

Application: 2024/956/EIA
Location: Land at Stoneyfield, Oxted, Surrey,
Proposal: Request for EIA Scoping Opinion for the development of 140 dwellings and 80 unit care home, with associated access, parking, and landscaping.
Ward: Oxted North

Decision Level: Chief Planning Officer (delegated decision)

Constraints –

anc_wood500 yes ancient woodland(s) within 500m

greenbelt yes green belt area

public right of way

railwaylines yes railway line(s) within 30m

ea_rofsw_1_in_100 yes risk of flooding from surface water - 100

ea_rofsw_1_in_1000 yes risk of flooding from surface water - 1000

ea_rofsw_1_in_30 yes risk of flooding from surface water - 30

tpo10 yes tree preservation order(s) within 10m

RECOMMENDATION: **Accept Scoping Report**

Summary

The Local Planning Authority agrees with the conclusions of the submitted Scoping Report in terms of the topics to be scoped in and out of the Environmental Statement.

Site Description

The application site comprises a large field (approximately 8ha) on the outskirts of Oxted, with Barrow Green Road to the north, Wheeler Avenue to the south, and the railway line to the east.

Proposal

A scoping opinion is sought from the Local Planning Authority pursuant to Regulation 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Relevant History

2012/577/EIA - Request for screening opinion for residential development. EIS Statement Not Required 10/05/2012

Development Plan Policy

Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 – Policies CSP1, CSP2, CSP4, CSP7, CSP11, CSP12, CSP14, CSP15, CSP17, CSP18, CSP19, CSP20, CSP21, and CSP22.

Tandridge Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies 2014 – Policies DP1, DP5, DP7, DP10, DP13, DP19, DP20, DP21, and DP22.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) and non-statutory guidance

Tandridge Parking Standards SPD (2012)

Tandridge Trees and Soft Landscaping SPD (2017)

National Advice

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Consultation Responses

- Oxted Parish Council: Application noted.
- Active Travel England: Refer to standing advice.
- Contaminated Land Officer: Comments provided.
- Environment Agency: Refer to standing advice.
- Environmental Health: Comments provided.
- Highway Authority: Comments provided.
- Lead Local Flood Authority: Comments provided.
- Natural England: Comments provided.
- SES Water: No response received.
- Southern Water: No response received.
- Surrey AONB Planning Adviser: Comments provided.
- Surrey County Council Historic Buildings Officer: Comments provided.
- Surrey County Council Archaeological Officer: Comments provided.
- Surrey County Council Countryside Access Officer: No response received.
- Surrey Wildlife Trust: No response received.

Public Representations/Comments

Not applicable.

Assessment

- 1 The submitted Scoping Report states that the applicant intends to provide an Environmental Statement (ES) alongside the planning application when this is made, despite the fact that the screening opinion of the Local Planning Authority has not been sought. Accordingly, a scoping opinion has been sought pursuant to Regulation 15. This report constitutes that opinion.
- 2 The Scoping Report proposes that the following topics be scoped in to the ES:

- Socio-Economics
- Air Quality
- Noise and Vibration
- Traffic and Transport
- Ecology
- Built Heritage
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

3 The following topics would be left out:

- Archaeology
- Agriculture
- Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
- Ground Conditions and Contamination
- Human Health
- Materials and Waste
- Major Accidents and / or Natural Disasters
- Water Resources

4 The abovementioned topics are considered in turn below.

Socio-Economics

5 It is agreed that Socio-Economics should be scoped in.

Air Quality

6 It is agreed that Air Quality should be scoped in. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that she is satisfied with the contents of the Scoping Report. Natural England have also provided comments at Annex A of their response.

Noise and Vibration

7 It is agreed that Noise and Vibration should be scoped in. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that she is satisfied with the contents of the Scoping Report.

Traffic and Transport

8 The Highway Authority have commented as follows:

"THE COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY (CHA) has undertaken an assessment of the proposed Environmental Impact Assessment methodology and are satisfied that the transport methodology is broadly suitable.

The proposals are the subject of an ongoing pre-application advice process with the CHA and are therefore subject to change which could then impact on the necessary scope or methodology of the EIA.

Please note that the EIA Scoping Report refers to a 2023 baseline and that this may need to be updated to reflect the baseline data collected to support the Transport Assessment."

- 9 It is agreed that Traffic and Transport should be scoped in. Regard should be had to the outcome of the pre-application process with the Highway Authority and the comments above.

Ecology

- 10 The Council's Principal Tree Officer has commented as follows:

"Of note is the Ancient and Semi Natural Woodland known as 'The Bogs' which immediately abuts the proposal site to the south. The Ancient Woodland is also listed as priority habitat deciduous woodland, which in fact extends further into the site, north of the ancient woodland boundary. There is clearly some discrepancy between the understanding of the constraints within the EIA scoping report, as demonstrated by the difference between the two paragraphs in blue below (my emphasis). Clearly, the proposal brought forward would need to fully acknowledge the presence of the ancient woodland and ensure that no loss or deterioration is caused, by providing a sufficient semi natural buffer, which due to the scale of the development ideally should exceed the minimum 15m semi natural buffer as recommended by Natural England, if at all possible, and should take account of any veteran trees that are surveyed within the woodland, where the buffer should be no less than 15 x the stem diameter of the tree.

In terms of specific trees of note, there are a number of trees and woodland areas protected by Tree Preservation Order, including the deciduous woodland and ancient woodland, a copse of woodland on the northern boundary, and several individual trees on the western boundary. There is a single protected ash tree located roughly central within the site, but its condition would need to be assessed prior to making a decision on its management.

The site is also bounded by hedgerows, which will need to be assessed for their 'importance' in terms of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. The level of importance, in all respects, would need to be assessed when considering access points etc, which may require sections of hedgerow to be removed.

Considering the arboricultural constraints, the applicant will need to ensure that the layout takes full account of the ancient woodland, trees and hedgerows, which form an integral aspect of the landscape character. Any new roads should be designed to be 'tree lined' in accordance with the NPPF, and open spaces and verges should ensure that space is provided for significant amenity tree planting. A diverse mixture of native, naturalized and non-native trees should be provided within a comprehensive landscaping strategy. The applicant should also submit a detailed Arboricultural Impact Assessment and outline Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan. Further details which may not be available at initial planning stage will then likely be required by condition should consent be granted.

7.3.9 - No other designated Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves or **Ancient Woodland** located within the vicinity of the Site.

7.6.1 - The site is largely arable, however, it does include areas of native hedgerow, and priority woodland, and is adjacent to **ancient woodland habitat**"

- 11 Natural England have also provided extensive comments at Annex A of their response.

- 12 It is agreed that Ecology should be scoped in. Regard should be had to the comments of the tree officer above and those of Natural England.

Built Heritage

- 13 The Historic Buildings Officer at Surrey County Council has commented as follows:

“There are no built heritage assets within the application site and as such there are no direct impacts from the scheme. The applicant has identified that there are possible indirect impacts on both Blunt House (Grade II) and the Church of St Mary (Grade I) through an impact on their setting.

In addition to the two aforementioned heritage assets, I would encourage the applicant to take account of views from Court Farm House (Grade II) which is to the south of the Church of St Mary. While it is unlikely the impact on this building will be considered ‘significant’ in line with the matrix set out within the Scoping Opinion, this will nonetheless need to be taken into consideration as part of the overall assessment of the impact on the historic built environment.

In line with Historic England Good Practice Advice Note 3, I would strongly encourage the applicant to include both summer and winter views within the application material. The inclusion of winter views are most important to show the full impact of the scheme when the trees are not in leaf. Subject to the proposed layout of the site, I would also suggest a further viewpoint is included between viewpoints 1 and 2/3 looking south-east toward the Church of St Mary where the church should be more prominent.

As part of attempts to minimise harm, I would encourage to the applicant to ensure the proposed dwellings reflect the Surrey vernacular style, in particular through the use of materials such as clay tiles and bricks. Consideration should also be given to the location of open spaces to see whether a suitable buffer can be created between the development and St Mary’s Church. It would also be preferable to have the view toward the church along the existing Right of Way kept open.”

- 14 It is agreed that Built Heritage should be scoped in, and regard should be had to the comments of the Historic Buildings Officer above.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- 15 The application site is adjacent to an area (north of Barrow Green Road) proposed for inclusion within the Surrey Hills AONB. The AONB Planning Adviser at Surrey County Council has commented as follows:

“The EIA Scoping Report seems thorough. It recognises that the site adjoins a proposed extension to Surrey Hills AONB, now rebranded National Landscape. As the term AONB has been used within the report so that term will be used in this consultation response.

The submitted report considers the relationship of the site with the proposed AONB between paragraphs 7.8.1 to 7.8.4 and it is shown in Figure 7.3 - Heritage Asset Plan. It is possible that when the planning application has been prepared, submitted and particularly determined, the AONB boundary review will be further progressed and should be given greater weight. In my view, this

proposed AONB will very likely be put forward by Natural England (NE) to the Secretary of State for AONB designation. It still remains a proposal following NE's assessment of the results of last year's public and statutory consultation.

The landscape issues will need to cover not just views from the proposed AONB to the proposed development but whether the development would harm views across the site into the proposed AONB. At this stage I would strongly recommend that substantial tree belts should be planted along the common boundary of the development site with the proposed AONB.

The nearest existing AONB boundary is to the north. NPPF paragraph 182 states that:

"...development within their (AONBs and NPS) setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas."

The intervening area between the AONB to the north and proposed development site is developed. Consequently, the visual impact of the proposed development may be shown in the application not to be significant. Again, it will be views towards the AONB that will need to be covered in a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment accompanying the application."

- 16 It is agreed that Landscape and Visual Impact should be scoped in, and regard should be had to the comments of the AONB Planning Adviser above.

Archaeology

- 17 The County Archaeologist has commented as follows:

"The site is large, totalling c 9.6ha. I have no specific archaeological requirements regarding the EIA, however, given its size, as noted in the Scoping Report, any subsequent application for development of the site will need to be accompanied by an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (as required by the National Planning Policy Framework - para 200).

Depending on the results of that Assessment, it may be necessary for a programme of pre-determination archaeological evaluation to be undertaken to fully inform on the site's archaeological potential and to assess at an early stage, the nature of any mitigation that may be required (as prescribed in Local Plan policy DP20).

The applicant may wish to consider the conduct of a programme of pre-application archaeological assessment and evaluation and I would be pleased to discuss the nature, extent and timing of that work. Its results would provide the opportunity to identify archaeological assets at an early stage and, in the event of a find(s) of significance, there then exists the opportunity to influence the design and logistics of the development to allow for their preservation in situ. Such a programme of work would help to provide the applicant with a clearer understanding of the potential costs and programme implications that may derive from the required archaeological considerations of the development.

*On the basis that archaeological considerations can be managed through the above National and Local Planning policies, **archaeology can be scoped out of the EIA.**"*

- 18 It is therefore agreed Archaeology can be scoped out of the ES, though the application should be accompanied by a desk based assessment in line with part D of policy DP20. Further work may subsequently be required in line with the policy and with the comments of the County Archaeologist above.

Agriculture

- 19 Based on the information within the Scoping Report, in particular the conclusions of the Phase 1 Land Quality Desk Study at Appendix A, it is agreed Agriculture can be scoped out of the ES. The desk study, and the Soil Management Plan referred to at para 8.3.7 of the Scoping Report, should accompany the planning application.

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

- 20 It is agreed that Climate Change can be scoped out of the ES for the reasons set out in the Scoping Report. Regard should be had to the comments of Natural England at Annex A of their response, and it is likely these could be addressed within the Ecology chapter.

Ground Conditions and Contamination

- 21 The Council's Contaminated Land Officer has commented as follows:

"I have reviewed the submitted document and agree that there are no significant matters relating to contamination.

However, the applicant should be made aware that a suitable Phase 1 risk assessment and supporting site walkover is expected to be submitted with the planning application when submitted.

A decision will then be made as to whether a contamination condition is required as part of any permission that might be granted."

- 22 It is therefore agreed that Ground Conditions and Contamination can be scoped out of the ES. The phase 1 assessment referred to by the Contaminated Land Officer should accompany the planning application.

Human Health

- 23 It is agreed that Human Health can be scoped out of the ES for the reasons set out in the Scoping Report.

Materials and Waste

- 24 It is agreed that Materials and Waste can be scoped out of the ES for the reasons set out in the Scoping Report.

Major Accidents and / or Natural Disasters

- 25 It is agreed that Major Accidents and / or Natural Disasters can be scoped out of the ES for the reasons set out in the Scoping Report.

Water Resources

- 26 The Lead Local Flood Authority have commented as follows:

“Surrey County Council as LLFA have no further comments that should be included in the scoping opinion. However, the Applicant should be made aware of the following:

A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy will need to be produced to accompany any future planning application for the site. A sequential based approach should be applied to placing development in areas of the site at lowest risk of fluvial and surface water flooding, including provision to maintain the surface water flow path.

If proposed site works affect an Ordinary Watercourse, Surrey County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority should be contacted to obtain prior written Consent. More details are available on our website.

If proposed works result in infiltration of surface water to ground within a Source Protection Zone the Environment Agency will require proof of surface water treatment to achieve water quality standards.

Sub ground structures should be designed so they do not have an adverse effect on groundwater.

The proposed development offers the opportunity to include above ground surface water attenuation as well as multifunctional sustainable drainage elements. Many schemes deliver the management of water quantity but do not fulfil the four pillars of SuDS design as defined by the SuDS Manual. The SuDS Manual seeks to encourage schemes that manage the quantity and quality of surface water runoff, provide an amenity that integrates surface water as an attractive part of public space and also enhance biodiversity. Schemes based around the management of quantity alone are purely drainage schemes not SuDS. This also delivers the objectives of the NPPF whereby ‘all major development should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence this would be inappropriate’.

- 27 Regard should also be had to the comments of Natural England at Annex A of their response, and to the standing advice provided by the Environment Agency. The former, insofar as they relate to water quality, can likely be addressed within the Ecology chapter.
- 28 It is agreed that Water Resources can be scoped out of the ES, subject to the comments referenced above and the submission of an FRA and surface water drainage scheme as part of the planning application.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the conclusions of the Scoping Report in terms of the topics to be scoped in and scoped out of the ES be accepted.

| | Signed | Dated |
|--------------|--------|------------|
| Case Officer | JK | 14/10/2024 |
| Checked ENF | | |
| Final Check | PL | 15.10,2024 |

[Kat Lail
Temple Group
Temple Chambers
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If calling: 01883 722000

tjames@tandridge.gov.uk

Our ref: 2024/956/EIA

Date 17 October 2024

Sent via email only to
kat.lail@templegroup.co.uk

Dear Ms Lail,

Application: 2024/956/EIA
Location: Land at Stoneyfield, Oxted, Surrey
Proposal: Request for EIA scoping opinion for the development of 140 dwellings and 80 unit care home with associated access, parking and landscaping

Further to the Council's decision on the scoping opinion issued on 15 October 2024, I am writing to clarify the comments in the officer's report.

The site has been chosen for inclusion in the expanded Surrey Hills AONB (National Landscape). For the avoidance of doubt, the words "adjacent to" in paragraph 15 of the officer's report should be omitted and the corrected sentence should read:

"The application site is in the area proposed for inclusion within the Surrey Hills AONB, The Environmental Statement (ES) landscape and visual assessment (LVIA) will need to assess whether, as a candidate area for inclusion in the AONB, the site is a valued landscape. The LVIA will also need to assess the landscape impact of the proposed development in terms of the current baseline that it is within the setting of the AONB and a future baseline that it is within the designated AONB"

As it has been agreed the LVIA has been scoped in, the above provides further clarity on what should be included within the assessment.

I would further advise that there is a complex, multi-faceted relationship between the site and The Bogs which abuts the site. This relationship does not fit neatly into a single topic area and instead spans the topics of landscape, ecology, ground conditions and contamination, water resources and flood risk. At a minimum the ES should assess all of these facets and their interaction which has led to The Bogs SNCI and how that interaction will be maintained with the proposed development in place. The ES should

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not be limited to consideration of those facets noted in the officer report in isolation from one another but in terms of the cumulative impact of the development on them and collectively.

A copy of this letter has been sent to the applicant, Croudace Homes and will be placed on the public folder.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas James

Interim DM Manager

Cc: Croudace Homes Limited