderer's Quality Submission and Financial Submission will be aggregated on a quality/price ratio of 40:60.

Stakeholder Management (Section B12(a))

The Planning Act 2008, section 47, places a duty on the applicant to consult the local community about a proposed application for Development Consent. Consultation by Central Bedfordshire Council with stakeholders involved in the promotion of Woodside Link have taken two main forms, as follows:

1. Public exhibitions and analysis of views expressed during the times of the exhibitions.
2. Direct contact by letter with Statutory Consultees.

1 Public Consultations

- 1.1 The local community was consulted in January and February 2009 on 3 possible corridors to connect Woodside Industrial Estate to the primary road network. This was by means of public exhibitions arranged in Dunstable, Houghton Regis and northern Luton. The views of the public were received via forms at the exhibitions, emails, letters, telephone and via Central Bedfordshire council's consultation web pages. The outcome of that consultation was a strong preference for an eastern corridor linking the industrial estate to a future M1 junction 11A. This route was adopted by the Council as its preferred option. The preferred corridor was included in the Council's draft Local Transport Plan, and consulted on early in 2011, before being adopted in the Local Transport Plan (2011). Subsequent work on the project has resulted in a preferred route being proposed.
- 1.2 Further preliminary design work was carried out on the assumption of this eastern route for Woodside Link. In order to comply with the requirements of The Planning Act 2008, section 47, to consult the local community about the proposed application for Development Consent it was necessary to carry out further consultation on the preferred route of the link road. During November 2011, the Council conducted consultations about the route of Woodside Link, including the issue of whether or not to include a road link to Parkside Drive.
- 1.3 The means of consulting the local community were as follows:
 - a) Exhibitions
 - b) Telephone Hotline
 - c) Discussions with local Unitary, Town and Parish Councils
 - d) Internet, using the Council's consultation website
 - e) Local Media
 - f) Printed Documents
- 1.4 A series of exhibitions of the proposals was staged during November 2012 around the local area. Exhibitions were arranged at the following locations:-
 - Friday 16th November (2pm to 5.30pm) - Houghton Regis Library
 - Saturday 17th November (10am to 1pm) - Houghton Regis Library
 - Tuesday 20th November (3pm to 7pm) - Chalton Village Hall
 - Wednesday 21st November (3pm to 7pm) - Sundon Village Hall
 - Thursday 22nd November (2.30pm to 6pm) - Dunstable Library

- Friday 23rd November (3pm to 7pm) – Lewsey Farm Community Centre

The location of each exhibition, and opening times, were publicised in a consultation leaflet distributed during the week commencing 5th November 2012 to all properties in Houghton Regis, Dunstable, West Luton (west of M1 motorway), and the parishes of Chalton and Sundon.

1.4 At the exhibitions, representatives of the applicant were present to answer questions from members of the public. Documents relating to the project, including a preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment were available for inspection. The consultation leaflet included a reply-paid card to encourage feedback from the local community.

1.5 Unitary, Town and Parish Councils

All affected Unitary, Town and Parish Councils were provided with printed and electronic versions of all consultation documents.

1.6 Internet

Dedicated project web pages were established, as part of the Central Bedfordshire Council website, at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/woodsidelink. These contained a summary of the proposals, as well as copies of all consultation documents available for download, and details on how to engage in the consultation process. An electronic response page allowed the consultation questionnaire to be completed online. 'Facebook' was used to provide an electronic forum where members of the community could engage with the project team to publically discuss any items of concern. A project email address, myjourney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk allowed electronic questions and documents to be sent to the project team.

1.7 Local Media

A series of local newspaper advertisements were placed during the consultation process, to reinforce the other means of local community engagement.

Advertisements were published in the following local newspapers:

1. A public notice under Section 48 of the Planning Act 2008 was published locally (in 'Luton on Sunday') twice, on 4th and 11th November 2012.
2. Publication of the Statement of Community Consultation, including exhibition dates and contact details was published on 11th November 2012 (in 'Luton on Sunday').
3. There were reminders of the consultation deadline in early December 2012
4. A summary of consultation responses, with programme was published in early January 2013.

In addition, Central Bedfordshire Council issued various press releases at key stages during the project development. A regular email bulletin was used to notify the community of key events, such as exhibitions and release of documents.

The local free newspaper 'Luton on Sunday' was selected as it has the best delivery coverage around the application site.

1.8 Printed Documents

A full set of printed consultation documents was maintained at the offices of Central Bedfordshire Council (both at the main office at Priory House, Shefford and at Watling House, Dunstable). All consultation documents were available during normal office hours for inspection, with information of how to obtain electronic and printed copies. The consultation documents could be obtained in printed form, at a charge of 20p per A4 page, 40p per A3 page and £10 per A1 plan. A CD of the Preliminary Environmental Information was available free of charge on request.

1.9 Consultation responses were requested by 24th December 2012, although the Council took into account some representations received after that date.

1.10 As a result of the above consultations, the following views were received:

Question 1 (Woodside Link)

Using an agreed consultation response formula, the overall score was +0.6 which indicated general agreement. Approximately 20% of the responses showed disagreement, but the vast majority agreed or strongly agreed. There was support in Luton, Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Parkside and nearby villages. Opposition was received from all areas where property is within 200m of the proposed link.

Question 2 (Parkside Drive link)

The overall score was +0.4 which implied slight agreement. Approximately 25% strongly disagreed, but almost 50% agree or strongly agree. There was support in Luton, Dunstable and local villages. There was a neutral view in Houghton Regis, with those properties in Parkside area opposed. There was opposition from all areas where property is within 200m of link.

1.11 Based on the above consultation results, the Council has concluded that there is support for the Woodside Link, and the application for Development Consent is continuing.

2 Direct contact by letter with Statutory Consultees

2.1 As a result of the requirement to contact Statutory Consultees about the proposed road link, the letter shown below was sent during November 2012 to the organisations listed below.

2.2 Several of the organisations contacted made no comment. However, transport related groups expressed support for the proposal. Environmental groups expressed concern about the effects on wildlife, especially Badgers, bats, Water Voles, reptiles and bird nesting habitations. The most robust responses were from Statutory Undertakers whose apparatus could be affected. Details of equipment and approximate cost of diversions were provided.

2.3 The responses from the Statutory Consultees will be useful during the detailed design stages and in preparation of mitigation works. As appropriate, contact will be maintained with the Statutory Consultees as preparation of the scheme progresses.

Addressee Organisation.

**Highways & Transport
Woodlands Annex
Manton Lane
Bedford
MK41 7NU**

XX November 2012

Switchboard 0845 365 6000

For the attention of XXXX

**Woodside Link, Houghton Regis, Central Bedfordshire
Statutory Consultation under Section 42 of Planning Act 2008**

Dear Sirs

In accordance with section 42 of the Planning Act 2008, we write to notify you that Central Bedfordshire Council proposes to make an application for a Development Consent Order for the above project.

I enclose the following documents:-

- A copy of the section 48 Notice that is being published in accordance with section 4 of The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009.
- A copy of the Preliminary Environmental Information (on CD)
- A copy of the leaflet that is being distributed both to those persons listed under section 42 of the Act and to local community in accordance with section 47 of the Act.

The statutory consultation period runs from Friday 16th November 2012 until Monday 24th December 2012. If you require any further information, please contact Mark Lewis at the above address, or via email to Mark.Lewis2@amey.co.uk.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Rosamond

Development Control & Roads Manager

LIST OF CONSULTEES

Legally required under Schedule 1 of The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedures) Regulations 2009

Regional Planning Body
Health & Safety Executive
Natural England
English Heritage
Bedfordshire & Luton Fire and Rescue Service
Bedfordshire Police Authority
Houghton Regis Town Council
Chalton Parish Council
The Environment Agency (East of England)
The Environment Agency (North East Thames)
The Commission for Architecture and The Built Environment (CABE)
East of England Regional Development Agency
Equality and Human Rights Commission
The Commission for Sustainable Development
Chilterns Conservation Board
Homes and Communities Agency
The Commission for Rural Communities
The Highways Agency (Major Projects, Birmingham)
The Highways Agency (Regional Office, Bedford)
The local Highways Authority (Central Bedfordshire Council)
The Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee
OFGEM
Bedford Group of Internal Drainage Boards
Bedfordshire and Luton Local Resilience Forum
East of England Strategic Health Authority

Anglian Water
Veolia Water
Thames Water
UK Power Networks
National Grid (Gas)
SSE (Gas)
National Grid (Electric)
British Telecom
Virgin Media

Unitary Authorities & County Councils

Central Bedfordshire Council
Luton Borough Council
Bedford Borough Council
Hertfordshire County Council
Buckinghamshire County Council
Cambridgeshire County Council
Milton Keynes Borough Council

District Councils

North Hertfordshire District Council
Aylesbury Vale District Council
Huntingdonshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council

Dacorum Borough Council

Town and Parish Councils

Houghton Regis Town Council
Dunstable Town Council
Chalton Parish Council
Totternhoe Parish Council
Chalgrave Parish Council
Sundon Parish Council
Toddington Parish Council
Tilsworth Parish Council
Streatley Parish Council
Harlington Parish Council

Other

Friends of the Earth (Luton)
Friends of the Earth (South Bedfordshire)
CPRE
The Greensand Trust
The Wildlife Trusts (Bedfordshire)
British Horse Society
Ramblers Association
RSPB
SEMLEP
Canmoor (owner of Woodside Industrial Estate)
Transport 2000
Bedfordshire Rights of Way Association
Freight Transport Association
Road Haulage Association
Chilterns Society
Strategic Health Authority
Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Trust
NHS Bedfordshire (PCT)
NHS Luton (PCT)
Sentry Ltd (Farm Managers)
East of England Ambulance Trust
Royal Mail Group
Sustrans

Landowners

Central Bedfordshire Council
Luton Borough Council
Friends Life
Bellcross Company Ltd



A great place to live and work

Contact us...

by telephone: 0300 300 4854

by email: customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

on the web: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Write to Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House,
Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ