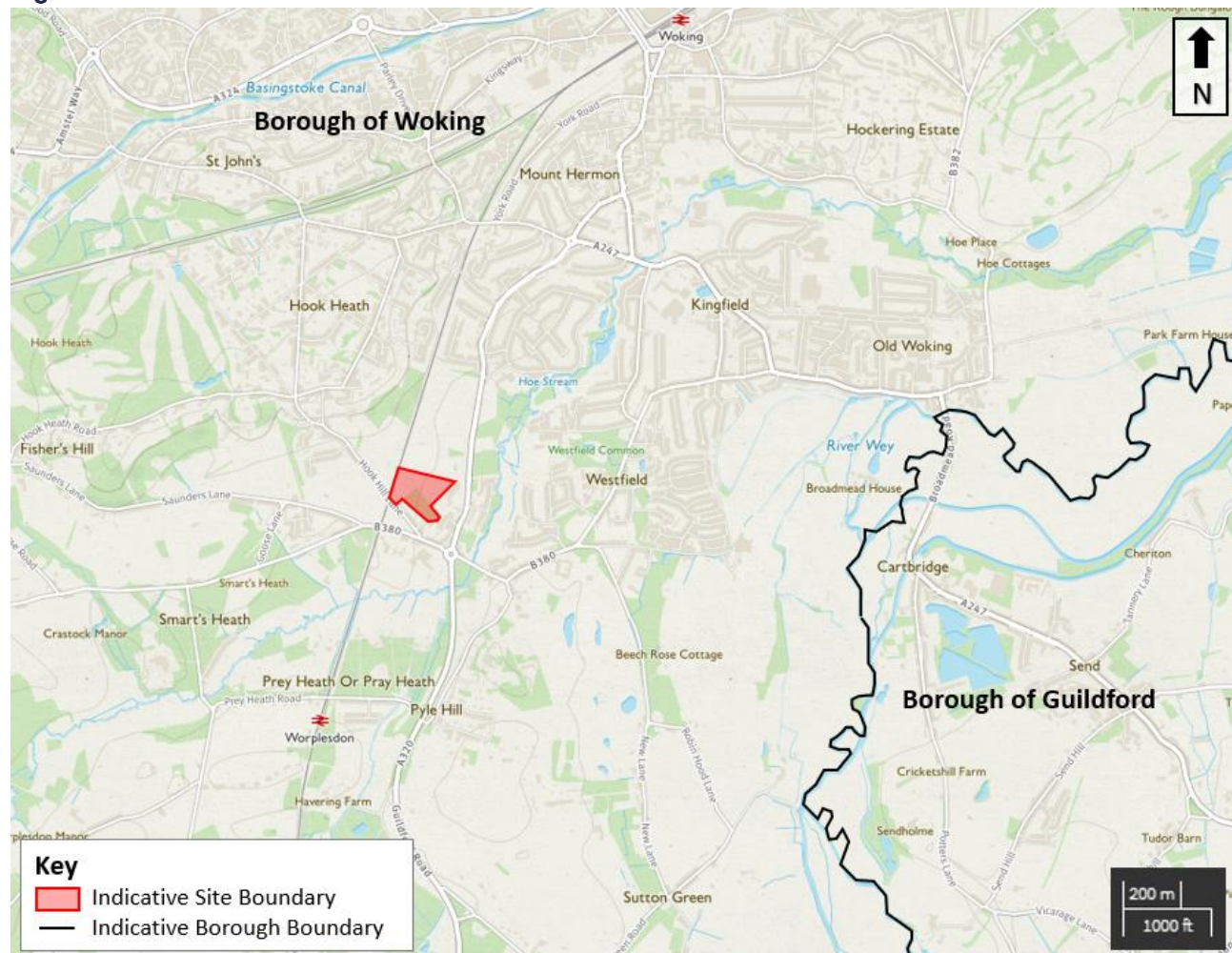


# **Chapter 1: Introduction**

## INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared on behalf of Woking Football Club and GolDev Woking ('the Applicant') in accordance with the statutory procedures set out in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, as amended in 2018 (referred to as the 'EIA Regulations').
- 1.2 The Applicant is seeking detailed planning permission for the proposed redevelopment of an area of land in Woking, in the north-west of Surrey, located approximately 2.5km to the south-west of Woking town centre (referred to as 'the site'). The site covers a total area of approximately 4.1 hectares (ha) and falls within the administrative boundary of the Borough of Woking. The site currently comprises open field, with one building (a disused garden centre nursery) located in the north-east of the site. There is a large area of trees in the southern portion of the site and access to the site is via a small road off of Egley Road (A320), located to the east of the site. The site location is shown in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Site Location



- 1.3 The scheme proposals (hereinafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development') comprise the demolition of the existing building on-site and the provision of 36 residential units (of up to a maximum of 3 storeys in height) and 5,836 square metres (m<sup>2</sup>) of gym and sport (D2) space, with associated car parking and landscaping. The Proposed Development is described in further detail within **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: The Proposed Development**.
- 1.4 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a process carried out which examines available environmental information to ensure that the likely significant environmental effects of certain projects are identified and assessed before a decision is taken on whether a project is granted planning permission. This means environmental issues can be identified at an early stage and projects can then be designed to avoid or to minimise significant adverse environmental effects, and appropriate mitigation and monitoring can be put in place.

- 1.5 Taking into account the nature and scale of the redevelopment proposed, the Proposed Development falls within the description of development in column 1 of Schedule 2, 10(b) (Infrastructure Projects – Urban Development Projects) of the EIA Regulations. As it exceeds the thresholds / criteria set out within column 2 of Schedule 2, 10(b), given that the Proposed Development will provide more than 1ha of urban development which is not dwellinghouse, it is considered that there is the potential for significant environmental effects to arise, as a result of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development is, therefore, considered to constitute 'EIA development' under the EIA Regulations. The Applicant has therefore undertaken an EIA for the planning application.
- 1.6 In accordance with the EIA Regulations, this ES reports on the potential (before mitigation) and residual (after mitigation has been applied) effects of the Proposed Development, and highlights any residual effects of the Proposed Development that are classified as being significant. The ES describes the likely environmental and socio-economic effects of the Proposed Development during demolition and construction, and on subsequent completion and occupation. The ES is designed to inform readers of the nature of the scheme proposed, the likely significant environmental and socio-economic effects, and the measures proposed to protect the environment.
- 1.7 Regulation 18(3) of the EIA Regulations requires that an ES includes the information set out in Part 1 of Schedule 4 that is "reasonably required to assess the environmental effects of the development and which the applicant can, having regard in particular to current knowledge and methods of assessment, reasonably be required to compile". The information required under Paragraph 1 of Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations and its location within this ES is presented in **ES Volume 2, Appendix: EIA Methodology (Annex 1)**.
- 1.8 The ES also describes the consultation process undertaken. This process is critical to the development of a comprehensive and balanced ES. Views of key statutory and non-statutory consultees serve to focus the environmental studies and to identify specific issues, which require further investigation as part of the EIA. Consultation is also an ongoing process, which enables mitigation to be incorporated as the design of the Proposed Development unfolds, thereby limiting adverse effects and enhancing scheme benefits.
- 1.9 The EIA has been carried out by Trium Environmental Consulting LLP ('Trium') and several technical specialists. The technical specialists who have led and authored the technical assessments within this ES are noted within the relevant technical chapters / volumes of this ES (**ES Volume 1, Chapters 6 and 7**).

## THE SITE

### Site Location

- 1.10 The site is centred around National Grid Reference (NGR): SU 99437 56385 and is bounded to the:
  - North by Woking Athletic Club (including a sports field) and Hoe Valley School;
  - East by large retail warehouses (Woking and Wyevale Garden Centre, Maidenhead Aquatics Woking), with Egley Road (A320) further beyond;
  - South by residential dwellings; and
  - West by railway tracks and open fields.

- 1.11 The redline planning application boundary is shown in Figure 1.2.

### Site Context

- 1.12 As previously noted, the site currently comprises open field (as shown in Figure 1.3), with one building located in the north-east of the site (as shown in Figure 1.4) and a large area of trees in the south of the site. With regards to access, the site is located to the west of Egley Road (A320), which connects to the B380 (Guildford Road and Westfield Road).
- 1.13 There are no statutory designations, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments or world heritage sites that fall within the site. Additionally, the site is not located within a Conservation Area.
- 1.14 A large portion of the site, located to the south, is designated as Woodland Priority Habitat, identified as requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP), and the entirety of the site is

currently situated within an area of Green Belt<sup>1</sup>. There are a number of Tree Preservation Areas and Tree Preservation Orders both surrounding the site and on the site.

- 1.15 The site connects to the B380 (Guildford Road and Westfield Road), via Egley Road (A320), and is approximately 30 minutes away from London Heathrow Airport by car; it is easily accessible from the M3 and M25 motorways. Worplesdon Rail Station is located approximately 1.2km to the south of the site with connections to London Waterloo and Portsmouth and Southsea. Woking Station is located approximately 2.5km to the north-east of the site, which is served by regular trains to central London. Locally, there are a number of bus stops located in close proximity to the site.
- 1.16 In accordance with the draft Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)<sup>2</sup>, the site is allocated for use as residential housing (including affordable housing), recreational / open space and education.

Figure 1.2 Redline Planning Application Boundary



Figure 1.3 Existing Open Field On-Site



Figure 1.4 Existing Building On-Site



## THE LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR AN EIA

- 1.17 Applications for development that are covered by the EIA Regulations are termed 'EIA Applications'.
- 1.18 The requirement for an EIA is based on the likelihood of significant environmental effects arising from a Proposed Development; and it is either mandatory or conditional depending on the classification of the development project. EIA applications are divided into Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 applications under the EIA Regulations.
- 1.19 Schedule 1 developments constitute those that are likely to have significant effects on the environment, such as major chemical or petrochemical projects and construction of ground or air transport infrastructure, and for

<sup>1</sup> An area of open land around a city, on which building is restricted.

<sup>2</sup> Woking Borough Council (WBC), (2018); Woking Local Development Documents – Site Allocations Development Plan Document (Regulation 19 Consultation).

which EIA is mandatory. For all other developments which fall under Schedule 2, the need for an EIA is determined based on set criteria as follows:

- It is within one of the classes of development stated in Schedule 2; AND
- EITHER it exceeds the applicable threshold criteria for that class of development in Schedule 2; OR it is to be carried out in part or all of a sensitive area; AND
- It is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location.

**1.20** The EIA Regulations Schedule 2 Part 10(b), states that for “urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas”, the thresholds which determine the need for a development to be screened for the potential for significant environmental effects comprise:

*‘(i) the development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwelling / house development; OR*

*(ii) the development includes more than 150 dwellings; OR*

*(iii) the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares’.*

**1.21** Based on the above, as the Proposed Development exceeds the threshold relating to non-dwelling / house development and has the potential to result in likely significant environmental effects, the Proposed Development is considered to constitute ‘EIA development’ under the EIA Regulations. As such, the Applicant has undertaken an EIA and the results of this are presented within this ES (Volumes 1 and 2) which has been submitted to accompany the planning application.

## ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT AND TECHNICAL APPENDICES STRUCTURE

**1.22** This document is the main body of the ES and is divided into a number of background and technical chapters supported with figures and tabular information for clarity of reading. A complete set of appendices is provided for reference. These comprise background data, tables, figures and surveys (refer to **ES Volume 1, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology** for further details).

**1.23** The ES comprises three technical volumes and a non-technical summary document:

- ES Volume 1: Main Report, comprising the following chapters:
  - Chapter 1: Introduction;
  - Chapter 2: EIA Methodology;
  - Chapter 3: Alternatives and Design Evolution;
  - Chapter 4: The Proposed Development;
  - Chapter 5: Demolition and Construction;
  - Chapter 6: Air Quality;
  - Chapter 7: Ecology;
  - Chapter 8: Effect Interactions;
  - Chapter 9: Likely Significant Effects and Conclusions;
  - Chapter 10: Mitigation and Monitoring; and
  - Chapter 11: Glossary and Abbreviations.
- ES Volume 2: Technical Appendices:
  - Appendix: EIA Methodology;
  - Appendix: Air Quality; and
  - Appendix: Ecology.
- Non-Technical Summary (NTS), providing a concise summary of the ES Volumes 1-2, written in non-technical language. The NTS presents a summary of the Proposed Development, the alternatives considered by the Applicant, the likely significant environmental effects and any identified / required mitigation measures or monitoring regimes.

## COMPETENT EXPERT AND RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

**1.24** The EIA Regulations require that to ensure the completeness and quality of the ES, ‘(a) the developer must ensure that the environmental statement is prepared by competent experts’ and ‘(b) the environmental statement must be accompanied by a statement from the developer outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts.’

**1.25** Trium is an environmental consultancy specialising in urban regeneration and property development projects in the UK. Trium’s Partners and Employees have extensive experience in managing the environmental issues and impacts surrounding large scale, high profile, urban regeneration development projects. The Partners and Employees of Trium have, over the course of their careers to date, project directed, managed or contributed to over 300 EIAs within the retail, residential, leisure, commercial, cultural, infrastructure and industrial sectors. Further detail on the expertise and experience of those preparing the ES is provided in **ES Volume 2, Appendix: EIA Methodology (Annex 2)**.

## LOCATION OF INFORMATION WITHIN THE ES

**1.26** Regulation 18(3) of the EIA Regulations defines that an ‘an environmental statement is a statement which includes at least:

*‘a description of the proposed development comprising information on the site, design, size and other relevant features of the development;*

*a description of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment;*

*a description of any features of the proposed development, or measures envisaged in order to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment;*

*a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, taking into account the effects of the development on the environment;*

*a non-technical summary of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (d); and*

*any additional information specified in Schedule 4 relevant to the specific characteristics of the particular development or type of development and to the environmental features likely to be significantly affected’.*

**1.27** The above information defined in Regulation 18(3) is replicated within Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations. The location of the information within the ES is sign-posted in **ES Volume 2, Appendix: EIA Methodology (Annex 1)**. A glossary of terms is included in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Glossary and Abbreviations** for clarity.

## ES AVAILABILITY AND COMMENTS

**1.28** The ES is available for viewing by the public during normal office hours at Woking Borough Council’s (WBC) Planning Department. Comments on the planning application should be forwarded to WBC at the following address:

Woking Borough Council  
Civic Offices  
Gloucester Square  
Woking  
Surrey  
GU21 6YL

**1.29** Electronic copies of the NTS are available free of charge. To request a copy, please contact:

Trium Environmental Consulting LLP  
69-85 Tabernacle Street  
London  
EC2A 4BD  
[hello@triumenv.co.uk](mailto:hello@triumenv.co.uk)