Downlands Farm, Uckfield

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

July 2020

BARTON WILLMORE
PLANNING / DESIGN / DELIVERY

Downlands Farm, Uckfield

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

Prepared on behalf of Gleeson Strategic Land

Job Number:	29565/A5/EIA Screening Report	
Status:	Draft	Issue
Issue/Rev:	01	02
Date:	June 2020	July 2020
Prepared by:	Neil Purvis	Neil Purvis
Checked by:	MM	MM

Barton Willmore LLP
7 Soho Square
London
W1D 3QB

Tel: 020 7446 6888

COPYRIGHT

The contents of this document must not be copied or reproduced in whole or in part without the written consent of Barton Willmore LLP.

All Barton Willmore stationery is produced using recycled or FSC paper and vegetable oil based inks.

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION 1
2 SITE AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT 3
3 SCREENING ASSESSMENT 6
4 CONCLUSION 19

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: SITE LOCATION PLAN

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report has been prepared by Barton Willmore, Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) qualified assessors and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Quality Mark registrants, on behalf of Gleeson Strategic Land. The report accompanies a request to Wealden District Council (WDC) to adopt a screening opinion to determine whether the proposed development of up to 550 dwellings and the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) at Downlands Farm, Uckfield constitutes EIA development.

1.2 This report reflects the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017[1], as amended[2], (the "EIA Regulations") and in accordance with Regulation 6 of the EIA Regulations, this report contains:

- A plan sufficient to identify the land;
- a description of the development, including in particular:
  - (i) a description of the physical characteristics of the development and, where relevant, of demolition works;
  - (ii) a description of the location of the development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected;
- a description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development;
- to the extent the information is available, a description of any likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment resulting from—
  - (i) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant; and
  - (ii) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity; and
- such other information or representations as the person making the request may wish to provide or make, including any features of the proposed development or any measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.

Requirement for EIA

1.3 In order to determine whether the proposed development is 'EIA development', regard must be had for the EIA Regulations and supporting Planning Practice Guidance[3].

[1] SI 2017/571
[2] SI 2020/505
[3] DCLG, 2015, online access: http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/environmental-impact-assessment/

1.4 EIA development is defined by the EIA Regulations as development:

> *"likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location".*

1.5 EIA development falls into two Schedules of the EIA Regulations. EIA is mandatory for developments listed within Schedule 1. Schedule 2 developments require EIA if they would lead to likely significant effects on the environment.

1.6 In deciding whether a Schedule 2 development is EIA development, Regulation 5(4) states:

> *"Where a relevant planning authority … has to decide under these Regulations whether Schedule 2 development is EIA development, the relevant planning authority … must take into account in making that decision-*
> *(a) Any information provided by the applicant;*
> *(b) The results of any relevant EU environmental assessment which are reasonably available to relevant planning authority… ; and*
> *(c) such of the selection criteria set out in Schedule 3 as are relevant to the development."*

1.7 In order to allow WDC to determine the need for EIA this report provides a description of the site and proposed development, a review of the EIA Screening Criteria based on the EIA Regulations and the PPG, a completed EIA Screening Checklist, and a site location plan at Appendix 1.

2 SITE AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Site Context

2.1 The site (see boundary plan at Appendix 1) is located to the northwest of the town of Uckfield, within the administrative area of WDC. The land immediately surrounding the north, west and south of the site largely comprises a mixture of agricultural land interspersed with areas of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland. The wider area to the north of the site includes the villages of Maresfield, Cooper's Green and Five Ash Down.

2.2 The A22 Uckfield Bypass cuts through the site north to south, splitting the site into two separate areas, to the east and west. The A22 turns into the A26 to the north west of the site. London Road, located to the northeast of the site and Rocks Road, located to the south of the site, provide the main vehicular access routes into Uckfield. A Public Right of Way (PRoW) passes to the immediate east of the site before crossing through the northern extent of the site. The PRoW provides access between the A26 to the northwest and Uckfield to the southeast.

2.3 There are no statutory ecological or landscape designations located on the site. The nearest statutory designation to the site is Buxted Park Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located approximately 550m to the east of the site. Buxted Park is also a Grade II* Listed Registered Park and Garden, the boundary of which is located approximately 500m to the east of the site. High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), is located approximately 2km to the north of the site. Rock Wood SSSI is located approximately 2.5km to the north of the site and Ashdown Forest SSSI, Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located approximately 2.75km to the north of the site.

2.4 West Park Uckfield Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located approximately 150m to the south of the site.

2.5 There are no historical designations located on the site. The Medieval settlement site in Buxted Park, a Scheduled Monument, is located approximately 950m to the east of the site. The nearest listed buildings to the site are the Grade II Listed Oast Cottage and Barn at Downlands Farm, located adjacent to the east of the site and the Grade II Listed Budletts House, located adjacent to the north east of the site. The Grade II Listed Blackhouse Farmhouse and Stone Cottage are also located approximately 50m to the north of the site. The site is not located within a Conservation Area. The nearest Conservation Area to the site is Maresfield Conservation Area, located approximately 450m to the north of the site.

2.6 The majority of the site is located in Flood Zone 1 (at a low risk of flooding from rivers). The southwest of the site is located in Flood Zone 3 (at a high risk of flooding from rivers). The site is not located within a Source Protection Zone (i.e. an area where groundwater is vulnerable to contamination).

2.7 Furthermore, the site is not located within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) or an Archaeological Priority Area.

Site Description

2.8 As noted above, the A22 Uckfield Bypass splits the site into two separate land areas. A larger area (site area A) measuring 67.6ha is located to the east of the A22 and a smaller area (site area B) measuring 13.7ha is located to the west of the A22.

2.9 Site area A comprises a mixture of woodland and agricultural land. The majority of the woodland on site area A, with the exception of the woodland within the north and south, is classed as Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland. The agricultural land on site area A is largely confined to the south of the site area. With reference to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) online Magic Map tool[4], the agricultural land on site area A comprises a mixture of Grade 3b and Grade 4, which is not considered to be Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land.

2.10 Site area B comprises woodland, some of the which (<50%) is classed as Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland, within the north of the site area. The small stretch of the Shortbridge Stream also passes through the south of site area B.

Proposed Development

2.11 Outline permission is sought for the development of up to 550 residential dwellings, with associated parking, infrastructure, landscaping and access. The proposed development will also include the provision of SANG/recreation provision, to be located within the east of Site area A. No built development will take place on site area B, part of which is located in Flood Zone 3.

2.12 The proposed maximum height of the buildings will be up to 2.5 storeys.

[4] https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx (accessed 02.06.20)

Mitigation

2.13 Mitigation measures will be considered as an inherent part of the design of the proposed development. At the simplest level these will include adherence to best practice measures during the construction phase, such as through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). As the scheme plans evolve landscaping measures including retention of existing vegetation, where appropriate, and provision of further planting; incorporation of sustainable drainage systems; and biodiversity enhancement will be included.

3 SCREENING ASSESSMENT

Introduction

3.1 In determining whether the proposed development constitutes EIA development, consideration should be had to the following:

- If the proposed development is of a type listed in Schedule 1;
- If not, whether it is listed in Schedule 2;
- Is it located within a sensitive area;
- It meets any of the relevant thresholds and criteria set out in Schedule 2; and/or
- Would it lead to likely significant effects on the environment.

3.2 These points are explored further in this section with reference to the EIA Regulations and supporting Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Schedule 1 Projects

3.3 EIA is mandatory for projects listed in Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations. Schedule 1 developments are large scale projects for which significant effects would be expected and comprise developments such as new airports and power stations. The proposed development is not of a type listed in Schedule 1.

Schedule 2 Projects

3.4 EIA is discretionary for projects listed in Schedule 2. If the development proposed is of a type listed in Schedule 2 then it may be classified as EIA development depending on the location of the development (i.e. if it is within a sensitive area) and/or whether it meets any of the relevant thresholds or criteria in Column 2.

3.5 Sensitive areas are defined in the EIA Regulations as:

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

3.6 In certain cases, local designations which are not included in the definition of sensitive areas, but which are nonetheless environmentally sensitive, may also be relevant in determining whether an assessment is required. Furthermore, in considering the sensitivity of a particular

location, regard should also be had to whether any national or internationally agreed environmental standards (e.g. air quality) are already being approached or exceeded.

3.7 The proposed development falls within category 10 of Schedule 2, 'Infrastructure Projects', sub-section (b) 'Urban Development Projects. The site is not located in a sensitive area and therefore the thresholds should be applied. The thresholds for residential developments as set out in Schedule 2 relate to developments that "*include more than 150 dwellings or the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares*". As the proposed development is for up to 550 residential dwellings and the site area is 81.3ha, both thresholds are exceeded. Accordingly, this screening assessment has been prepared to determine whether the proposed development would be likely to result in significant environmental effects. In order to achieve this Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations and the Planning Practice Guidance need to be taken into account. Information on these are set out below.

Schedule 3

3.8 Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations sets out selection criteria which relate to specific matters including: the characteristics of the development; the location of the development; and the characteristics of the potential impact. These factors should be taken into account as part of the screening process and are set out below:

Characteristics:

- the size and design of the whole development;
- cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development;
- the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;
- the production of waste;
- pollution and nuisances;
- the risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;
- the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).

Location:

- the existing and approved land use;
- the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground; and
- The absorption capacity of the natural environment.

Potential Impact:

- the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- the nature of the impact;
- the transboundary nature of the impact;
- the intensity and complexity of the impact;
- the probability of the impact;
- the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
- the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development; and
- the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

Consideration of Cumulative Effects

3.9 Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations requires consideration of a proposed development cumulatively with other existing and/or approved development. Guidance on the consideration of cumulative effects in the EIA screening process is set out in the PPG[5], which echoes the requirements of the EIA Regulations:

> *"each application (or request for a screening opinion) should be considered on its own merits. There are occasions where other existing or approved development may be relevant in determining whether significant effects are likely as a consequence of a proposed development. The local planning authorities should always have regard to the possible cumulative effects arising from any existing or approved development."*

3.10 Table 1 below, sets out those 'existing and approved' schemes identified in the surrounding area (up to 2km from the site boundary), which warrant consideration.

Table 1: Potential Cumulative Development

Scheme	Description	Status	Approximate Distance from site
Approved Applications			
Land West of Uckfield – Site SD1 (WD/2015/0209/MEA)	Outline application for a residential-led mixed use urban extension to provide up to 1,000 dwellings, up to a 2-FE primary school and early years facility, retail, community, health, leisure and up to 13,495sqm of employment uses	Approved 24 March 2016	1km south
Land West of Uckfield - Site SD1	Reserved matters application for phases 1a & 1b of development at Ridgewood farm (details of	Approved 21 September 2017	2km south

[5] Paragraph: 024 Reference ID: 4-024-20170728

Scheme	Description	Status	Approximate Distance from site
(WD/2017/1368/MRM)	appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to planning consent WD/2015/0209/MEA for the erection of 250 no. Dwellings and associated car parking, play areas, hard and soft landscaping, drainage ponds and earthworks.		
Land North of Mallard Drive, Uckfield TN22 5JQ (WD2010/2874/FE)	Residential development comprising of 146 dwellings, including affordable housing, open space including children's play areas and an equipped play area, structural landscaping and associated works, with access from Mallard Drive.	Approved 15 March 2011	1.7km southeast
Land North of Mallard Drive, Uckfield TN22 5JQ (WD/2013/0415/MRM)	Reserved Matters application for application WD/2010/2874/FE for 119 dwellings.	Committee resolution to approve given 14 May 2020	1.7km southeast

Planning Practice Guidance

3.11 Paragraphs 057 and 058 of PPG are used to help determine whether significant effects are likely. In general, the more environmentally sensitive the location, the lower the threshold will be at which significant effects are likely. Table 2 below sets out indicative criteria and thresholds identified in the PPG along with some of the issues that are most likely to need to be considered in determining the whether a development is likely to be EIA development.

Table 2: Planning Practice Guidance Indicative Screening Criteria

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

3.12 Table 3 sets out a review of all off the above criteria and requirements and specifically addresses the proposed development at the site.

Table 3: Screening Assessment for Development at Downlands Farm, Uckfield.

SCREENING CRITERIA	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DEVELOPMENT	
(a) Size of the development	
Will the development as a whole be out of scale with the existing environment?	The site is located to the northwest of the town of Uckfield and comprises a mixture of agricultural land and woodland. The proposed development comprises up to 550 residential dwellings which will extend the existing built form of Uckfield. At up to 2.5 storeys, the proposed residential dwellings will not be out of scale with the existing residential dwellings located in Uckfield.
Will the design of the development as a whole fit in with the existing environment?	As stated above, the proposals with fit with the existing development located in Uckfield to the southeast and at up to 2.5 storeys, the residential dwellings will be of a similar scale.
Will it lead to further consequential development or works?	No. The proposed development is a discrete proposal and includes all necessary works, including access.
(b) Accumulation with other development	
Are there potential cumulative impacts with other existing development or development not yet begun but for which planning permission exists?	The following schemes have been identified for consideration for likely significant cumulative effects with the proposed development: • Outline application for a residential-led mixed use urban extension to provide up to 1,000 dwellings, up to a 2-FE primary school and early years facility, retail, community, health, leisure and up to 13,495sqm of employment uses. This scheme, located approximately 1km south of the site, was granted planning permission in March 2016. • Reserved matters application for phases 1a & 1b of development at Ridgewood farm (details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to planning consent WD/2015/0209/MEA for the erection of 250 no. Dwellings and associated car parking, play areas, hard and soft landscaping, drainage ponds and earthworks. This scheme, located approximately 2km south of the site, was granted planning permission in September 2017. • Residential development comprising of 146 dwellings, including affordable housing, open space including children's play areas and an equipped play area, structural landscaping and associated works, with access from Mallard Drive. This scheme, located approximately 1.7km southeast of the site, was granted planning permission in March 2011. • Reserved Matters application for application WD/2012/0806/O for 119 dwellings. This scheme, located approximately 1.7km southeast of the site, was granted planning permission in May 2020. With regard to the indicative criteria and thresholds identified in the PPG (set out in Table 2 above) it is considered that the proposals when considered cumulatively with other proposed and permitted development would exceed the 1,000 dwelling threshold. However, the proposed development would be in keeping with the current nature and scale of the

SCREENING CRITERIA	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
	surrounding proposed development and therefore cumulative effects are not considered likely.
Should the application for this development be regarded as an integral part of a more substantial project? If so, can related developments which are subject to separate applications proceed independently?	No. The proposed development is a discrete project and could proceed independently.
(c) Use of natural resources	
Will construction or operation of the development use natural resources such as land, water, material or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	The construction and operational phases of the proposed development will use resources in terms of land, water and energy as would be expected for a residential development on greenfield land. Some would be non-renewable (e.g. energy). None are anticipated to be in short supply.
(d) Production of waste	
Will the development produce wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Construction waste would be reused and recycled where possible. Operational waste would be disposed of in line with WDC requirements and managed in accordance with all applicable legislation.
(e) Pollution and nuisances	
Will the development release any pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	The construction of the proposed development is expected to result in some dusts and emissions associated with construction vehicles. Dust will be managed in accordance with best practice and a CEMP required as a condition to the planning consents. Construction traffic will also be controlled through a CEMP including no idling of engines. The operational air quality effects of the proposed development are not anticipated to be significant. It is, therefore, not considered necessary to require further mitigation measures. The proposed development is of residential use and is not associated with hazardous substances or toxic emissions to air. There is not anticipated to be a requirement to store large volumes of hazardous materials. Any such materials would be stored and handled in accordance with relevant legislation.
Is there a potential risk from leachates or escape of wastes of other products/by-products that may constitute a contaminant in the environment?	Appropriate measures, including standard best practice mitigation measures, enforced through a CEMP, in accordance with all relevant legislation, would be used to prevent accidental spillages of contaminants during the construction and operational phrases of the proposed development. The land use proposed is not highly contaminative and it is not expected that there is a high risk of contaminants being released into the environment.
Will the development cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	The potential exists for noise effects to result from the construction processes associated with the proposed development. These effects will be managed in accordance with best practice measures, implemented through the CEMP and are not anticipated to generate significant adverse effects. Lighting would be designed carefully in accordance with relevant British Standards and Institute of Lighting Professionals (2020) Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light. A Lighting Assessment will be submitted with the planning application.

SCREENING CRITERIA	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
	No electromagnetic radiation, heat or energy releases are expected other than those associated with normal residential development.
Will the development 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?	The site comprises a mixture of woodland and agricultural land which is not expected to be highly contaminated. Any hydrocarbons used as part of the construction phases of the proposed development (e.g. plant and vehicle fuel and lubricants) would be stored and used in accordance with all applicable legislation and mitigation measures implemented through the CEMP to avoid releases of pollutants. A Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study will also be submitted with the planning application.
(f) Risk of major accidents and/or disasters, including those caused by climate change and also having regard in particular to substances or technologies used	
Will there be a risk of accidents during construction or operation of the development which would have effects on people or the environment?	During the construction phase, the contractor(s) would implement measures in accordance with Health and Safety legislation/requirements, and best practice to minimise the risks of accidents that would have effects on people or the environment. All such measures would form part of the CEMP. There are no anticipated significant risks of accidents during operation as the proposed development does not involve users dealing with hazardous substances. The built elements of the proposed development do not lie within an area at risk of natural disasters such as tectonic activity. As stated above, the very southwest of the site is located within Flood Zone 3 (high risk of flooding) but no built development will take place within this area. Significant effects are therefore not anticipated.
Will the development involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to people or the environment (flora, fauna, water supplies)?	During the construction phase, certain materials may be present on the site which may be harmful to the environment. However, these will be managed in accordance with best practice mitigation measures, implemented through the CEMP and there will be no significant adverse effects. The operational development is of residential use and is not expected to involve the use, transport or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to the environment.
(g) Risks to human health	
What are the risks to human health such as from water contamination or air pollution?	Dust and emissions generated during the construction phase would be minimised through implementation of best practice mitigation measures set out in the CEMP. The majority of the site is located in Flood Zone 1 (at a low risk of flooding from rivers). The southwest of the site is located in Flood Zone 3 (at a high risk of flooding from rivers) due to the presence of the Shortbridge Stream. However, no built development will take place in Flood Zone 3. Surface water run-off and foul water drainage will be managed on-site during the construction and operational phases, as detailed further in the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) that will be submitted with the planning application. The site is not located in an AQMA.

SCREENING CRITERIA	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
	Given that the site comprises woodland and agricultural land, significant levels of land contamination are not anticipated. A Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study will also be submitted with the planning application.
Other characteristics	
Potential physical changes (topography, land use, changes in water bodies etc) from construction, operation or decommissioning of the development?	The proposed development will change the site from greenfield land adjacent to an existing urban edge, to residential development.
2. LOCATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT	
(a) Existing and approved land use	
Are there existing land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the development, e.g. residential, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying?	Residential areas are located to the northeast and southeast of the site. As noted above, with reference to the DEFRA online Magic Map tool, the agricultural land on the site comprises Grade 3b and Grade 4, which is not considered to be BMV land. However, as a rule, effects are generally considered to be significant only when the threshold for the requirement for consultation with the Secretary of State for the Environment and Rural Affairs due to the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land is exceeded. In this instance the threshold of 20 hectares is not exceeded. There are areas of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland on the site, however this would not be removed as part of the proposals. The proposed built development will be located in the south of site area A which predominantly comprises agricultural land. An Arboricultural Assessment will be submitted with the planning application. There are no tourism, mining, quarrying, or industrial developments directly adjacent to the site that would be affected by the proposed development.
Is the development located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	The proposed development would result in the loss of greenfield land. As noted above the agricultural land on the site is not classed as Best and Most Versatile land.
(b) Relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area and its underground	
Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the development? • soil • land • groundwater resources • surface waters • biodiversity • forestry • agriculture • fisheries • tourism • minerals	There are areas of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland on the site, however this is not expected to be considerably affected by the proposals. As previously stated, the proposed built development will be located to the south of site area A which comprises agricultural land and will be offset from the areas of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland on the site. There would be new residents on the site resulting in some recreational pressure on the existing areas of woodland however the site will be put into a management structure which will aim to reduce/remove recreational pressures on the woodland. This will reduce any potential for adverse effects. The majority of the site is located in Flood Zone 1 (at a low risk of flooding from rivers). The southwest of the site is located in Flood Zone 3 (at a high risk of flooding from rivers) due to the presence of the

SCREENING CRITERIA	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
	Shortbridge Stream. However, no built development will take place on Flood Zone 3. The site is not located within a groundwater Source Protection Zone (SPZ), neither is one adjacent to the site. None of the other features are present in or adjacent to the site.
(c) Absorption capacity of the natural environment	
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 development?	The site is not in or adjacent to a Sensitive Area, as defined within the EIA Regulations, or other statutory designations including Scheduled Monuments, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Parks, Registered Battlefields, Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), or Ramsar Sites. The nearest 'Sensitive Area', as defined by the EIA Regulations is the Buxted Park SSSI, located approximately 550m to the east of the site. Buxted Park is also a Grade II* Listed Registered Park and Garden, the boundary of which is located approximately 500m to the east of the site. High Weald AONB is located approximately 2km to the north of the site. Rock Wood SSSI is located approximately 2.5km to the north of the site and Ashdown Forest SSSI, SPA and SAC is located approximately 2.75km to the north of the site. West Park Uckfield LNR is located approximately 150m to the south of the site. The Medieval settlement site in Buxted Park, a Scheduled Monument, is located approximately 950m to the east of the site. The nearest listed buildings to the site are the Grade II Listed Oast Cottage and Barn at Downlands Farm, located adjacent to the east of the site and the Grade II Listed Budletts House, located adjacent to the north east of the site. The Grade II Listed Blackhouse Farmhouse and Stone Cottage are also located approximately 50m to the north of the site. The site is not located within a Conservation Area. The nearest Conservation Area to the site is Maresfield Conservation Area, located approximately 450m to the north of the site. It is considered that the above features would not be directly or indirectly affected due to their separation and distance from the proposed development on the site. Any potential impacts on listed buildings surrounding the site will be mitigated by appropriate and design of the proposed development.
Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of: • Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths; • coastal zones and the marine environment; • mountains and forest areas;	Please see above. The majority of the site is located in Flood Zone 1 (at a low risk of flooding from rivers). The southwest of the site is located in Flood Zone 3 (at a high risk of flooding from rivers) due to the presence of the

SCREENING CRITERIA	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
• nature reserves and parks; • European sites and other areas classified or protected under national legislation; • Areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure; • Densely populated areas; • Landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.	Shortbridge Stream. However, no built development will take place on Flood Zone 3. The site is not located within a groundwater SPZ. Surface water run-off and foul water drainage will be managed on-site during the construction and operational phases, as detailed further in the FRA that will be submitted with the planning application. The site is not located within an AQMA. The site is located to the northwest of Uckfield and existing residential development. However, given the residential nature of the proposed development, this would be considered appropriate to the surrounding environment.
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?	There are no statutory ecological designations located on the site. As previously stated, areas of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland are located on the site. An Ecological Appraisal (including a shadow Habitat Regulations assessment (HRA)) will accompany the planning application.
Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected?	The majority of the site is located in Flood Zone 1 (at a low risk of flooding from rivers). The southwest of the site is located in Flood Zone 3 (at a high risk of flooding from rivers) due to the presence of the Shortbridge Stream. However no built development will take place on Flood Zone 3. The site is not located within or close to a groundwater SPZ. No other water bodies would be expected to be significantly affected by the proposed development.
Are there any groundwater source protection zones or areas that contribute to the recharge of groundwater resources?	No. As stated above, the site is not located within or adjacent to a groundwater SPZ.
Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected?	The nearest such site is the Buxted Park Grade II* Listed Registered Park and Garden, located approximately 500m to the east of the site. High Weald AONB is also located approximately 2km to the north of the site. Due to separation and distance from the site, it is not considered that these features would be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed development. There are no other known features of landscape importance on or adjacent to the site. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will be submitted with the planning application.
Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected?	The surrounding road network includes the A22 Uckfield Bypass, the A26, as well as London Road and Rocks Road. A PRoW also crosses the north of the site. Some of the surrounding local road network and PRoW may require some temporary closures during the construction phase.

SCREENING CRITERIA	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected?	The construction phases of the proposed development would involve changes to traffic movements (e.g. use of HGVs). There is likely to be a change in the number of vehicles using the local road network once the proposed development is operational. A Transport Assessment which will include a Travel Plan will be submitted in support of the planning application.
Is the development in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Views of the site are largely restricted by trees and woodland which surround the site. There may be local, glimpsed views available of the site from the immediate surroundings including from adjacent and nearby roads, PRoW and from residential dwellings to the northeast and southeast of the site. The proposed development will not be out of context with existing residential development including within in Uckfield, to the southeast of the site. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will be submitted with the planning application.
Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected?	There are no historical designations located on the site. The Medieval settlement site in Buxted Park, a Scheduled Monument, is located approximately 950m to the east of the site. The nearest listed buildings to the site are the Grade II Listed Oast Cottage and Barn at Downlands Farm, located adjacent to the east of the site and the Grade II Listed Budletts House, located adjacent to the north east of the site. The Grade II Listed Blackhouse Farmhouse and Stone Cottage are also located approximately 50m to the north of the site. The site is not located within a Conservation Area. The nearest Conservation Area to the site is Maresfield Conservation Area, located approximately 450m to the north of the site. An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment as well as a Built Heritage Statement will be submitted with the planning application.
Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built up, which could be affected?	The site is located to the northwest of Uckfield and existing residential development. Noise from the development is likely to arise during the construction stage from construction plant however this would be managed in accordance with standard procedures, outlined within a CEMP. On completion of the proposed development, the main source of noise would be from traffic from the residential use however where necessary this will be addressed at the detailed design stage to mitigate any potential effects. The existing belt of woodland adjacent to the A22 will also be retained reducing potential noise effects from traffic on the proposed development.
Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected?	The site is not located within an AQMA. As noted above the existing belt of woodland adjacent to the A22 will be retained reducing any impact of traffic emissions on the proposed development.

SCREENING CRITERIA	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
	The site comprises agricultural land and areas of woodland which are not expected to be highly contaminated. A Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study will also be submitted with the planning application.
Is the location of the development susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the development to present environmental problems?	The majority of the site is located in Flood Zone 1 (at a low risk of flooding from rivers). The southwest of the site is located in Flood Zone 3 (at a high risk of flooding from rivers) due to the presence of the Shortbridge Stream. However, no built development will take place on Flood Zone 3. An FRA would be submitted in support of the planning application, which would contain a suitable surface water drainage strategy to ensure no significant effects relating to surface water flooding. The site is not located within a groundwater SPZ. The site is not located within an AQMA. The site is not considered susceptible to any other hazards.
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POTENTIAL IMPACT	
(a) Extent and nature of the impact	
Will the effect extend over a large area?	No. This is confined to the site (81.3ha) and the land immediately adjacent.
Will many people be affected?	Residents adjacent to the northeast and southeast of the site will be affected by the proposed development during the construction phase. Adverse effects would be minimised through the implementation of a CEMP. It is considered that people would not be significantly affected by the proposed development once operational.
What will be the nature of the impact?	Short term visual impact; HGV traffic movements; increase in noise and dust during construction. Effects on views once the development is complete.
(b) Transboundary nature of the impact	
Will there be any potential for transboundary impact? (n.b. Development which has a significant effect on the environment in another Member State is likely to be very rare. It is for the Secretary of State to check Environmental Statements to decide whether there is likely to be such an effect in each case).	No.
(c) Magnitude and complexity of the impact	
Will there be a large change in environmental conditions?	The site will change from greenfield land to residential development.
Will the effect be unusual in the area or particularly complex?	No.
Will many receptors other than people (fauna and flora, businesses, facilities) be affected?	No.
Will valuable or scarce features or resources be affected?	No.
Is there a risk that environmental standards will be breached?	No.
Is there a risk that protected sites, areas, and features will be affected?	No.
(d) Probability of the impact	

SCREENING CRITERIA	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
Is there a high probability of the effect occurring?	The effects of the proposed development can be clearly established and the probability of any effects determined with reasonably confidence.
Is there a low probability of a potentially highly significant effect?	As above.
(e) Expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact	
What will result in the onset of the impact?	Development will commence following the discharge of pre-commencement conditions attached to the planning permission.
Will the effect continue for a long time?	Construction effects would be short term in duration and the operational effects would be long term.
Will the effect be permanent rather than temporary?	Construction effects would be temporary, and the operational effects would be permanent.
Will the impact be continuous rather than intermittent?	Construction – intermittent Operation – continuous
If intermittent, will it be frequent rather than rare?	Frequent.
Will the impact be irreversible?	Construction – Yes Operation - No
Will it be difficult to avoid or reduce or repair or compensate for the effect?	No.
(f) Possibility of effectively reducing the impact	
What is the possibility of the likely impacts arising from the Proposed Development being effectively reduced?	Mitigation measures would be considered to ensure that any impacts arising from the proposed development would be reduced. This includes best practice measures during the construction phase, such as through a CEMP.

4 CONCLUSION

4.1 The screening assessment has considered whether the proposed development of up to 550 dwellings, SANG/Recreation provision and supporting infrastructure on land at Downlands Farm, Uckfield is likely to give rise to significant effects on the environment.

4.2 The proposed development falls within Schedule 2, 10 (b) of the EIA Regulations, as an urban development. The site exceeds the 5ha and 150 dwelling thresholds set out in the EIA Regulations however as set out in the PPG EIA will apply to "*…only apply to a small proportion of projects considered within the town and country planning regime"* and "*…it should not be presumed that developments above the indicative thresholds should always be subject to assessment".*

4.3 With regard to the indicative criteria and thresholds identified in the PPG (set out in Table 2 above) it is considered that the proposals when considered cumulatively with other proposed and permitted development would exceed the 1,000 dwelling threshold. However, the proposed development would be in keeping with the current nature and scale of the surrounding proposed development.

4.4 It is considered that the principal environmental effects will relate to dust, noise, lighting and traffic associated with the construction phase, and traffic and views from the operational phase. The construction effects will be mitigated using standard measures controlled by conditioning the need for a CEMP to be approved by WDC. The operational effects will be mitigated by good design and effective landscaping. The use of vehicles with be mitigated through the use of a Travel Plan. Accordingly, the overall effects of the proposed development will not be significant.

4.5 In summary, this screening assessment has identified that significant effects on the environment are not considered likely. Effects from the proposals can be managed in accordance with standard methods. The proposed development is therefore not considered to be EIA development as defined by the EIA Regulations.

4.6 The planning application will be supported by a suite of environmental reports. The precise scope of the application will be confirmed in discussions with WDC during the preapplication process and is expected to include:

- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment;
- Ecological Appraisal;
- Built Heritage Statement;

- Archaeological Desk-based Assessment;
- Transport Assessment (Including travel Plan);
- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Utilities and Foul Drainage Assessment;
- Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study;
- Arboricultural Assessment; and
- Lighting Assessment.

APPENDIX 1

SITE LOCATION PLAN

N

Site

DOWNLANDS FARM, UCKFIELD

Drawing

Site location plan

Scale

1:5000@A2

Date

21.05.20

Drawing ref 1309.**01**

0 50 100 150 200 250m

KEY

Site boundary

Ordnance Survey (c) Crown Copyright 2020. All rights reserved. Licence number 100020449

This drawing is for planning purposes only
Copyright of richards urban design ltd.

richards
urban design