



Yeargate Limited

LAND NORTH OF BIRCH BUSINESS PARK

Environmental Statement Volume 3 Non-Technical
Summary

August 2026

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WSP

8 First Street

Manchester

M15 4RP

Phone: +44 161 200 5000

WSP.com

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Prepared by	Mateo Espinosa			
Signature				
Checked by	Alec Drake			
Signature				
Authorised by	Nick Fillingham			
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

- 1.1.1. Yeargate Limited is applying for outline planning permission for which will include employment uses and associated office space, parking, internal roads, site access, landscaping and the works associated with these. Within this document, this development will be referred to as the 'Proposed Development'.
- 1.1.2. The Proposed Development is located at land to the north of Birch Business Park, an area of Rochdale which is located within the administrative area of Rochdale Borough Council. Heywood Distribution Park lies circa 600m northwest of the site.
- 1.1.3. There is also a major application currently under determination by the Council for a large parcel of the wider Northern Gateway allocation (ref: 25/00418/OUT) which lies west of the site. As such, despite the existing rural surroundings, the wider character of the site will be transformed by development and built form in the coming years.

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 1.2.1. As part of the planning process, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) must be completed for the Proposed Development. The term 'environmental impact assessment' describes a procedure that must be followed for certain types of projects before they can be given 'development consent'. The procedure follows the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and is a means of drawing together an assessment of a project's likely significant environmental effects. This helps to ensure that the importance of the predicted effects and the scope for reducing them are properly understood by the public and the relevant competent authority before it makes its planning decision. An Environmental Statement is the written output of the EIA and contains three parts:
 - Volume 1: Main Text and Figures;
 - Volume 2: Technical Appendices; and
 - Volume 3: Non-Technical Summary.
- 1.2.2. This document is Volume 3: Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the Environmental Statement and has been prepared using non-technical language. Volumes 1 and 2 of the Environmental Statement can be consulted for more information on any of the topics within this NTS.
- 1.2.3. The EIA has been prepared by a team of experienced and qualified experts.
- 1.2.4. WSP is responsible for the coordination, compilation and procedural review of the Environmental Statement. WSP is registered under the EIA Quality Mark operated by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) which recognises our commitment to excellence in EIA activities.

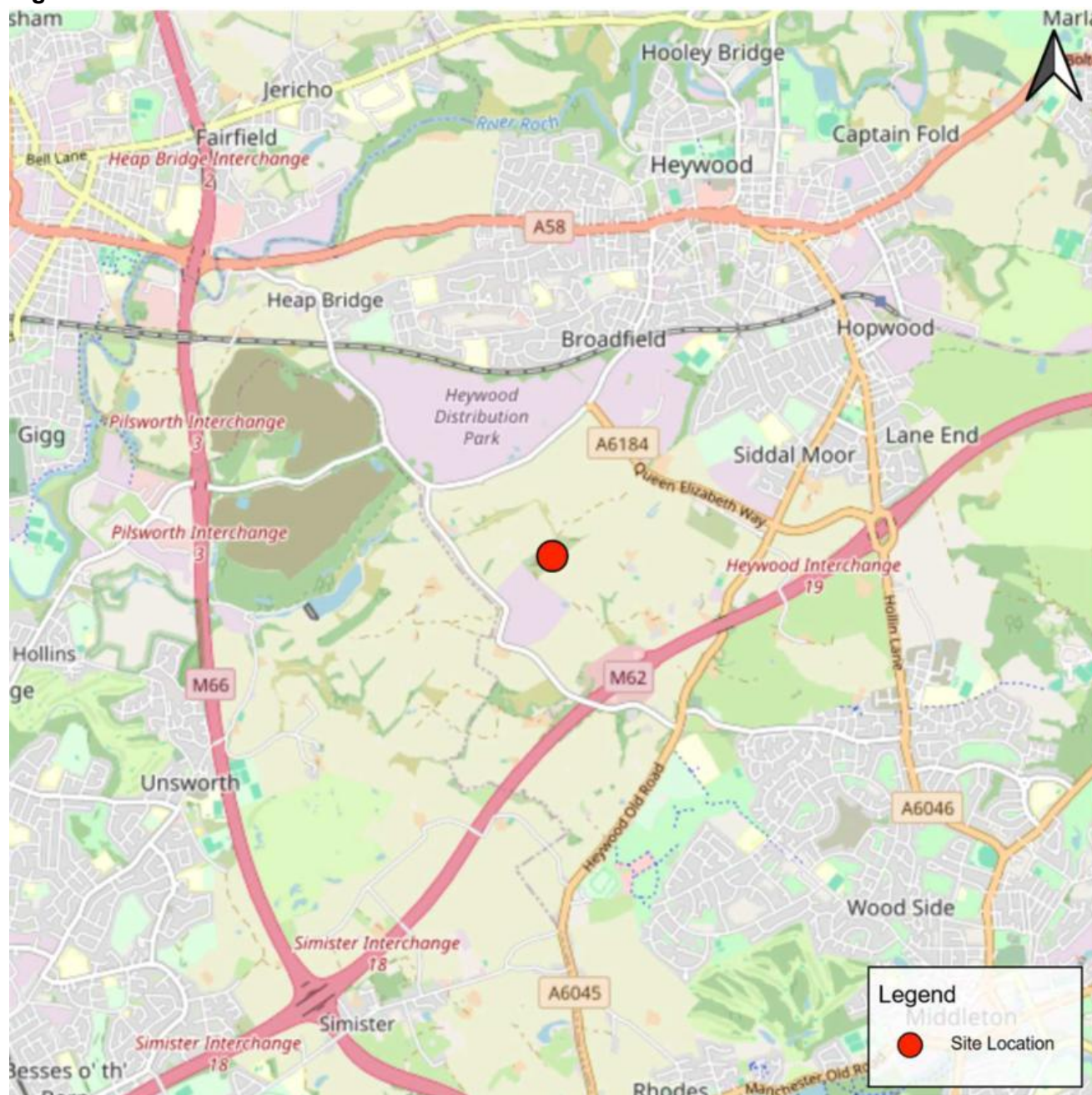


2 THE EXISTING SITE

2.1 OVERVIEW OF THE SITE

- 2.1.1. The area where the Proposed Development will be located (known as the Site) is approximately 4 hectares in size and approximately 2.5km south from Heywood town centre and 7km south from Rochdale town centre.

Figure 2-1 - Wider site area



- 2.1.2. The location of the Site is shown in Figures 2-2 below.

Figure 2-2 - Site location



2.1.3. The environmental characteristics of the Site are summarised in the table below.

Environmental Characteristic	Summary
Ground Conditions	The underlying geology is predominantly Glacial Till, with Glaciofluvial Sheet Deposits and Lacustrine Deposits along the eastern boundary. These overlie the Pennine Lower Coal Measures Formation. Coal seams including the Lower Foot Coal and Lower Mountain Coal are present beneath the site, and the area lies within a Mining Remediation Authority High Risk Area where probable unrecorded shallow workings may exist.
Ecology	The Site is not located within, nor immediately adjacent to, any statutory or non-statutory ecological designation. The nearest non-statutory designation is Pilsworth Site of Biological Importance (SBI), located approximately 860 m to the north-west, comprising two large waterbodies connected by Brightley Brook. The Site lies within the Impact Risk Zones of Rochdale Canal SSSI/SAC, located approximately 3.7 km to the east, and West Pennine Moors SSSI, located approximately 9.7 km to the north-west. Owing to the separation distances, the limited scale of the development and the absence of ecological connectivity, no impacts on these designated sites are anticipated.

Landscape	There are no known landscape designations within the Proposed Development. The site lies within National Character Area 54: Manchester Pennine Fringe, which forms a transition between the urban conurbation of Greater Manchester and the surrounding Pennine landscapes.
Air Quality	The Proposed Development is not located within an Air Quality Management Area. The proposals are located 650m north of the Rochdale Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)
Noise and Vibration	There are no Noise Important Areas (NIA) within the Proposed Development. The closest noise receptor is identified as Commercial Premises to the South, located approximately 50 m from the site boundary.
Water Resources, Flood Risk and Drainage	An unnamed Ordinary Watercourse that forms the eastern boundary of the site. The Main River tributary of Brightley Brook lies to the north. The Proposed Development lies entirely within Flood Zone 1, meaning that there is a probability of fluvial and tidal flooding of less than 0.1% every year.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 OVERVIEW

3.1.1. The proposed planning application seeks permission for:

“Outline planning application (with all matters reserved other than access) for employment development comprising industrial and warehouse floorspace (Use Classes B2 and B8) together with ancillary class E office, with supporting loading bays, trailer bays, trailer park spaces, parking spaces, landscaping, infrastructure and associated works.”

3.1.2. The proposals will compromise warehouse floorspace with supporting office and ancillary facilities.

3.1.3. Layout will be secured at reserved matters stage.

3.1.4. Traffic will access the Site via the existing priority junction connecting Birch Business Park to Moss Hall Road. From there, vehicles will proceed northeast along the internal site road. Access to the Proposed Development will be provided through a new, simple priority-controlled T-junction, positioned off the internal road within Birch Business Park. Separate parking areas will be provided for cars and HGV's. Sufficient space has been provided for HGV's to turnaround internally within the curtilage of the units.

3.2 PROPOSED SUSTAINABILITY CREDENTIALS

3.2.1. The development has been designed as a modern, low-carbon employment scheme incorporating energy-efficient buildings, air source heat pumps and solar photovoltaic panels to reduce operational energy demand and carbon emissions.

3.2.2. Sustainable travel measures, including electric vehicle charging and cycle facilities, together with extensive landscaping, biodiversity enhancements and sustainable drainage systems, will further support the site's environmental performance. The buildings are anticipated to achieve EPC A ratings and have the potential to achieve BREEAM Excellent standards.

3.3 DRAINAGE

3.3.1. The development will incorporate a sustainable drainage system that safely manages rainfall and protects nearby watercourses. Surface water will be collected, stored on site and released at a controlled rate, helping to reduce flood risk and maintain water quality. Additional treatment measures will remove pollutants from runoff before water leaves the site. Construction activities will be subject to strict environmental controls to protect local watercourses. The assessment concludes that the drainage proposals will not result in significant adverse effects and will provide a well-managed, long-term drainage solution for the site.

3.4 CONSTRUCTION

3.4.1. It is currently anticipated that construction will start in 2027 and is expected to be completed in 2030. It is anticipated that the standard working hours will be 0800 hours to 1800 hours on weekdays, 0800 hours to 1300 hours on Saturdays and no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

4 REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

4.1 OVERVIEW

- 4.1.1. Developers are required to provide a description of reasonable alternatives considered in development of the design (for example different locations and designs).

4.2 ALTERNATIVE SITES

- 4.2.1. No alternative sites were considered for the Proposed Development as the existing Site was already allocated for potential development within the Places for Everyone Joint Plan.

4.3 ALTERNATIVE DESIGNS

- 4.3.1. Five initial masterplan options were developed to ensure that multiple scenarios had been explored regarding the location of transport networks and buildings across the Site. The four alternative options not chosen are shown within in the below figures with masterplan plan option 5 the preferred option:

Figure 3-1 - Masterplan options 1

Design Development



Existing - Application site locates to the rear of the business park. An existing access point to the site between Units H & W.



Option 1 - Maximise the development with a single unit. Car parking to the front, service yard along the long elevation with trailer spaces to the rear.

Figure 3-2 - masterplan options 2 and 3



Option 2 - Maximise the development with a single footprint, multi let units. The service yard along the long elevation, with parking space included in the yard



Option 3 - Maximise the development with a single unit. Car parking to the front, with service yard to the rear at the gable end.

Figure 3-3 - masterplan options 4 and 5



Option 4 - Revised option 2, in response to the existing terrain and reflecting the cut and fill exercise, the site is subdivided into two plateaus.



Option 5 (Preferred) - Two standalone units with their own car park and service yard, served by a main access road.

- 4.3.1. Masterplan option 5 was adopted and has been taken forward. A summary of the reasoning is provided below.
- 4.3.2. Key physical features and technical constraints and opportunities on the site have resulted in well balanced scheme that takes into account existing features such as topography and local landscape.
- 4.3.3. The evolution of the illustrative masterplan used to test the feasibility of the site technically was also informed by pre-application meetings as discussed in the following section.
- 4.3.4. This has helped define what can reasonably be accommodated in terms of developable area when coupled with the effective mitigation of the site constraints.
- 4.3.5. The context of relevant national and local planning policies, best practice guidance and development standards, baseline studies, as well as feedback obtained from key stakeholders during consultations have been considered throughout design development, including feedback from meetings with RMBC – all of which has helped shape the current masterplan and development parameters.

5 APPROACH TO EIA

5.1 OVERVIEW

- 5.1.1. Under the EIA Regulations 2017, the Proposed Development is defined as the type and scale of development that requires an EIA. An EIA has been undertaken to meet the requirements of the relevant planning legislation and policy and assesses the effects of the Proposed Development on the environment.
- 5.1.2. The EIA considers impacts during both construction and operation of the Proposed Development. The assessment of the construction stage considers temporary activities required for building the Proposed Development and their effects on the environment and local community. The assessment of the operational stage looks at the permanent presence of the Proposed Development on the environment and local community.
- 5.1.3. The findings of the EIA are reported in the Environmental Statement which has been submitted to accompany the planning application for the Proposed Development.

5.2 APPROACH TO THE ASSESSMENT

- 5.2.1. Environmental effects have been assessed using appropriate national and international standards or limits and guidance. In the absence of relevant standards, professional judgement by experienced technical specialists has been used.
- 5.2.2. Each effect is given a significance level based on the size of the change due to the Proposed Development and the sensitivity of the affected environmental receptor receiving the change.
- 5.2.3. Residual effects have also been assessed; these are the likely final effects of the Proposed Development, when mitigation measures to reduce or reverse negative effects, or enhance positive effects, have been taken into account.
- 5.2.4. The terms used to define environmental effects in the Environmental Statement are as follows:
 - Major (beneficial or adverse) effect: where the Proposed Development would cause a substantial improvement or deterioration to the existing environment/receptor;
 - Moderate (beneficial or adverse) effect: where the Proposed Development would cause a noticeable improvement or deterioration to the existing environment/receptor;
 - Minor (beneficial or adverse) effect: where the Proposed Development would cause a perceptible improvement or deterioration on to the existing environment/receptors; and
 - Negligible: where the Proposed Development would result in no discernible improvement or deterioration to the existing environment/receptors.
- 5.2.5. For most assessments, effects considered as moderate or major are considered to be significant and those considered as minor or negligible are considered to be not significant.
- 5.2.6. Effects are described as:
 - Beneficial or adverse;
 - Permanent or temporary;
 - Direct or indirect, secondary or transboundary;
 - Duration (short, medium or long-term), frequency and reversibility of effect;
 - Inter-relationship between different effects (both cumulatively and in terms of likely effect)

interactions); and

- Significant or not significant.

5.2.7. In terms of the duration of an effect, generally the EIA considers that a short-term effect is up to 2 years in duration, a medium-term effect is between 2 and 10 years, and a long-term effect is greater than 10 years in duration. Any variation of this approach is explained in the relevant chapter of the Environmental Statement.

5.2.8. The following chapters provide a non-technical summary of the likely residual environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development during construction and operation.

6 HOW THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WILL AFFECT AIR QUALITY

6.1 OVERVIEW

- 6.1.1. The Proposed Development has the potential to cause air quality effects during the construction and operational phases. As such, an assessment was undertaken in order to determine baseline conditions and assess the significance of predicted effects.
- 6.1.2. The Site is located in the vicinity of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Air Quality Management Area which has been declared due to high pollutant levels. However, local monitoring results indicate that levels were below the relevant criteria in the vicinity of the Site during 2024. Background pollutant concentrations are also below the relevant criteria.

6.2 CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

- 6.2.1. Potential construction phase air quality effects from fugitive dust emissions were assessed as a result of earthworks, construction and trackout. A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be produced in support of the Proposed Development. Measures outlined within the document will be reviewed and updated as necessary. They will then continue to be implemented in order to reduce potential effects associated with fugitive dust emissions during the construction phase as far as practicable.
- 6.2.2. During the construction and operational phase of the Proposed Development there is the potential for air quality impacts as a result of road vehicle exhaust emissions associated with vehicles travelling to and from the Site. These were assessed using dispersion modelling. The results indicated that effects were not predicted to be significant at any sensitive receptor location.

6.3 OPERATIONAL EFFECTS

- 6.3.1. The Proposed Development has the potential to cause changes in pollution levels at the Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation as a result of road vehicle exhaust emissions associated with the development. This was assessed by reviewing the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan. This indicated that effects as a result of atmospheric emissions associated with the Proposed Development alone and in-combination are not predicted to be significant.

6.4 SUMMARY

- 6.4.1. Based on the results of the assessment, residual air quality effects associated with the Proposed Development are **not considered to be significant**.

7 HOW THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WILL AFFECT ECOLOGY

7.1 OVERVIEW

- 7.1.1. The Proposed Development Site is not located within any statutory or non-statutory ecological designation and no designated nature conservation sites occur within 1 km of the Site boundary. The nearest designated ecological site is Pilsworth Site of Biological Importance (SBI), located approximately 860 m to the north-west, which comprises two large waterbodies connected by Brightley Brook.
- 7.1.2. The Site also lies within the Impact Risk Zones of Rochdale Canal Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC), located approximately 3.7 km to the east, and West Pennine Moors SSSI, located approximately 9.7 km to the north-west.

7.2 CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

- 7.2.1. The Proposed Development would result in the loss of some on-site habitats, including areas of grassland, scrub, trees, hedgerows and a reedbed habitat. The reedbed is a UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat and was assessed as being of County-level ecological importance. Prior to mitigation, habitat loss effects were assessed as significant.
- 7.2.2. Construction activities could affect protected and notable species including great crested newts, common amphibians, bats, hedgehogs, brown hare, breeding birds and notable invertebrates through habitat loss, disturbance, noise, lighting and vegetation clearance.
- 7.2.3. Mitigation measures include habitat protection fencing, pollution prevention measures, off-site compensation for reedbed habitat, ecological toolbox talks, species-specific precautionary working methods, sensitive lighting design and pre-construction ecological checks.
- 7.2.4. Great crested newts will be protected through the implementation of a District Level Licensing Scheme, with off-site compensation measures supporting the species at a strategic level.
- 7.2.5. Following mitigation, all residual construction effects are assessed as either **Minor Adverse** or **Negligible** and are **not significant**

7.3 OPERATIONAL EFFECTS

- 7.3.1. During operation, potential ecological effects could arise from lighting, habitat management activities, dust deposition and human activity within the Site.
- 7.3.2. Retained habitats, including hedgerows, woodland and grassland features, will be managed under a Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan (HMMP) for a minimum of 30 years.
- 7.3.3. New habitats including grassland, scrub, woodland, fen habitat, trees and species-rich hedgerows will be created as part of the landscape strategy.
- 7.3.4. Measures will be implemented to minimise lighting impacts on commuting and foraging bats, including the retention of dark habitat corridors along key boundary features.
- 7.3.5. Off-site Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) compensation will be secured to address habitat losses that cannot be accommodated within the Site.

- 7.3.6. Following mitigation and long-term habitat management, all residual operational effects are assessed as **Negligible** and **not significant**.

7.4 SUMMARY

- 7.4.1. Following the implementation of mitigation and enhancement measures, **no significant residual effects** on biodiversity or ecology are anticipated during either the construction or operational phases of the development.

8 HOW THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WILL AFFECT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL RECEPTORS

8.1 OVERVIEW

- 8.1.1. The Proposed Development Site is not located within any nationally designated landscape, such as a National Park, National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) or Green Belt designation. The Site lies within National Character Area 54: Manchester Pennine Fringe, which forms a transitional landscape between the Greater Manchester conurbation and the Pennine uplands.
- 8.1.2. The Site itself comprises previously disturbed vacant land immediately adjacent to existing employment development at Birch Business Park and Heywood Distribution Park. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment identified that the Site is influenced by the surrounding commercial development and urban fringe character.
- 8.1.3. No landscape designations were identified that would be directly affected by the Proposed Development

8.2 CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

- 8.2.1. Construction activities would introduce temporary visual effects associated with earthworks, construction compounds, plant, machinery and construction traffic.
- 8.2.2. Temporary effects would mainly be experienced by nearby receptors including users of local roads, surrounding public rights of way and nearby residential properties.
- 8.2.3. Existing vegetation and boundary features would provide some screening of construction activity from the wider landscape.
- 8.2.4. The effects of construction would be temporary and limited to the duration of the construction period.
- 8.2.5. Following implementation of embedded mitigation, including landscape planting and retention of existing vegetation where practicable, no significant long-term landscape effects are anticipated from the construction phase.

8.3 OPERATIONAL EFFECTS

- 8.3.1. The Proposed Development would permanently change the Site from vacant land to an extension of the existing employment and industrial area.
- 8.3.2. The greatest visual effects would occur for receptors located closest to the Site, including local road users, nearby public rights of way and a limited number of residential properties.
- 8.3.3. New buildings, access roads, service yards and external lighting would become visible elements within the local landscape.
- 8.3.4. Proposed landscape planting, tree planting, scrub planting and ecological enhancement areas would soften the appearance of the development and assist its integration into the surrounding landscape over time.

- 8.3.5. As the planting matures, visual effects would reduce and the development would become more integrated with the existing business park context.
- 8.3.6. Residual landscape and visual effects are generally localised and reflect the existing urban fringe and employment character of the surrounding area.

8.4 SUMMARY

- 8.4.1. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment concluded that the Proposed Development would introduce a permanent change to the appearance of the Site through the construction of new employment buildings and associated infrastructure.
- 8.4.2. However, the Site is located within an area already influenced by existing commercial and industrial development and does not form part of a designated landscape. Landscape enhancement measures, including extensive planting, habitat creation and retention of existing vegetation, would help integrate the development into its surroundings.
- 8.4.3. Visual effects would be greatest during construction and for receptors located closest to the Site but would reduce over time as landscape planting establishes. Overall, whilst the development would result in localised landscape and visual change, the assessment concludes that the Proposed Development would result in significant visual effects for a limited number of receptors located within the immediate vicinity of the Site, particularly during the early years of operation. These effects would reduce over time as mitigation planting establishes and matures. For the majority of receptors, effects are assessed as not significant. The overall effects are localised and reflect the Site's location adjacent to the existing Birch Business Park employment area.

9 HOW THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WILL AFFECT CLIMATE CHANGE

9.1 OVERVIEW

- 9.1.1. Chapter 16 reports the outcome of the assessment of likely significant effects arising from greenhouse gas emissions associated with the Proposed Development upon Climate Change and the likely significant effects arising from Climate Change upon the Proposed Development.
- 9.1.2. The Proposed Development has the potential to result in greenhouse gas emissions. As such, an assessment was undertaken to determine baseline conditions, quantify emissions from the Site, consider appropriate mitigation measures to reduce emissions in line with the trajectory to net zero and assess the significance of predicted effects.
- 9.1.3. Review of national and regional emissions statistics indicated that Rochdale contributes a small proportion of the total greenhouse gas emissions for England and the UK. Transport was identified as the largest sectoral contributor to regional and national emissions.
- 9.1.4. Based on the existing land use, negligible emissions are likely to be generated by the existing Site. Therefore, all greenhouse gas emissions generated by the Proposed Development will be in excess of the baseline.

9.2 CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

- 9.2.1. Greenhouse gas emissions from embodied carbon in construction materials, construction transport, operational transport and operational energy consumption were considered and where possible, quantified.

9.3 OPERATIONAL EFFECTS

- 9.3.1. In the absence of detailed design measures, the Proposed Development does not fully contribute to decarbonisation in line with local and national policy goals at this stage. As such, the following additional mitigation measures can be secured via planning condition to reduce emissions in line with national, regional and local policy:
- BREEAM Materials credits, including a Life Cycle Assessment;
 - Construction Transport Management Plan;
 - Passive electric vehicle charging provision;
 - Travel Plans; and,
 - Servicing and Delivery Strategy.
- 9.3.2. Following securement of the above measures via planning condition, effects as a result of the Proposed Development on climate change were predicted to be **minor adverse** and **not significant**.
- 9.3.3. The Proposed Development has the potential to introduce receptors vulnerable to climate change to the Site. As such, an assessment was undertaken to determine baseline conditions, consider potential climate effects on receptors associated with the Proposed Development and identify appropriate mitigation measures.

- 9.3.4. The baseline climate at the Site shows a trend towards increasing temperatures and rainfall, alongside fewer frost days. Future climate projections indicate that this trend is likely to continue, with warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers, as well as reduced snowfall and slightly higher winter wind speeds. Overall, it was predicted that the Site will experience greater climate variability over time, with an increased likelihood of events such as heatwaves, droughts, storms, and periods of heavy rainfall.
- 9.3.5. A Climate Change Resilience Assessment was undertaken in accordance with best practice guidance and took into consideration the likelihood and consequence of identified climate effects. The results of the assessment indicated that significant effects could arise from extreme weather and storm conditions, and from drought, on landscaping and planting if appropriate design measures are not implemented. As such, the following additional mitigation measures can be secured via planning condition:
- Detailed landscape design and planting to consider drought, extreme weather conditions and wind damage; and,
 - Landscape Management Plan.

9.4 SUMMARY

- 9.4.1. Following securement of the above measures via planning condition, effects as a result of climate change on the Proposed Development were predicted to be **not significant**.

10 HOW THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WILL AFFECT NOISE AND VIBRATION RECEPTORS

10.1 OVERVIEW

- 10.1.1. An assessment of the likely effects of the Proposed Development on noise and vibration has been undertaken to identify potential impacts on nearby residential properties, commercial premises and users of the local road network. The assessment included a review of baseline conditions informed by a background sound survey undertaken in July 2025 and detailed noise modelling.
- 10.1.2. Potential impacts associated with construction activities, construction traffic, operational traffic movements and operational commercial noise sources were assessed using recognised national standards and guidance. The assessment concluded that the Proposed Development would not give rise to any significant noise or vibration effects and that no additional mitigation measures are required.

CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

- 10.1.3. During construction, potential effects from construction noise, construction vibration and construction-related traffic were assessed at the nearest residential and commercial receptors. Construction noise modelling demonstrated that predicted noise levels would remain below the applicable assessment thresholds at all identified receptors, resulting in a negligible magnitude of impact.
- 10.1.4. Predicted vibration levels associated with construction activities were also found to be well below levels at which significant human or building effects would be expected. In addition, the relatively low level of construction traffic generated by the development would result in changes in road traffic noise of less than 2 dB, which is considered negligible.
- 10.1.5. As a result, construction noise, vibration and construction traffic effects are anticipated to be temporary, direct and negligible adverse in nature, and are not considered significant. No additional mitigation or monitoring is required

OPERATIONAL EFFECTS

- 10.1.6. During operation of the development, potential effects from commercial and industrial activities within the site and from development-generated traffic on the surrounding road network were assessed. The assessment found that increases in traffic flows on local roads would result in changes in noise levels of less than 1 dB, representing a negligible adverse effect.
- 10.1.7. Operational noise modelling demonstrated that daytime noise levels from commercial activities would remain below existing background sound levels at all receptors. Although a small exceedance of background sound levels was predicted at one receptor during the night-time period, internal noise levels would remain below recognised night-time criteria, and no adverse impact is predicted.
- 10.1.8. Consequently, operational noise effects are expected to be direct, permanent, long-term and negligible adverse, and are not considered significant. No additional mitigation or monitoring is required.

10.2 SUMMARY

- 10.2.1. Residual impacts on residential and commercial receptors are predicted to be negligible adverse **and not significant**. No additional mitigation measures or monitoring requirements have been identified. An opportunity for environmental enhancement has been identified through the planting of boundary vegetation, which could help reduce views of on-site activities and contribute to a perceived reduction in noise effects for nearby receptors.

11 HOW THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WILL AFFECT HUMAN POPULATION RECEPTORS

11.1 OVERVIEW

- 11.1.1. An assessment of the likely socio-economic and human health effects of the Proposed Development has been undertaken, considering potential impacts during both the construction and operational phases. The assessment considered employment generation, economic output, access to skills and training, and the potential effects on vulnerable groups within the local population.
- 11.1.2. The study area included the Neighbourhood Impact Area, comprising LSOA Rochdale 020F, the Local Impact Area of Rochdale Local Authority, and the Wider Impact Area of the North West region. The assessment was informed by desk-based socio-economic and health data, including census, labour market, deprivation, health and employment datasets.
- 11.1.3. No additional mitigation measures or monitoring requirements have been identified for the receptors assessed in this chapter.

CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

- 11.1.4. During construction, the Proposed Development would generate direct, indirect and induced employment, together with associated economic output.
- 11.1.5. The assessment estimates that approximately 56 direct full-time equivalent jobs per annum could be supported during the construction phase, with a total of approximately 81 direct, indirect and induced full-time equivalent jobs per annum across the Local Impact Area after allowance for leakage and displacement. Across the Wider Impact Area, approximately 103 direct, indirect and induced full-time equivalent jobs per annum could be supported. Construction activity is also expected to generate approximately £5.6 million of gross value added per annum across the Local Impact Area and £7.1 million across the Wider Impact Area.
- 11.1.6. These effects are assessed as direct, temporary, short-term minor beneficial and are not significant in EIA terms.
- 11.1.7. The construction phase may also provide limited opportunities for skills and training, including potential apprenticeship opportunities. The assessment indicates that the construction phase could support approximately one apprentice per annum. This effect is considered direct, temporary, short-term and negligible, and is not significant.
- 11.1.8. Potential effects on vulnerable groups arising from construction-related air quality, transport, noise and climate change effects were also considered with reference to other technical chapters of the Environmental Statement. These effects are assessed as negligible and not significant. No additional mitigation specific to socio-economics or human health is required, although embedded and good practice measures identified in the relevant technical chapters would help manage potential construction effects.

OPERATIONAL EFFECTS

- 11.1.9. Once operational, the Proposed Development would support employment within the proposed industrial, storage and distribution, and ancillary office floorspace.

- 11.1.10. The assessment estimates that the Proposed Development could generate between 210 and 380 direct full-time equivalent jobs per annum on site. After accounting for leakage, displacement and multiplier effects, the Proposed Development could support between 150 and 270 direct, indirect and induced full-time equivalent jobs across the Local Impact Area, and between 217 and 392 direct, indirect and induced full-time equivalent jobs across the Wider Impact Area. These employment effects are assessed as direct, permanent, long-term minor beneficial and are not significant in EIA terms.
- 11.1.11. Operational employment would also generate economic output. The assessment estimates that the Proposed Development could generate between £7.6 million and £13.8 million of gross value added per annum across the Local Impact Area, and between £13.4 million and £24.1 million across the Wider Impact Area.
- 11.1.12. This effect is assessed as direct, permanent, long-term minor beneficial and not significant. The operational phase may also support between two and four apprentices per annum, resulting in a negligible effect on access to skills and training. Potential effects on vulnerable groups during operation, including those associated with air quality, traffic, noise and climate change, are assessed as negligible and not significant.

11.2 SUMMARY

- 11.2.1. **No significant** adverse residual effects have been identified, and no additional mitigation or monitoring is required for socio-economic and human health receptors.

12 HOW THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WILL AFFECT TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT RECEPTORS

12.1 OVERVIEW

- 12.1.1. An assessment of the likely effects of the Proposed Development on highways, traffic and transport has been undertaken. The assessment considered construction traffic, operational trip generation, traffic distribution across the local highway network, highway capacity, committed development traffic, background traffic growth and sustainable transport accessibility.

12.2 CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

- 12.2.1. During construction, there would be an increase in vehicle movements associated with the delivery of materials, plant and equipment. These effects would be temporary and limited to the construction period. Standard construction management measures would be implemented to control construction traffic, including agreed delivery routes and management of vehicle movements. The assessment concludes that construction traffic would have a minor adverse effect on the local road network, but this effect would not be significant.

12.3 OPERATIONAL EFFECTS

- 12.3.1. Once operational, the development would generate staff and freight vehicle movements associated with the proposed industrial and storage uses. The assessment found that traffic levels on surrounding roads would increase only modestly and that the operation of nearby junctions would not be materially affected. As a result, effects on road users, nearby businesses and local residents are predicted to be negligible to minor adverse and not significant.
- 12.3.2. The development would also provide opportunities to support more sustainable travel through the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure, electric vehicle charging facilities and measures to encourage alternatives to private car use. These improvements are expected to provide a minor beneficial effect by improving accessibility and supporting sustainable transport choices

12.4 SUMMARY

- 12.4.1. Operational traffic effects would also be not significant, with residual effects ranging from negligible to minor adverse for highway users and nearby receptors. The Proposed Development would provide a minor beneficial effect associated with improved opportunities for sustainable travel. **No significant cumulative** effects have been identified, and any relevant monitoring would be undertaken through construction traffic management and Travel Plan mechanisms.

13 HOW THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WILL AFFECT WATER RESOURCES, FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

13.1 OVERVIEW

- 13.1.1. The site lies wholly within Flood Zone 1, which is land with a low probability of fluvial flooding, and the Proposed Development is considered appropriate in flood risk terms. Additional mitigation in the form of a Construction Environmental Management Plan, including a Construction Surface Water Management Plan, and the need to secure Environment Agency Environmental Permit consent for the proposed package treatment works before treated foul water is discharged to the Ordinary Watercourse has been identified.

13.2 CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

- 13.2.1. During construction, the main potential effects relate to temporary increases in surface water runoff from disturbed and bare ground, temporary changes to existing drainage pathways and overland flow routes, and the risk of pollution from construction activities reaching the adjacent Ordinary Watercourse.
- 13.2.2. A Construction Surface Water Management Plan, secured through a Construction Environmental Management Plan, as additional mitigation has been identified. This would include temporary silt fencing and earth bunding, phased earthworks, temporary attenuation and settlement lagoons where required, regular inspection of temporary controls, buffer zones to the Ordinary Watercourse, bunded storage, silt traps, wheel wash facilities and a pollution incident response plan. Following implementation of these measures, construction effects on flood risk and water quality are assessed as negligible adverse and not significant.
- 13.2.3. Monitoring would include regular CEMP compliance inspections, post-storm inspections and watercourse spot-checks where agreed with the relevant authority

13.3 OPERATIONAL EFFECTS

- 13.3.1. The proposed drainage strategy includes geocellular storage tanks and oversized pipes on each development parcel.
- 13.3.2. Foul water would be treated through a package treatment works, with discharge of treated effluent to the Ordinary Watercourse subject to Environment Agency Environmental Permit consent.
- 13.3.3. The site is located within Flood Zone 1, and other flood risk sources including groundwater, sewers and artificial sources have been scoped out as low risk.
- 13.3.4. Operational surface water quality effects would be managed through a SuDS treatment train including trapped gullies, silt traps, catchpit manholes, channel drains with silt collection sumps and the polishing swale. Following mitigation, operational residual effects are assessed as negligible adverse or minor beneficial and not significant.

13.4 SUMMARY

- 13.4.1. Following implementation of the identified mitigation and embedded drainage design, **no significant** residual effects are anticipated.

14 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

14.1 OVERVIEW

- 14.1.1. Cumulative effects are the combined effects of likely changes (related to human activity) within a specific area over a certain period of time. These can be both direct and indirect.
- 14.1.2. For the purposes of this Environmental Statement, the following types of cumulative effects have been considered in accordance with the EIA Regulations 2017 and best practice guidance:
- **Intra-project** combined effects – the interaction and combination of different environmental effects from within the Proposed Development affecting a receptor; and
 - **Inter-project** cumulative effects – the combined effects of the Proposed Development and other projects on a receptor

14.2 INTRA-PROJECT COMBINED EFFECTS

- 14.2.1. An assessment was undertaken to identify receptors that may experience effects from more than one environmental topic as a result of the Proposed Development. Potential interactions were identified for local population receptors, users of the local highway network, and employees, visitors and businesses within Birch Business Park.
- 14.2.2. The assessment concluded that, although some receptors may experience effects relating to transport, landscape and visual change, and climate change, the interaction of these effects would not materially increase the significance of effects beyond those identified within the individual environmental assessments. Accordingly, no additional significant intra-project combined effects were identified.

14.3 INTER-PROJECT CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

- 14.3.1. During the construction phase, cumulative effects arising from the Proposed Development in combination with other committed developments were assessed in relation to transport, landscape and visual effects, air quality, noise and vibration and other environmental topics. The assessment concluded that cumulative construction effects would be temporary and localised in nature and would not result in significant cumulative environmental effects following the implementation of mitigation measures.
- 14.3.2. During the operational phase, the assessment concluded that the majority of environmental topics would not experience significant cumulative effects. Residual cumulative effects relating to transport, noise and vibration, air quality, ground conditions and contamination, water environment, ecology, cultural heritage, socio-economics and climate change were assessed as not significant.
- 14.3.3. Significant cumulative effects were identified only in relation to landscape and visual receptors. For a limited number of localised viewpoints and receptor groups, cumulative landscape and visual effects are predicted to be **Moderate Adverse** to **Major-Moderate Adverse (Significant)** as a result of the Proposed Development being experienced alongside other nearby employment developments within the wider Northern Gateway and Birch Business Park area. These effects are localised in extent and primarily affect receptors within the immediate setting of the Site.

14.4 SUMMARY

- 14.4.1. Overall, with the exception of localised cumulative landscape and visual effects identified for certain receptors, the assessment concluded that the Proposed Development would not give rise to significant cumulative environmental effects beyond those reported within the individual technical assessment.

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