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# **BRISTOL AIRPORT CAR PARKING AT HEATHFIELD PARK**

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**ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT**

**January 2021**

**SUTHERLAND PROPERTY  
& LEGAL SERVICES LTD**



**PLANNING & ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTANCY SERVICE**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Environmental Statement has been prepared to support a planning application for an alternative option to car parking at Bristol Airport. Within their submission under 18/P/5118/OUT the airport made it clear that more car parking is needed (whether the application was approved or not) and there is not sufficient room at the airport to provide additional car parking.
- 1.2. A local businessman, is proposing to accommodate the additional airport car parking at a site near to J21 off the M5 (appendix I), this will remove existing pressure from the surrounding airport roads while safeguarding Green Belt land so the airport does not have to expand into it.
- 1.3. The offer will be valet parking with eco-friendly buses operating from the site. There will be a bus service operated every 20 minutes from the car park, replacing thousands of cars with between 3 and 5 buses every hour, varying according to time of day and changes in passenger demand.
- 1.4. Within a formal screening opinion from North Somerset Council (LPA) under reference 20/P/1697/EA1 (appendix II) the potential impacts of the development are set out, these are:
  - Potential for significant impacts on European Site features – Mendip and North Somerset Bats SAC;
  - Potential for significant impact on National Priority Habitat – ‘Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh’ and Puxton Moor, Biddle Street and Yatton SSSIs; and
  - Potential for significant impacts on the Strategic Road Network (principally the M5 motorway).
- 1.5. To support this Environment Statement 4 technical documents have been produced these are:
  - Ecological Impact Assessment (January 2021)
  - Shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment (sHRA) and Shadow Appropriate Assessment (sAA) (January 2021)
  - Flood Risk Assessment & Sustainable Drainage Strategy (December 2020)
  - Technical Note 1 (Volume 1- 4); Transport Statement

- 1.6. Reference should also be made to the Planning Design and Access Statement which provides information with regard to the operation of the site and policy justification.
- 1.7. This Environmental Statement has been prepared in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. The format of this Environmental Statement follows the paragraph order of Schedule 4 of the 2017 regulations. With reference to the relevant technical documents.

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1. The proposal is for the provision of up to 3,000 airport carparking spaces at land to the south of the A370 near J21 of the M5 Motorway, with an associated reception building.
- 2.2. The cars will be valet parked, allowing for a greater density of cars at the location.
- 2.3. The cars will be parked on a permeable gravel surface while the entrance and circulatory roads will be paved with permeable tarmac.
- 2.4. The reception buildings footprint will be 163m<sup>2</sup> in size, it will be single storey.

### The Site

- 2.5. The site is located to the south of the A370 and takes access directly from it. The access is existing and connects to a narrow road which accesses a number of business and residential properties to the east of the Application site.
- 2.6. The Site occupies approximately 11.2 hectares of flat land south of the main A370 (Weston Road) between Hewish and Congresbury, approximately four kilometres to the north-east of Weston-super-Mare in North Somerset.
- 2.7. It comprises a diversity of habitats within an area of extensive Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh (the North Somerset Levels), including some recently raised and cleared land. The site has a residential area to the east (Moorlands Park), open farmland divided by rhynes to the south and west, and the main A370 road to the north.
- 2.8. The Site itself is dominated by ephemeral/short perennial vegetation which is developing into semi-improved grassland; marshy grassland and semi-improved grassland; with some bare ground and areas of tall ruderal vegetation on spoil and refuse heaps, as well as along some of the rhynes that bound the majority of the site. The rhyne along the western site boundary is tree-lined along its northern section, with a species-poor hedgerow along its southern section (offsite). A species-poor hedgerow also runs the full length of the southern site boundary, both on- and off-site.

### Operation

- 2.9. This proposal is targeted at improving the environment of North Somerset by;
  - catering for the current over-demand for airport-related car parking, which has largely been catered for by uncontrolled off-site car parking throughout the greenbelt;

- reducing traffic demand on the rural roads which pass through the greenbelt, connecting major infrastructure with the Airport; and,
- improving local air quality by reduction in traffic demand in the vicinity of the Airport Terminal.

2.10. The proposal looks to cater for arrivals in the frontage area of the site, where arriving drivers will park in an attractively laid out, planted drop-off area, deposit their car key a reception and board a waiting bus. The buses will depart at headways of no more than 20 minutes, upon which the customer's car will be valet parked to the rear of the site, in Zones 2 – 4. The operator will be aware from the booking of which aircraft the customer is expecting to return on and this can be monitored for delay such that their car is returned to the pick-up area immediately prior to their arrival from the airport, ensuring a smooth and efficient service is provided.

### 3. ALTERNATIVE SITES

- 3.1. Within the Planning, Design and Access Statement a section is included (chapter 6) that has regard to other sites.

## 4. CURRENT STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

### Ecological

- 4.1. A full assessment of the site with regards to ecology is set out in chapter 6 of the Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA).
- 4.2. There are two sites of international importance within the study area as shown on Figure 6.1 of the (EclA) , with the Severn Estuary being a Ramsar site, a Special Protection Area (SPA) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC); a summary of the features of importance at each site is presented below in Table 4.1.
- 4.3. The proposed development site does not lie within any internationally designated sites of nature conservation.
- 4.4. The European protected site, North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC, lies approximately 3.1 kilometres to the east, with the Site lying within Consultation Band C of the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC, as shown in Figure 6.2 (North Somerset Council, 2018).
- 4.5. The network of rhynes connect the Site to Puxton Moor Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (see section 6.1.2), as well as to Oldbridge River which is a tributary of the River Yeo flowing into the Severn Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar site north of Wick St. Lawrence some four kilometres downstream.

Table 4.1

Designation	Site name	Key ecological features	Distance and direction from application site (km)
<b>Special Area of Conservation (SAC)</b>	North Somerset and Mendip Bats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Semi-natural dry grassland and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (important orchid sites)</li> <li>Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines (priority feature)</li> <li>Caves not open to the public</li> <li>Lesser Horseshoe Bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>)</li> </ul>	~3.1km to the east

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater Horseshoe Bat (<i>R. ferrumequinum</i>)</li> </ul>	
	Severn Estuary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estuaries</li> <li>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</li> <li>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>)</li> <li>Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time</li> <li>Reefs</li> <li>Sea lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)</li> <li>River lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>)</li> <li>Twait shad (<i>Alosa fallox</i>)</li> </ul>	~3.9km to the north-west
<b>Special Protection Area (SPA)</b>	Severn Estuary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bewick's swan (<i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>)</li> <li>Gadwall (<i>Anas strepera</i>)</li> <li>Greater white-fronted goose (<i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>)</li> <li>Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>)</li> <li>Common shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>)</li> <li>Common redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>)</li> <li>Internationally important waterfowl assemblage</li> </ul>	~3.9km to the north-west

<b>RAMSAR</b>	Severn Estuary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immense tidal range affecting both physical environment and biological communities</li> <li>• Estuaries</li> <li>• Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</li> <li>• Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>)</li> <li>• Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time</li> <li>• Unusual estuarine communities, reduced diversity and high productivity</li> <li>• Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>)</li> <li>• Sea trout (<i>S. trutta</i>)</li> <li>• Sea lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)</li> <li>• River lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>)</li> <li>• Twait shad (<i>Alosa fallax</i>)</li> <li>• Allis shad (<i>A. alosa</i>)</li> <li>• European eel (<i>Anguilla anguilla</i>)</li> <li>• Internationally important waterfowl assemblage</li> <li>• Bewick's swan (<i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>)</li> <li>• Gadwall (<i>Anas strepera</i>)</li> <li>• Greater white-fronted goose (<i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>)</li> <li>• Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>)</li> <li>• Common shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>)</li> <li>• Common redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>)</li> </ul>	~3.9km to the north-west
<b>World Heritage Site</b>	None	n/a	n/a

4.6. The Site lies within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone where all planning applications (except householder) that are outside or extending outside existing settlements/urban areas affecting greenspace, farmland, semi-natural habitats or landscape features such as trees, hedges, streams, rural buildings/structures require the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to consult with Natural England.

4.7. Two SSSIs lie close to the Site: Puxton Moor located approximately 115 metres to the south and Biddle Street Yatton lying approximately 475 metres to the north. The network of rhynes connect the Site to Puxton Moor SSSI, as well as to Oldbridge River which is a tributary of the River Yeo flowing into the Severn Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site north of Wick St. Lawrence some four kilometres downstream. This is set out in table 4.2, below.

Table 4.2

Designation	Site name	Key ecological features	Distance and direction from application site (km)
<b>Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</b>	Puxton Moor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network of rhynes and ditches supporting aquatic plant communities of great nature conservation interest. Open water species such as Canadian and Nuttall's waterweed <i>Elodea canadensis</i> and <i>E. nuttallii</i>, frogbit <i>Hydrocharis morsus-ranae</i>, small and lesser Pondweed <i>Potamogeton berchtoldii</i> and <i>P. pusillus</i>, common water-crowfoot <i>Ranunculus aquatilis</i> and the locally uncommon opposite-leaved pondweed <i>Groenlandia densa</i> are all present. Emergent species are also well-represented and include branched bur-reed <i>Sparganium erectum</i>, tubular water-dropwort <i>Oenanthe fistulosa</i>, water plantain <i>Alisma plantago-aquatica</i> and water horsetail <i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>.</li> </ul>	~115m to the south
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diverse invertebrate fauna associated with the rhynes and ditches, molluscs, <i>Coleoptera</i> and <i>Hydracarina</i> (water mites) well-represented and breeding populations of several odonata including ruddy darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i> and locally uncommon white-legged damselfly</li> </ul>	

	<i>Platycnemis pennipes.</i>	
Biddle Street, Yatton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Watercourses supporting a wide range of aquatic plant communities, many of which are of considerable nature conservation interest.</li><li>• Open water occurs plants such as common water- starwort <i>Callitriche stagnalis</i>, frogbit, fan-leaved water-crowfoot <i>Ranunculus circinatus</i>, Nuttall's waterweed, lesser pondweed, whorled water-milfoil <i>Myriophyllum verticillatum</i> and stonewort <i>Chara</i> sp.</li><li>• High diversity of emergent species including branched bur-reed, lesser water-parsnip <i>Berula erecta</i>, water horsetail, tubular water-dropwort and water-plantain.</li><li>• Rich invertebrate fauna associated with the rhynes and ditches. Good numbers of aquatic beetles <i>Coleoptera</i> are present including populations of two nationally rare species, <i>Hydacticus transversalis</i> and Britain's largest water beetle, the great silver water beetle <i>Hydrophilus piceus</i>.</li><li>• A number of dragonflies and damselflies are known to breed in the watercourses including southern hawker <i>Aeshna cyanea</i>, blue-tailed damselfly <i>Ischnura elegans</i> and the nationally scarce variable damselfly <i>Coenagrion pulchellum</i>.</li></ul>	~475m to the north

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aquatic molluscs with strong populations of the common freshwater mussel and the nationally rare pea mussel <i>Pisidium pseudosphaerium</i>.</li> </ul>	
<b>National Nature Reserve (NNR)</b>	None	n/a	n/a
<b>Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	None	n/a	n/a

## Highways

- 4.8. With regard to Highways the “lockdown” and travel reduction enforced in response to the COVID19 pandemic makes it impossible to survey current base traffic levels. Moreover and in regard to historic survey data, until traffic returns to a stable state, not only will it be impossible to undertake additional traffic surveys, but it is unclear what has been the impact on traffic growth. The previous forecasts undertaken using TEMPro clearly assumed economic and traffic growth would continue throughout the recent period of lockdown.
- 4.9. The TEMPro forecasting system is based on regional economic forecast data in order to judge likely traffic changes and consensus is that a potentially substantial economic downturn not previously anticipated is now likely. This will undoubtedly check traffic growth to a degree currently impossible to forecast.
- 4.10. On the above bases, it is clear that forecasting traffic is currently more of an uncertain discipline than it has been for many years and that there is no opportunity to address this in the immediate future.
- 4.11. In regard to forecasting future base traffic conditions, therefore, it is appropriate to limit the period into the future over which forecasts are attempted. In this instance and given the anticipation that the current proposal can be brought forward to the same deadline as the previous proposal referred above, it is considered prudent to adopt the future year base traffic flows agreed in submissions pursuant to that Application as a likely worst case, in regard to base traffic demand. It is clearly inappropriate to attempt to forecast beyond the anticipated year of opening, as the significant uncertainties referred above will then grow further.

## 5. LIKELY FACTORS TO BE SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTED BY THE DEVELOPMENT AND SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

### Ecology

5.1. A full assessment of the environmental factors likely to be affected by the development are set out in Chapter 8 of the EclA and within the Shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment (sHRA) and Shadow Appropriate Assessment (sAA).

5.2. A summary is included below in table 5.1:

Table 5.1

Phase of development	Potential effects on ecology	Impacts
<b>Groundworks / pre-construction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ground investigations e.g. for contaminated land</li> <li>• Vegetation/habitat clearance</li> <li>• Burning of waste</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of habitats</li> <li>• Degradation/damage/modification of habitats</li> <li>• Fragmentation of habitats</li> <li>• Loss of species</li> <li>• Incidental mortality or injury of species</li> <li>• Disturbance of species</li> </ul>
<b>Construction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access and travel on/off site</li> <li>• Areas for plant maintenance and for storage of oils, fuels and chemicals</li> <li>• Movement of materials to/from or within a site e.g. topsoil, crushed stone</li> <li>• Acoustic disturbance and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of habitats</li> <li>• Degradation/damage/modification of habitats</li> <li>• Fragmentation of habitats</li> <li>• Loss of species</li> <li>• Incidental mortality or injury of species</li> <li>• Disturbance of species</li> </ul>

	vibration from construction activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dust generation</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental incidents and accidents e.g. spillage, noise and emissions</li> <li>Lighting</li> <li>Provision of services and utilities e.g. underground power lines, water supply and drainage</li> <li>Setup and subsequent removal of site officers/compound s and final site clearance after construction; storage areas for construction/excav ated materials</li> <li>Structural works for new building and engineering</li> </ul>	

<b>Operational</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to site (both route and means)</li> <li>• Drainage</li> <li>• Implementation of landscape design and habitat management (type and location)</li> <li>• Presence of vehicles and people</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Physical presence of structures e.g. new roads</li> <li>• Site operation and management e.g. maintenance operations, lighting, noise, air and water pollution, traffic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degradation/damage/modification of habitats</li> <li>• Incidental mortality or injury of species</li> <li>• Disturbance of species</li> </ul>
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## Highways

5.3. The target market of the Park and Ride proposal comprises customers of the International Airport, who will be making their journey to the Airport whether or not this proposed parking facility is provided. Consequently, none of the traffic using the site will be entirely new traffic; these customers will be travelling to the Airport by some means in any case. The traffic addressed in this report is therefore not truly generated traffic, but is more accurately described as diverted traffic.

5.4. The above notwithstanding, the site location will mean that traffic, some of which would otherwise leave the Motorway at other junctions (typically 18, 19 or 22), will instead divert via Junction 21. Consequently, on a local level, this diverted traffic can reasonably be considered the same as generated traffic, as it would not otherwise be here. Clearly, any local traffic increase due to this diversion is mirrored by an equivalent decrease in traffic elsewhere on the network.

- 5.5. As such any the impact will be with regards to capacity of J21 as opposed to an introduction of new vehicle movements to the Highway Network.
- 5.6. A response with regards to the impacts of the development on J21 is included within Technical Note 1 (Volume 1- 4); Transport Statement.

## 6. FORECASTING METHODS OR EVIDENCE

### Ecology

- 6.1. The Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) encompasses the establishment of the ecological baseline by undertaking a desk-based study, drawing on existing information and data, and a field survey; evaluation of the impacts of the proposed development on the designated sites, habitats and species (ecological features) found both on site and in the immediate vicinity of the Site and the identification of measures to mitigate the significant effects of these impacts on the Important Ecological Features; and the identification of ways to enhance the biodiversity of the area. The monitoring of these mitigation measures and biodiversity enhancements is also outlined.
- 6.2. The study area was defined by Ecological Surveys Limited as the application site and a 2km radius around it as is accepted as an industry standard. Baseline information for this area was collated to determine ecological features that could potentially be affected by the development of the site. These included habitats and species both within and outside the application site but within the study area. The ecological baseline for the assessment was established by undertaking a desk-based study and field surveys of the application site. The radius was increased to 5km from the Site for bat species and common dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*).
- 6.3. A full breakdown of the evidence in use is contained within section 5 of the EclA. Table 6.1, below, sets out the surveys undertaken.

Survey type	Date(s)	Weather conditions	Surveyor(s)	Equipment used
Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey	30/04/2020	Fine and dry, with sunny intervals	Dominic Sheldon BSc (Hons), PgCert, ACIEEM, TechArborA	Binoculars, camera
Bat Activity Survey	Transsects walked: 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2020 6 <sup>th</sup> August	18°C, wind = 1, 25% cloud, no rain 22°C, wind = 1, 5% cloud, no rain 17°C, wind = 1, 85%	Dominic Sheldon BSc (Hons), PgCert, ACIEEM, TechArborA	Anabat Walkabout bat detector used for transects.  Two Anabat Express bat detectors used for static automated survey.

	2020 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2020 Automated detectors in place: 16 <sup>th</sup> – 23 <sup>rd</sup> July 2020 5 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> August 2020 31 <sup>st</sup> August – 6 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	cloud, no rain		
Reptile Survey	03/07/2020 (placement of refugia)		Nikki Taylor	150 refugia initially placed. However, all but 10 were found to have been taken on the first survey visit so a further 50 were placed. Visual search, using 8x33 Kowa Genesis binoculars, for basking reptiles was also undertaken.
	07/09/2020	Moderate westerly breeze, partial cloud cover, nil precipitation (17°C)		
	16/09/2020	Minimal cloud cover, sunny, nil precipitation		

	(18°C)
18/09/2020	Partly cloudy, nil precipitation, light south-westerly breeze (16°C)
19/09/2020	Nil precipitation, light breeze (13°C)
22/09/2020	Cloudy, light showers, moderate westerly breeze (17°C)
24/09/2020	Cloudy, no precipitation, south-westerly wind (13°C)
26/09/2020	Overcast, some light drizzle, light breeze (16°C)
27/09/2020	Overcast, nil precipitation, light westerly breeze (15°C)

- 6.4. All areas of the Site were readily accessible to enable the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey to be undertaken, and the time spent on site was considered appropriate to obtain all the details required for each habitat and species to enable an assessment to be made. Although some plant species would not have been visible during the survey period, the botanical diversity was considered sufficient to be able to classify and assess the habitats present, as well as their potential for supporting legally protected and notable species.
- 6.5. The weather conditions were fine and dry, with sunny intervals.
- 6.6. All surveys were carried out by suitable-skilled and experienced surveyors.
- 6.7. However, it is worth remembering that any single survey gives a snapshot of species and habitats present on site on a particular day. The presence or absence of species recorded on site that day, particularly mobile species with larger home ranges, will vary and does not therefore necessarily represent the total species using the site over time, hence the undertaking of further surveys (as listed in Table 6.1 above) for potential species using the site, as identified during the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey.
- 6.8. The bat activity surveys were carried out according to the guidance given in Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd ed.) (Collins, J. (ed.), 2016). The survey effort was proportionate to the likely use of the site by bats and the potential effects of the proposed development on the species present. The surveys involved three transect and fixed-point surveys and three periods of remote monitoring. All surveys were carried out under suitable weather conditions and at a suitable time of year.
- 6.9. Species identification from sound analysis alone is not always possible with all species. Many myotis species have very similar calls and, unless characteristic calls of certain species are recorded, most of these calls are grouped together as myotis species.
- 6.10. The reptile survey was conducted in accordance with the Herpetofauna Workers' Manual (Gent and Gibson, 1998) and the Froglife Advice Sheet 10 concerning reptile survey methods (Froglife, 1999). Survey effort was focussed on areas of habitat particularly suitable for reptiles, corresponding to areas rough tussocky grassland, hedges, spoil heaps and refuse piles. 150 artificial cover objects were placed on site on 3rd July 2020; all were laid in a south-facing position. Eight survey visits were made from 7th September 2020 to 27th September 2020, with each visit taking place between 0700 to 1800 on days with suitable weather conditions, i.e. when air temperatures were between 10-20°C; when there was little or no wind, and when there was no rain. Where possible, survey days were selected during warm, dry, sunny periods following cold, wet overcast days. On the first survey visit (7th September 2020) all but 10 felt mats had

been removed and so another 50 were placed. These 60 remained in place for the duration of the survey and so, in effect, 60 were checked for the presence of reptiles.

- 6.11. It should be noted that habitats, and the species they may support, change over time due to natural processes and because of human influence. In line with current guidelines, the survey on which this report is based is only valid for two years, after which time it will need updating. It being accepted that some local planning authorities now expect a survey to be updated after twelve months.

### **Highways**

- 6.12. As set out in section 4, CoVID has meant new survey data for a base position has not been possible. The previous forecasts undertaken using TEMPro clearly assumed economic and traffic growth would continue throughout the recent period of lockdown.
- 6.13. The TEMPro forecasting system is based on regional economic forecast data in order to judge likely traffic changes and consensus is that a potentially substantial economic downturn not previously anticipated is now likely. This will undoubtedly check traffic growth to a degree currently impossible to forecast.

## 7. OFFSET OF ANY IDENTIFIED SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

### Ecology

7.1. A full assessment of mitigation measures is set out in section 8 of the EclA, table 7.1, below, provides the provisioned mitigation measures. Further detail is also included within the sHRA and sAA.

Mitigation measure	Development Phase	Important Ecological Feature(s) initially impacted upon / effected	Avoidance / reduction in effect
Retention of habitats	All	Hedgerows, free-standing trees, marshy grassland, some semi- improved grassland, rhynes, vascular plants, bats, European badger, Eurasian otter, European water vole, Eurasian water shrew, West European hedgehog, brown hare, birds, reptiles, amphibians, European eel, invertebrates	Avoidance
Removal of invasive, non-native species: montbretia	Groundworks/pre-construction	Semi-improved grassland	Reduction
Control of disturbance levels (work hours)	Groundworks/pre-construction Construction	Bats, Eurasian otter, European badger, European water vole, West European hedgehog,	Reduction

between 08:00 and 18:00)		birds, reptiles	
Permanent buffers created: minimum 10m around badger sett and minimum 9m protection strip along all rhynes and Ecology Zone	All	Designated sites, hedgerows, free-standing trees, marshy and semi-improved grassland, rhynes, vascular plants, bats, European badger, Eurasian otter, European water vole, Eurasian water shrew, West European hedgehog, brown hare, birds, reptiles, amphibians, European eel, invertebrates	Avoidance
Construct ion Exclusion Zones along edge of 9m rhyn e protectio n strips and Ecology Zone	Groundworks/pre-construction Construction	Designated sites, hedgerows, free-standing trees, marshy and semi-improved grassland, rhynes, vascular plants, bats, European badger, Eurasian otter, European water vole, Eurasian water shrew, West European hedgehog, brown hare, birds, reptiles, amphibians, European eel, invertebrates	Avoidance / Reduction
Silt fencing	Groundworks/pre-construction Construction	Designated sites, hedgerows, free-standing trees, marshy and semi-improved grassland, rhynes, vascular plants, bats, European badger, Eurasian otter,	Avoidance

		European water vole, Eurasian water shrew, West European hedgehog, brown hare, birds, reptiles, amphibians, European eel, invertebrates	
Installation of bioremediation conveyance trenches around edge of all parking areas, with accompanying ponds.	All	Designated sites, hedgerows, free-standing trees, marshy and semi-improved grassland, rhynes, vascular plants, bats, European badger, Eurasian otter, European water vole, Eurasian water shrew, West European hedgehog, brown hare, birds, reptiles, amphibians, European eel, invertebrates	Avoidance
Appropriate timing of woody species removal including dense scrub (outside of bird nesting season)	Groundworks/pre-construction Construction	Hedgerows, free-standing trees, dense scrub, birds	Avoidance
Careful inspection of spoil heaps and rubbish piles	Groundworks/pre-construction Construction	Reptiles, amphibians, West European hedgehog	Avoidance
Covered trenching and capped pipes	Groundworks/pre-construction Construction	European badger, Eurasian otter, Eurasian water shrew, West European hedgehog,	Avoidance

		brown hare, reptiles, amphibians	
Artificial Lighting Strategy	All	Designated site, European badger, Eurasian otter, European water vole, Eurasian water shrew, West European hedgehog, brown hare, birds, European eel	Avoidance
Re-instatement of previously infilled sections of rhyne	All	Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, rhynes, vascular plants, bats, Eurasian otter, European water vole, Eurasian water shrew, birds, amphibians, European eel, invertebrates	Reduction
Mammal shelf beneath bridge/in culvert where any road crosses a rhyne	All	Eurasian otter, Eurasian water shrew	Avoidance
Habitat creation: species- rich grassland within 9m rhyne protection strips and	Groundworks/pre-construction Construction	Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, grassland, hedgerows, bats, birds, reptiles, West European hedgehog, brown hare, invertebrates, vascular plants	Avoidance / Reduction

## Highways

7.2. No major impacts are envisaged.

7.3. Due to the location of the proposed airport parking it is considered it will have a positive benefit on local community health and well being.

7.4. The proposal removes traffic destined for the airport from local roads, including A370 and A38, and replaces them with a limited number of bus movements, this has the benefit of:

- Removing vehicle pollution; and
- Reducing the number of vehicles on the road, which in turn should improve highway safety.


## **8. EXPECTED SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT ON THE ENVIRONMENT DERIVING FROM THE VULNERABILITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT TO RISKS OF MAJOR ACCIDENTS AND/OR DISASTERS WHICH ARE RELEVANT TO THE PROJECT CONCERNED**

- 8.1. There are no expected significant adverse effects of the development on the environment deriving from the vulnerability of the development to risks of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned.

## Appendix I



# KEY

 Application Site Boundary  
Total Area = 10.93 Hectares

urbandesignpractice  
Masterplanning + Urban Design

## Title

Site Location Plan

## Location

Land south of A370

## Scale

1:2500@A3

## Date

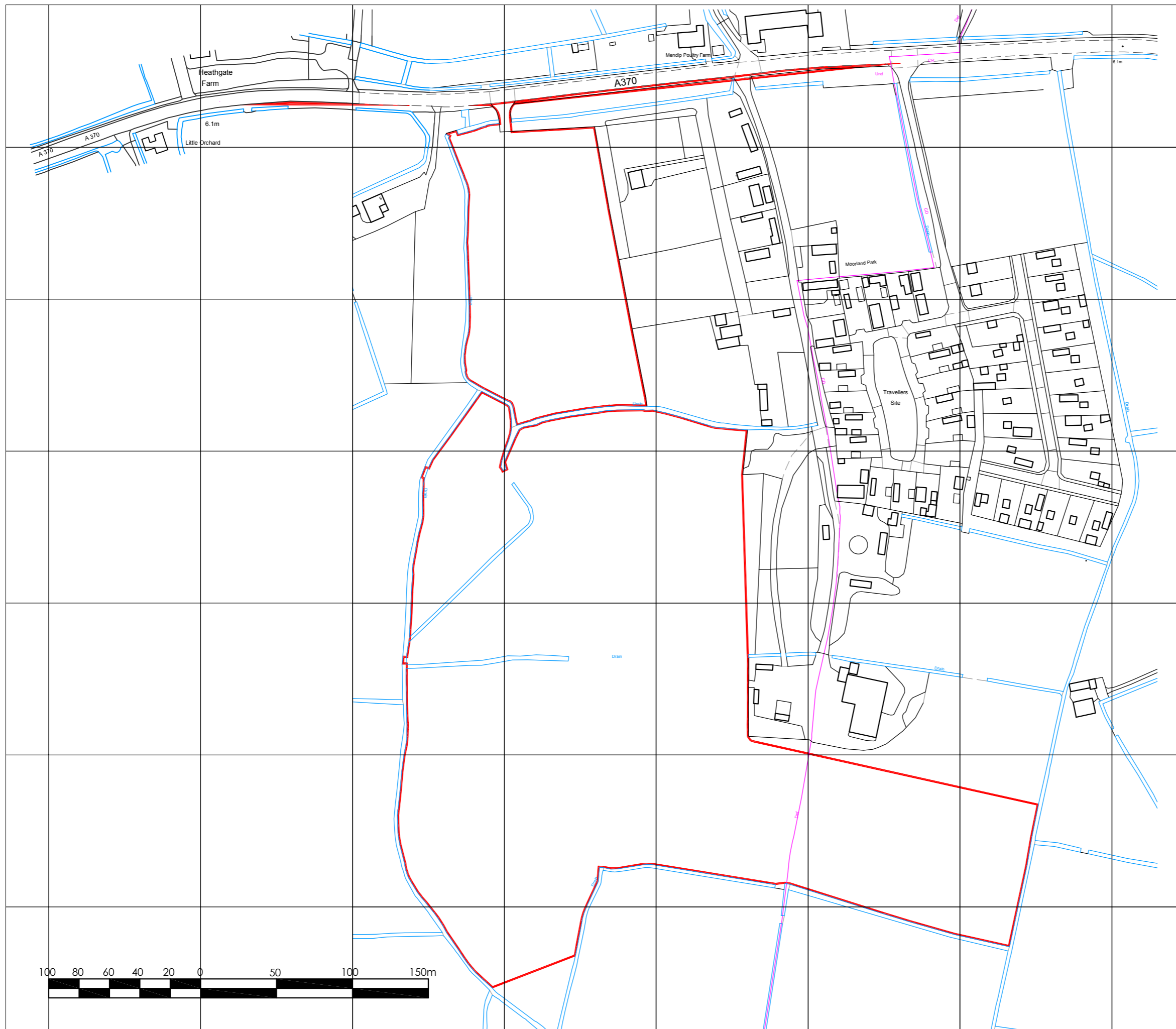
June 2020

## Drg no.

EP005

## Status

Planning



## Appendix II

## DELEGATED REPORT

<b>Application No:</b>	20/P/1697/EA1	<b>Target date:</b>	10.08.2020
<b>Case officer:</b>	Jessica Harper	<b>Extended date:</b>	
<b>Proposal:</b>	Request for a formal screening opinion as to whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is required for the change of use of land from gypsy pony track/agricultural land to use for a Park and Ride car park for Bristol Airport with 3101 parking spaces plus arrival/departure area with construction of associated roads and surfaces and the erection of a reception centre - THIS IS NOT A PLANNING APPLICATION		
<b>Site address:</b>	Proposed Park And Ride Adj Heathfield Park, Bristol Road, Hewish,		

## EIA SCREENING OPINION

### Classification and the need for screening

The proposed development falls within Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 - Column 1, [Part 10 (Infrastructure Projects)] and exceeds the thresholds in Column 2. A formal screening opinion is therefore required.

### Consultation summary

The Council has no statutory obligation to consult on EIA screening requests. It does however undertake nominal consultation including the local Parish Council and it can carry out further consultation if required. The following comments comprise summaries only. For the full comments, please refer to the website:

#### Puxton Parish Council

The bulk of airport traffic does not use the A370 / Brockley Coombe route. It is signposted off along the Portway in the north and onto the A38 in the south. The necessary motorway signage to airport access via J21 is surely going to increase airport traffic onto the A370 route that has no intention of using the Park & Ride facility. This increase in traffic volumes, the application claims, will mostly be from the south, so leaving the motorway nearer the airport will seem logical for the average driver. J21 is at the hub of a densely crowded section of the motorway: increasing the traffic flows on this section of road is likely to increase the risk of incidents closing the motorway and creating traffic gridlock between Gordano and Weston-Super-Mare. The J21 proposal will move the problem of airport parking into a narrow, commuter-crowded valley system blocked by hills to the east and the sea to the west, it will not resolve that problem but, rather, exacerbate the already notorious congestion that each motorway incident within that valley system brings.

After weighing up the pros and cons of the application, members unanimously felt that, on balance, they needed to object to this application.

#### Environment Agency No comments

#### Natural England

The proposed development is located within 125 metres of and has the potential for adverse effects on the following designated nature conservation sites or designated landscapes:

- Puxton Moor Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Natural England considers that the proposed development could have likely significant direct and/or indirect effects upon the above designated sites and that comprehensive environmental assessment is required.

Puxton Moor SSSI and nearby Biddle Street and Yatton SSSI are species rich ditches, which are nationally protected and support a diverse range of flora and fauna. The SSSI ditches are also used for navigation and foraging by several bat species, including Horseshoe bats from the nearby North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC, a site protected by legislation at the international level. Horseshoe bats are extremely light-sensitive, and the proposals have the potential to have significant impacts on the Horseshoe bat populations through the introduction of widespread lighting to a currently dark area.

Natural England considers this application has the potential to adversely affect populations of Greater and Lesser Horseshoe bats. We, therefore, recommend that a detailed assessment of the impacts of this proposal on these protected species, accompanies any subsequent planning application, irrespective of whether an EIA is required. In order to provide this information, there may be a requirement for surveys to be carried out at appropriate times of the year.

Should you determine that an EIA is not required in this case, you should ensure that the application is supported by sufficient biodiversity, landscape information and other environmental information in order for you to assess the weight to give these material considerations when determining the planning application.

#### Historic England

We consider that the historic environment information contained in the screening report provided is insufficient to enable the authority to determine whether or not an EIA is required in relation to this topic.

The applicant should be asked to provide information on heritage assets likely to be affected, including all designated heritage assets and their settings together with potential impacts on non-designated features of historic, architectural, archaeological or artistic interest, since these can also be of national importance and make an important contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of an area and its sense of place. This covers buildings, historic open spaces, historic features and the wider historic landscape including below-ground archaeological remains. This information is available via the local authority Historic Environment Record

[<https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>] and relevant local authority staff.

## Highways England

We have set out below both the general and specific areas of concerns that Highways England would wish to see considered as part of any Environmental Statement. The comments relate specifically to matters arising from Highways England's responsibilities to manage and maintain the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in England.

The site is approximately 3.5km north-east of M5 Junction 21 which forms part of the SRN.

General aspects to be addressed in all cases:

- An assessment of transport related impacts of the proposal should be carried out and reported as described in the current DCLG guidance on '*Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements in decision taking*'. Reference should be made to Highways England policy requirements set out in Circular 02/2013.
- Environmental impacts arising from any disruption during construction, traffic volume, composition or routing change and transport infrastructure modification should be fully assessed and reported, along with the environmental impact of the road network upon the development itself.
- Adverse changes to noise and air quality should be considered, including in relation to compliance with the European air quality Limit Values and/or Local Authority designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and World Health Organisation (WHO) criteria. ▪ Works in the vicinity of the SRN should be scheduled to avoid coinciding with other construction projects in order to limit the level of disturbance to the network.
- As per paragraph 50 of the Circular 02/2013, no new connections are permitted to the Highways England drainage network. In the case of an existing 'permitted' connection, this can only be retained if there is no land use change.
- Development must not lead to any surface water flooding on the SRN carriageway.

Location specific considerations:

- Any application will need to be supported by a transport assessment which should consider the impact of the proposal on the operation of the SRN - in this case the M5 Junction 21 - in line with the guidance contained within National Planning Practice Guidance and DfT Circular 02/2013 The Strategic Road Network and the Delivery of Sustainable Development. Any adverse impact will require appropriate mitigation to be provided in line with current guidance.
- The effects of the proposed development should be assessed cumulatively with other schemes and we would expect the applicants to agree an appropriate list of schemes, including committed development in the area, with the relevant local planning authority and Highways England.

## North Somerset Levels IDB (Internal Drainage Board)

The Board is of the opinion that an EIA is required due to the proximity of the SSSIs.

The proposals are likely to have a significant impact on water quality which could be detrimental to the aquatic environment and therefore the SSSI.

This risk needs to be considered at an early stage.

## The Mendip Society

We would question why a 'park and ride' is necessary, given the significant downturn in demand for air travel and the recent refusal to approve expansion of Bristol Airport.

In our opinion an independent and unbiased 'Environmental Impact Assessment' is absolutely essential for, amongst other things, the following reasons;

The development outlined above would;

- cause immense and irreversible damage to the countryside.
- decimate the natural flora and fauna of the area.
- cause considerable and unacceptable light pollution which would be especially visible from raised vantage points such as The Mendip Hills.
- cause considerable and unacceptable noise pollution.
- be inappropriate as the proposed site is a Zone 3 floodplain which is therefore at the highest risk of flooding. A flood would give rise to, inter alia, fuel and oil spillage and consequently to contamination of the land. In this respect, we observe that the water table is close to ground level and flooding is a major problem in the area.
- give rise to fuel and oil leakage/spillage from vehicles parked on quote 'grass or porous' surfacing which would cause contamination of the land.
- be unsuitable for the countryside if acres of land were to be covered with tarmac or other hard surfaces.
- create a dangerous 'T' junction on the A370.

## **Assessment criteria**

In considering whether the proposal is 'EIA development' the key is whether it is likely to have 'significant' environmental effects. Criterion for Screening 'Schedule 2' development is set out in 'Schedule 3' of the EIA Regulations and it says proposals should be screened according to the:

- Characteristics of the development (e.g. size, use, pollution and waste);
- Location of the development; and
- Types and characteristics of potential impact (magnitude and duration)

EIA development will usually apply where the proposals are:

- More than local importance
- Development proposed in particularly sensitive or in vulnerable locations
- Development with unusually complex or hazardous consequences

The **screening checklist** attached alongside this report is provided so that consideration can be given to potential impacts and whether these are likely to have 'significant' environmental effects. Further information is provided below.

### **1. Characteristics of the Development**

Schedule 3 of the Regulations sets out that the characteristics of the development must be considered having regard, in particular, to the size of the development; the cumulation with other development; use of natural resources; production of waste; pollution and nuisances and the risk of accidents, having regard in particular to substances or technologies used.

The proposal is for a change of use of land from agricultural use to allow the construction of access roads, reception centre, a Park and Ride car park for Bristol Airport parking allowing for up to 3,101 cars to park. The proposal falls within Section 10 of the EIA Regulations (2017), as an infrastructure project with a proposed site area of 11 hectares, this exceeds the 5-hectare threshold set out for Schedule 2 developments. As the threshold is exceeded, an EIA screening opinion is required.

#### **Size and cumulative impact - landscape**

The proposed site comprises six fields within the Kingston Seymour and Puxton Moors Landscape Character Area. Overall the character is considered to be **strong**, with the landscape in **good** condition. The landscape strategy for this area is:

The landscape strategy for *Kingston Seymour and Puxton Moors* is to **conserve** the existing landscape of strong character and good condition typified by the highly rural, remote pastoral grassland with strong networks of drainage channels and hedgerows, and winding rural roads between historic villages and farmsteads. Alongside this some elements of the landscape, which are in declining condition such as the small farm orchards and hedgerow trees and willow pollards should be restored. There is also an opportunity to enhance the character and condition of the area by reverting some areas to a more semi-natural state for wildlife enhancement and conserving traditional features associated with land drainage. Some areas adjoining urban areas are in need of sympathetic enhancement.

The proposed site is generally flat open pastureland. Construction and operation of a park and ride facility with more than 3,000 car park spaces will lead to a significant permanent change in existing land use and form, which has the potential to lead to detrimental impacts on the existing landscape character. This needs to be assessed. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is therefore required. This should include an assessment of the impact upon landscape character, including the implications of the proposal on the wider landscape, including impact on the setting of the Mendip Hills AONB. Both summer and winter views from the adjacent receptors should be provided, along with an assessment of the lighting effects of the proposals.

GIS mapping shows that there have been three EIA screening opinions received by the council for land very close to the proposed site. 11/P/0292/EA1, 13/P/1301/EA1 and 15/P/0623/EAI. Two of these three screening requests were deemed to require full EIA submission. The reasons for these decisions include that the proposals were likely to have direct and indirect impacts on sensitive landscapes and would likely have a significant environmental and visual impact on this sensitive and highly rural location and in those circumstances an EIA would be required. It is noted that the request under application number 13/P/1301/EIA1 was subsequently given planning permission, so may have been built. If this is the case, then the cumulative impact of that development and this proposal should be assessed.

#### Size and cumulative impact - highways and transportation:

By the very nature of the proposal as a park and ride facility, it will generate significant levels of traffic, the impact of this upon both the local highway network and the strategic highway network must be fully assessed.

#### Transport and Traffic Assessments

The North Somerset Highways team will be able to advise on the appropriate level of detail required for assessment on the local highways network. This is likely to include;

1. Impacts of the works during construction and consideration to the surrounding rural highway network and access to the site.
2. The traffic generated by the operation of the proposed works once completed and its impact on the surrounding highway network.
3. Parking provision for the works as appropriate.

The presentation of any construction traffic/transport assessment work can either form a transport chapter within the main EIA or form an Appendix with a summary chapter in the main body of the EIA.

Highways England have advised on the level of detail is required in order to assess the impact on the Strategic Road Network, principally the M5 Motorway.

#### Natural resources, waste, pollution and hazards:

It is considered that the proposal is not likely to generate significant levels of waste. However, the proposal does have the potential for water, noise and light pollution and these will need to be assessed. Some of the comments raise concern about light pollution, and this should be assessed by means of a Lighting Impact Assessment.

#### Flooding and drainage

The proposed site is within Flood Zone 3. The entirety of the site is within tidal Flood Zone 3A, with the northern part of the site also fluvial Flood Zone 3a and the southern part of the site fluvial Flood Zone 3b. The applicant comments that the site benefits from existing flood defences and has been subject to land raising. A Flood Risk Assessment will be required to assess the flood risk associated with the proposal.

Advice received on the drainage requirements for the site include that the site layout must respect the natural drainage pattern across the site, and the watercourse network must remain open, culverting is allowed for access only. This is in line with the council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, the Core Strategy policy CS3: '*Environmental impacts and flood risk management*' and Sites and Policies DM1: '*Flooding and drainage*' planning policies.

Any alterations to the watercourses or bridges into the site will require a Land Drainage Consent and the applicant should contact the Internal Drainage Board at Highbridge.

As the site lies near to ordinary watercourses, maintenance access will be required with an access strip of 5m to 9 metres at top of bank of any watercourse, as is set out in our Biodiversity and Trees SPD (section 8.4), (as the site is within the IDB area the standard requirement is 9 metres for the bylaw). All existing culverts will require surveying and no development over culverts, with an easement of 4 metres to either side for access.

There must be no interruption to the surface water drainage system of the surrounding land as a result of the operations on the site. Provisions must be made to ensure that all existing drainage systems continue to operate effectively and that landowners upstream and downstream of the site are not adversely affected. All development areas should remain permeable and all property development should recycle water and have green roofs to minimise surface water runoff.

## **2. Location of Development**

Schedule 3 of the Regulations states that the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development must be considered, having regard, in particular, to the existing land use; the relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of the natural resources in the area and the absorption capacity of the natural environment, particularly in relation to the relationship to wetlands, coastal zones, mountain and forest areas; nature reserves and parks; designated wildlife nature conservation areas; areas with a poor environment; densely populated areas; and landscapes of historic, cultural or archaeological significance.

The Planning Practice Guidance states that the more environmentally sensitive the location, the more likely it is that the effects will be significant and will require an assessment. Certain designated sites are defined in [regulation 2\(1\)](#) as sensitive areas. All developments in, or partly in, such areas should be screened. These are:

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest and European sites;
- National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and
- World Heritage Sites and scheduled monuments.

Puxton Moor SSSI (approximately 125 metres south of site) and nearby Biddle Street and Yatton SSSI (approximately 475 metres north of site) are identified as 'sensitive areas' through the EIA Regulations. These SSSIs are species-rich ditches, which are protected

by legislation at the national level because of the aquatic plant communities they contain. These plants are of great conservation interest and, in turn, support a very diverse invertebrate fauna. Water quality in the ditches is very important and the proposals have the potential to have significant impacts on water levels and water quality due to surface run-off and the potential for car parking areas to be flooded, bringing contaminants into the ditches.

Where proposals are within or have the potential to impact upon SSSIs, as these designations are more environmentally sensitive, guidance suggests that the more likely it is that the effects will be significant and will require EIA.

The scale and nature of the proposal, on a greenfield site, which also comprises national priority habitat, indicates potential for a significant environmental impact. The potential for significant environmental impacts is detailed below:

**1. Potential for impacts on European Site features** – North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC. The proposal represents a further loss of grazed land, potentially seasonally wet grassland, and introduces lighting into an area from vehicular movements on site. The noted habitats have potential to provide foraging habitat for bats, and potentially light sensitive greater horseshoe bat, one of the qualifying interest species of the North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation. Therefore, submission of a 'shadow' Habitats Regulations Assessment to include an in-combination assessment is indicated as required. This would need to be informed by best available evidence, to include assessments and surveys in line with the North Somerset Bat SAC SPD (2018). Due to loss of such habitats, the proposal is indicated as likely to require assessment of replacement habitat under Annex 5 of the 'North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation Guidance on Development SPD', which relates to the mitigation for the application 'alone'. Where In combination effects cannot be ruled out, this would indicate a greater requirement of Annex 5 replacement habitat to be provided, ideally within the application area, but potentially as off-site mitigation habitat provision

**2. Potential for significant loss of National Priority Habitat** – legally protected and notable species, which would lead to the loss of biodiversity. GIS layers indicate that the habitat comprises national priority habitat – indicated as the national and local priority habitat '*Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh*' for which North Somerset is understood to hold a significant component of the national resource. This is also indicated by the presence of the rhine network. This habitat comprises seasonally wet grasslands drained by rhynes. Whilst it is not clear at this stage, due to lack of survey information, this habitat is generally recognised as potentially supporting a range of notable species (reference JNCC habitat descriptions and North Somerset Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2005)). Seasonally wet grasslands can support birds of wetlands such as snipe and also legally protected and Section 41 species, such as legally protected grass snake and Section 41 species such as brown hare.

The rhine networks in North Somerset, where sympathetically maintained and protected from contaminated runoff may support exceptional botanical and invertebrate interest, as evidenced by the extensive areas of the best examples, that have been designated as SSSIs and/or Wildlife Sites. They also support otter which requires water quality sufficient to support fish; and may also support legally protected water vole, as well as wetland birds. (Other national priority habitat that may occur in mosaic includes reedbeds and pockets of wet woodland (with alder and willow)). Accordingly, as the proposal is indicated as likely to comprise a significant area of hard standing for vehicles, with consequent

further loss of damp grassland habitat for species such as snipe, which are in a national decline due to the extent of land drainage for agriculture and development.

**3. Potential for impact on water quality** - within aquatic habitats and consequent degradation of habitat quality, and health and fitness of associated aquatic fauna. A key potential impact is for run-off of contaminants derived from vehicles to cause deterioration in the water quality of the local rhyne network (tyre particulates, oil, petrol).

In conclusion, a range of environmental impacts need to be adequately assessed and mitigated.

### **Heritage/ Archaeology**

Advice received from the NSC Heritage team is that this proposal would not lead to a requirement for an EIA in terms of archaeology or heritage. However, Heritage England have raised concerns that the EIA screening opinion request does not provide enough detail to assess this in good detail. It is advised that an Historic Environment Assessment is required and should include a heritage impact/settings assessment.

### **3. Characteristics of Potential Impact**

Schedule 3 of the Regulations states that the potential significant effects of development must be considered in relation to criteria set out above (characteristics and location), and having regard in particular to the extent of the impact (geographical area and size of the affected population); the transfrontier nature of the impact; the magnitude and complexity of the impact; the probability of the impact; the duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact.

As detailed previously, previous EIA screening opinions have been submitted for solar PV related development in close proximity to this proposed site. The proposal 13/P/1301/EIA1, was on land that is adjacent and to the south-west of this proposed site. This EIA screening opinion concluded that the proposed development at that location, would likely have a significant environmental and visual impact on this sensitive and highly rural location and in those circumstances an EIA would be required.

The screening opinion request submitted, provides very limited detail to allow assessment of the potential impacts of the development on the local and wider environment and indeed no detail on potential mitigation measures. Any change to the land use and form from this development would be permanent. A range of potential impacts have been identified and the probability of these occurring must be assessed and mitigation measures identified.

It is therefore concluded with due regard to the consultee comments opinions provided, which are detailed within this report, additional information on potential impacts is required and this should be provided within an Environmental Statement to conform with the requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2017.

### **Screening checklist**

The screening checklist demonstrates the range of factors that are considered to have the potential for adverse impacts on the environment. Those factors which have been assessed to have the potential to lead to significant effects, defined as either *(1) likely to be of more than local importance, (2) within a sensitive area or (3) likely to have unusually complex/ hazardous effects* are:

1. Will construction, operation or decommissioning **cause physical change** in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies etc?) YES
6. Will the project cause **noise and vibration or release of light, heat or electromagnetic radiation**? YES
7. 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
9. Are there any areas on or around the location which are **protected under international or national or local legislation** for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the project? YES
10. Are there any other areas on or around the location which are **important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology** e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the project? YES
11. Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by **protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora** e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the project? YES
12. Are there any **inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location** which could be affected by the project? YES
13. Are there any areas or **features of high landscape or scenic value** on or around the location which could be affected by the project? YES

A description of the assessment under each of the question is provided within the checklist.

## **Summary and Conclusions**

### **EIA development**

For the reasons set out above, the proposal is likely to have significant effects on the environment having regard to the characteristics, location and potential impact of the development. The proposed development therefore constitutes EIA development and an Environmental Statement will be required as part of any future planning application.

## **Recommendations**

**Submission of 'shadow' Habitats Regulations Assessment and in-combination assessment** - required due to the potential for impacts on European Site features (North Somerset and Mendips Bat SAC). The proposal has been identified as having the potential to significantly affect internationally protected populations of both lesser and greater horseshoe bats.

**Lighting Impact Assessment** - The introduction of lighting associated with car parking has the potential to lead to light pollution should be assessed. It may be detrimental on navigation and foraging patterns of both lesser and greater horseshoe bats, which must also be fully investigated through appropriate assessment and surveys in line with the North Somerset Bat SAC SPD (2018).

**Comprehensive environmental assessment** of the potential for significant loss of National Priority Habitat - The proposal has the potential for adverse direct and/or indirect effects on nationally protected the Puxton Moor Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

**Historic Environment Assessment** - as very limited detail has been provided within the screening opinion request to allow assessment of the proposal on heritage assets, non-

designated features of historic, architectural, archaeological or artistic interest likely to be affected and should include a heritage impact/settings assessment

**Potential for impacts on both the strategic and local road network** The Environmental Statement should also assess the potential impacts on the Strategic Road Network (M5) from the proposal. This includes a range of general and location specific requirements, which are set out within the comments from Highways England.

**Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** - the scale of the proposal has the potential to impact significantly on the local landscape and indeed the setting of the Mendip Hills AONB

**Flood Risk Assessment** - to include the potential for run off to affect the water quality and water levels of the surrounding ditches.

## **EIA development**

Issue a **POSITIVE SCREENING OPINION** - The proposal constitutes EIA development for the following reasons:

There are a number of potential impacts on the environment associated with this proposed development that require further assessment, and it is considered that this must be considered through the submission of an Environmental Impact Statement in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

These potential impacts relate specifically to:

- Potential for significant impacts on European Site features – Mendip and North Somerset Bats SAC
- Potential for significant impact on National Priority Habitat – ‘*Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh*’ and Puxton Moor, Biddle Street and Yatton SSSIs
- Potential for significant impacts on the Strategic Road Network (principally the M5 motorway)

# NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL:

## EIA Screening Checklist

<b>Planning reference Number: 20/P/1697/EA1</b>					
<b>Site address: Heathfield Park, Hewish</b>					
Questions to be considered:	Likely to have an adverse effect?		If <b>yes</b> , is this likely to be significant?		If <b>yes</b> , consider whether: 1) Likely to be of more than local importance? 2) Is within a sensitive area? 3) Likely to have unusually complex/ hazardous effects?
1. Will construction, operation or decommissioning <b>cause physical change</b> in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies etc?)	Yes  x	No  	Yes  x	No  	Not likely to be of more than local importance.
2. Will construction or operation use <b>natural resources, such as land, water, materials or energy</b> especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes  	No  x	Yes  	No  	
3. Will the Project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of <b>substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment?</b>	Yes  	No  x	Yes  	No  	Should be dealt with appropriately through implementation of Construction environmental management plan.
4. Will the project produce <b>solid wastes</b> during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes  x	No  	Yes  	No  x	
5. Will the project release <b>pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances</b> to air?	Yes  	No  x	Yes  	No  	There will be lighting associated with the new development. A Lighting Impact Assessment must be submitted.
6. Will the project cause <b>noise and vibration or release of light, heat or electromagnetic radiation?</b>	Yes  x	No  	Yes  x	No  	
7. Will the project lead to <b>risks of contamination of land or water</b> from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Yes  x	No  	Yes  x	No  	There is risk identified to the surrounding rhyme network. This network contributes to the SSSI designation and so must be adequately assessed, to ensure the risk can be satisfactorily mitigated.
8. Are there <b>any areas on or around the location which are</b>	Yes  	No  	Yes  	No  	

<b>already subject to pollution or environmental damage</b> e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?		x			
9. Are there any areas on or around the location which are <b>protected under international or national or local legislation</b> for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No	Yes	No	Potential impact on North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC. Site is within 125m of Puxton Moor Site of Special Scientific Interest. Could have likely significant direct and/ or indirect effects on this SSSI.
	x		x		
10. Are there any other areas on or around the location which are <b>important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology</b> e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No	Yes	No	There is potential risk of adverse effects on the rhyne network which borders the site. Water quality in the network may be affected. The network is also used for navigation and foraging by bats.
	x		x		
11. Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by <b>protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora</b> e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No	Yes	No	The proposal has the potential to adversely affect populations of Greater and Lesser Horseshoe bats. Detailed assessment is required.
	x		x		
12. Are there any <b>inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location</b> which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No	Yes	No	There is potential for the rhyne network with its particular features, which support both fauna and flora species to be affected.
	x		x		
13. Are there any areas or <b>features of high landscape or scenic value</b> on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No	Yes	No	The potential to impact the Mendip Hills AONB should be assessed.
	x		x		
14. Is the project in a location where it is likely to be <b>highly visible</b> to many people?	Yes	No	Yes	No	It will be visible from the A370 and wider visibility should be assessed through a LVIA.
	x			x	
15. Are there any areas or <b>features of historic or cultural importance</b> on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No	Yes	No	GIS layers shows limited heritage, further assessment is however advised.
		x			
16. Are there <b>existing land uses</b> on or around the location e.g. homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying which	Yes	No	Yes	No	Moorland Park, a permanently allocated Gypsy site is adjacent to the proposed site.
	x			x	

could be affected by the project?					
17. Are there any areas on, or around, the location which are <b>occupied by sensitive land uses</b> e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		x			
18. Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, <b>high quality or scarce resources</b> e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No	Yes	No	Not Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land Quality– identified as Grade 4
		x			
19. Is the project location susceptible to <b>earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions</b> , which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		x			
20. Are there any <b>plans for future land uses</b> on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		x			
21. Is there potential for <b>cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities</b> in the locality?	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		x			
<b>Screening Decision</b>					
Through answering the above, is it judged that the project is likely to have a significant effect on the environment?	<b>Yes</b>  <b>Due to potential for significant effects on the environment, it is considered that a formal EIA is required.</b>				No

Signed: Jessica Harper