

4.0 ALTERNATIVES & DESIGN EVOLUTION

Introduction

4.1 Regulation 18 and Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations require an applicant to provide:

"A description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of development design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects".

4.2 Alternatives typically comprise:

- The 'do nothing' alternative, where the Development is not progressed;
- Consideration of Alternative Locations or Uses; and
- Consideration of Alternative Designs.

4.3 It should be noted that the EIA Regulations require the description of alternatives only if "*studied by the developer*".

The 'do nothing' Alternative, Consideration of Alternative Locations and Uses

4.4 Under the 'do nothing scenario' the Site would remain in its existing agricultural use. The beneficial and adverse effects outlined in this ES would not occur. This option was not considered as the Development is required for programming reasons (to allow the necessary engineering works, protected species translocation and advance planting such that a future SANG could be operational by the time of first potential occupations of the Proposed Wisley New Settlement. (refer to Chapter 1 for details). Given the Applicant owns the Site, which is not Green Belt, and is either within or directly adjacent to Policy A35 of the Guildford Local Plan, planned for a proposed new settlement, as guided by the GBC Spatial Development Framework SPD, and owing to the proximity of the Site to the SSSI/SPA, no alternative locations were considered..

Consideration of Alternative Scale and Designs

4.5 The Applicant considered applying for and completing the Development as part of the construction phase of the potential Proposed Wisley New Settlement in accordance with Policy A35 of the Guildford Local Plan. However, it was not considered further as it would

mean delay to the start of occupations by approximately 18-24 months as two hay cuts are required following advance planting in order for the land to become suitable for use as SANG, which is required prior to occupation. This would mean that housing could not be delivered in line with GBC's housing delivery trajectory. It is likely that the environmental effects of this alternative would be comparable to that set out in this ES. However, they would be more short-lived as the work would more quickly progress to the formation of the SANG itself and then use of the land by future residents and the public. Effects of the first phase of a wider development on the land allocated under Policy A35 would likely also be experienced (which are reported to the extent that information is available within the cumulative assessment sections of the technical chapters of this ES).

- 4.6 The Development assessed within this ES is the result of a thorough analysis of the constraints and opportunities on the Site, the character of the surrounding area and the aims of the Development. No distinct alternative layouts or designs were considered so a comparison of environmental effects is not required. The design stage included fine tuning shapes of mounds, ponds and ditches to achieve a cut and fill balance. The potential (future) SANG use for the Site has previously been discussed, and agreed, with Natural England.
- 4.7 As discussed in Chapter 2 EIA Methodology, two rounds of public consultation have been undertaken with stakeholders, community groups and residents in the local area relating to the Proposed Wisley New Settlement. Two independent Design Review Panels have been undertaken to date. This Development was also discussed at consultation events and in the monthly newsletter, however no specific consultee comments were raised and therefore no design amendments have been made in response.