

Dominic Mackrill
Corporate Project Manager
Eastleigh Borough Council

Application V/25/99823
Please ask for Rebecca Altman
Direct dial 023 8068 8266
Working hours Tues 9am-3pm; Wed-Fri 9am-5pm
Email Rebecca.altman@eastleigh.gov.uk

18 November 2025

Dear Mr Mackrill

Screening Opinion under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, Part 2, Regulation 6

Application No: V/25/99823

Description: Construction of 192 dwellings.

Site: Land east of Kings Copse Avenue and Tanhouse Lane, Hedge End, SO30 0FB

Applicant: Eastleigh Borough Council

Date Information received:
29/07/2025

Extension in time agreed:
19/11/2025

Site Description

The site lies within the urban edge and is allocated for residential development within the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan. The site is approximately 6.9ha in size and currently comprises an open field bordered by trees and hedgerows, which was historically part of the River Hamble Country Park Estate. The surrounding area is characterised by residential development to the north and west and countryside to the south and east. There are two adjacent recreation grounds / sports facilities: Little Hats recreation ground and playground to the north east; and Norman Rodaway Pavilion, Football field and playground to the south-west.

Part of the north and east sides of the site fall within the Tanhouse Meadow Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), and the Manor Farm Local Nature Reserve (LNR). Other site constraints include the following:

- Minerals safeguarding area;
- Flood zones 2 and 3 north side of site (river);
- Airport safeguarding zone;
- ESSO and Southern Gas pipelines beneath the site;
- Overhead power lines;

- River Hamble Country Park;
- Great crested newts green zone (moderate habitat suitability);
- Adjacent bridleway to west (Botley 20);
- Adjacent to HEWEB Character Areas 74 and 75.

Proposed Development

The proposal is for the construction of 192 dwellings, comprising 102 houses and 90 flats. Access would be via Kings Copse Avenue with a main access road leading to a central square / cross roads around which the flats would be located in four blocks. The rest of the development would comprise housing in a perimeter block style layout. The housing would be up to 3 storey's in height and the flats would be 4-storey height. The SINC and local nature reserve areas on the northern and eastern sides of the site would remain undeveloped.

Is an Environmental Impact Assessment Required?

The Local Planning Authority are of the opinion that an Environmental Impact Assessment is **not required** for this development.

Screening Assessment

The EIA Regulations (the Regulations), in conjunction with the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) set out the legal framework in relation to EIA. The EIA Regulations contain two development schedules, Schedule 1 development and Schedule 2 development. Schedule 1 contains a list of development where EIA is mandatory. Schedule 2 contains a list of development types and development thresholds where the requirement for EIA should be considered.

The Local Planning Authority must screen planning applications for development of a description contained within Schedule 2, Column 1, which is within a sensitive area or meets or exceeds the relevant thresholds contained in Column 2, to determine whether it is likely to have significant effects on the environment when having regard to the selection criteria contained within Schedule 3 of the Regulations.

Schedule 1 Development

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

Schedule 2 Development

Schedule 2 development means development, other than exempt development, of a description mentioned in Column 1 of the table in Schedule 2 where:

- (a) any part of that development is to be carried out in a sensitive area; or

(b) the applicable threshold or criterion in the corresponding part of column 2 of that table is respectively exceeded or met in relation to that development.

Is the development Schedule 2 development?

The development proposed is of a type listed in Column 1 of the table of Schedule 2 (Category 10(b), urban development projects).

Sensitive areas

As set out in Paragraph 032 of the PPG, the more environmentally sensitive the location, the more likely it is that the effects on the environment will be significant and will require an EIA. Certain designated sites are defined in regulation 2(1) as sensitive areas, which are:

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

The development site is not located in a sensitive area and therefore the thresholds set out in Column 2 of the table in Schedule 2 for category 10(b) developments should be applied.

Thresholds

The thresholds for “urban development projects” are:

- The development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or,
- The development includes more than 150 dwellings; or
- The overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.

The proposed development is for 192 dwellings on a site of 6.9ha. The development is, therefore, Schedule 2 development and it is necessary to consider whether the proposal is likely to have significant effects on the environment taking account of the relevant selection criteria in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations.

The PPG states that only a very small proportion of Schedule 2 development will require an EIA and gives indicative screening thresholds of the type of development for which an EIA is unlikely to be necessary. For “urban development projects” it states that EIA is unlikely to be necessary 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 markedly different nature or there is a high level of contamination. For sites which have not previously been intensively developed it gives a suggested threshold of 5ha or development that would have significant urbanising effects in a previously non-urbanised area (e.g. new development of more than 1,000 dwellings). The proposed number of residential units is well below the broad indicative thresholds given by the PPG for residential development.

Schedule 3: Selection Criteria for Screening Schedule 2 Developments

Schedule 3 includes three broad categories for consideration which comprise of: the characteristics of the development; the environmental sensitivity of the location; and, the types and characteristics of the potential impacts, which includes such matters as: the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact; the nature of the impact; the probability and complexity of the impact; the onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact; and, the possibility of effectively reducing the impact. The relevant matters to the particular development proposed are considered below.

1. Characteristics of development

a) Size and design of the development:

The site is 6.9ha in size, which includes the SINC and nature reserve designations on the northern and eastern sides. These areas would remain undeveloped, and the development has been designed with the tallest buildings located in the centre of the site, reducing in density and scale towards the site edges adjacent to the countryside and nature conservation areas. The scheme would need to be assessed in detail through an application process, but based on the submitted information it is not considered to be of a size or design that would result in significant environmental impacts such as to warrant the need for an EIA to be undertaken.

b) Cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development:

The site is not directly adjacent to any proposed development sites, but is located near to some recent housing developments on Heath House Lane and Barnfield Way. Any impacts from these developments would have been mitigated on a site specific basis.

The major development area known as One Horton Heath is also approximately 5km to the north, which is a scheme for up to 2,500 dwellings located to the west of Horton Heath. This development was subject to its own Environmental Impact Assessment, where the impacts on the wider environment were assessed in detail and relevant mitigation agreed, including a package of off-site highway improvement works and air quality monitoring to mitigate impacts of increased traffic on the surrounding road network.

Given that the impacts of nearby developments have been mitigated, it is considered that the cumulative impact is not likely to have significant effects on the environment such as to warrant the need for an EIA to be undertaken.

c) Traffic and transport impacts:

The proposed development would result in a permanent increase in the number of vehicles travelling on the local road network and could affect existing traffic flow. It is considered that without mitigation, the traffic impacts would be likely to have a negative effect on the local highway network. A Transport Assessment has been prepared and the proposal includes plans for off site pedestrian and cycle network improvements including an upgrade to a section of Tanhouse Lane and provision of a new section of footway along Kings Copse Avenue. The need for any further mitigation, such as contributions towards improvements to the local highway network, would be confirmed by HCC at the application stage. Such mitigation could be secured by legal agreement or by condition, and subject to this, it is not considered that the traffic impacts, either alone or in combination with other permitted development, would warrant an EIA.

The proposed development would also result in additional traffic during the construction phase, which would include heavy goods vehicles. This impact would, however, be temporary in nature and is considered to be typical of a development of this type. It is not considered therefore that it would have significant effects on the environment if appropriately managed through a Construction Environmental Management Plan.

d) Use of natural resources:

The development would permanently change the use of the land, would involve some changes to the topography of the site and the use of construction materials. It is not, however, considered that this would result in significant effects on the environment such as to warrant an EIA. The site is also within a minerals safeguarding area, where policies seek to protect economically viable mineral resource from sterilisation and maximise mineral recovery. A Minerals Safeguarding Report has been prepared and confirmed that the site is unsuitable for prior extraction and the Minerals and Waste Authority concurs with this conclusion, recommending that a recovery strategy is put in place to allow for any incidental extraction opportunities. The level of mineral recovery in this case is therefore not likely to result in significant effects on the environment.

Once operational, the development would require the use of certain resources including energy and water. Similar resources would also be required to be utilised during the construction phase. However, these would not be significant in scale and would not exceed the expected levels for a typical residential development proposal of this nature.

e) Production of waste:

The production of waste which would result from the construction phase would be typical for an urban development project of the nature proposed with waste levels not being considered to be significant. The provisions for the storage,

collection, and disposal of rubbish from the development during the construction phase could be managed through a Construction Environmental Management Plan. It is not considered that the waste arising from the operational phase of the development would be significant and this would be appropriately managed in line with the Council's waste management and recycling provision.

f) Pollution and nuisance:

Pollution impacts would include those relating to the construction phase (e.g. dust and noise), and those associated with increased traffic generation (air quality impacts from emissions), and contaminated land. The Air Quality Impacts have been assessed through an Air Quality Impact Assessment with no significant impacts identified. There is some risk of land contamination from past agricultural activities but the risk to human health is anticipated to be low. Any required mitigation could be secured appropriately through conditions or legal agreement. Pollution arising from the construction process could be mitigated through the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan.

There is also the potential for pollution impacts on the adjacent watercourse, which is a tributary of the protected River Hamble, from water run-off and increased nutrient output. These risks are proposed to be mitigated through the use of a sustainable drainage system with appropriate filtration measures, and the purchase of nutrient credits to achieve nutrient neutrality, which can be secured through condition or legal agreement.

g) Risk of major accidents and/or disasters:

The anticipated risk of accidents occurring is considered to be low if appropriately managed. The site is currently an open field with no existing buildings or structures requiring demolition. Existing overhead power lines are proposed to be relocated beneath ground and the developer is in liaison with the relevant organisations to ensure that such works would adhere to required legislation and safety guidelines. There are also utilities pipelines beneath the site and the development has been designed to ensure that these would be protected with the required easements, with the relevant consultation bodies fully informed and raising no objection.

The construction and operational phases of the development would not involve the use of high risk substances or technologies. There is also not considered to be a significant risk of accidents occurring as a result of the proposed end uses, including those related to transport, although this would be subject to design and layout considerations. The construction phase would be managed by the developer in accordance with a Construction Environmental

Management Plan and the relevant Health and Safety Regulations and other associated statutory provisions.

h) Risk to human health:

The site is currently an agricultural field, with no other known land uses. The contamination risks of the site have been assessed and it is determined that there is an overall low risk to human health from contamination. Any recommended measures to ensure the prevention of risks, such as the implementation of a materials management plan for the safe reuse and disposal of soils, could be appropriately secured by condition. It is not considered that the risk of contamination would be of a level to warrant an EIA.

Potential impacts to human health from increased pollution from vehicle emissions have been assessed through an Air Quality Impact Assessment with no significant impacts identified. If any mitigation is required, this could be secured through conditions.

i) Noise and disturbance:

The development would result in an increase in noise levels during the construction process but this would not be anticipated to be unusual for a development of this type, and could be controlled through the use of a Construction Environmental Management Plan. This would incorporate a range of measures including the appropriate location of plant and on-site facilities, details of any piling, lorry routing and the control of construction and delivery hours to minimise the impact upon sensitive receptors.

During the operational phase, the development would result in an increase in noise levels relative to the existing situation on site, with this mainly arising from additional traffic movement and general residential activity, but this is considered unlikely to result in significant effects on the environment such that an EIA would be required.

2. The Location of the Development - the environmental sensitivity of the location

(a) Existing and approved land use:

The site is an agricultural field last used as arable farmland. It is identified by DEFRA as Grade 2 (very good quality) agricultural land. Grades 1, 2 and 3a are considered as the 'best and most versatile' (BMV) agricultural land for planning purposes. The National Planning Policy Framework requires agricultural land quality to be recognised in planning decision making, noting that areas of poorer quality should be preferred to those of higher quality (paragraph 187 and footnote 65). For any loss of BMV over 20ha for development that does not accord with an adopted development plan, there is a need to consult Natural England to assess the impacts of the loss. In this case, the proposal is for a site allocated in the

Eastleigh Development Plan and as the area of BMV land is less than 20ha, Natural England would not be required to be consulted on this matter. However, it would still be a material consideration for the planning decision making process. In summary, whilst the loss of BMV is a material consideration, the BMV classification in itself is not considered to warrant an EIA for this development.

The site is located adjacent to an existing settlement although on the edge of the countryside. The development would significantly alter the character of the site from a rural field to an urban development, and the landscape and character impacts of this would need to be carefully assessed through the application process. However, it is considered that the impacts on existing populations and land uses would not be significant subject to appropriate design and mitigation (e.g. layout to set back development from site boundaries with adjacent housing and provide appropriate buffers to sensitive nature conservation areas).

(b) Natural Resources:

It is not considered that the proposals would result in an excessive use of resources that would have a significant effect on the environment.

(c) Natural Environment:

The development would have the potential to impact on European and locally protected nature conservation sites if no mitigation were achieved. Potential impacts in relation to flood risk would also need to be assessed.

Impact on protected nature conservation areas

Parts of the site are designated as a SINC and local nature reserve and these areas would remain undeveloped with an appropriate buffer zone provided to the new development. There is also a watercourse running through the northern area of land which is a tributary of the River Hamble, which itself is part of the Solent complex of protected sites.

Natural England has confirmed that the development has the potential to impact on terrestrial Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites that they underpin. Potential impacts would result from nutrient loading on water quality, and from increased recreational pressure.

Mitigation of impacts to water quality could be achieved by appropriate design of the drainage system, and incorporation of filtration measures, which could be secured by condition. It would also be necessary for the scheme to achieve nutrient neutrality to protect water quality and it would be possible for the applicant to mitigate nutrient impacts using the Council's Nutrient Mitigation Strategy or similar approved scheme. This could be secured by legal agreement or condition.

The site also lies within the catchment areas for the New Forest National Park and the Solent protected sites, where there is the potential for impacts due to increased recreational pressure. These impacts could be mitigated through the payment of contributions towards appropriate mitigation schemes, e.g. the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy and the Council's New Forest Mitigation Strategy, and secured by legal agreement.

The site is also in an area where there are records of protected species, including bats, dormice and badgers, and where there is suitable habitat for great crested newts. An Ecological Impact Assessment has been carried out which has identified those protected species likely to be affected and sets out recommended mitigation measures for both the construction and operation stages, to include the implementation of precautionary working methods, wildlife sensitive lighting, enhancements to habitats and habitat management, and provision of a biodiversity net gain. The mitigation measures would be fully assessed through the planning application stage and could be secured by condition. Subject to mitigation, the ecological impacts of the development would not be considered to be of an extent that would warrant an EIA.

Flood risk

The majority of the site lies within Flood Zone 1 (low flood risk), which is where the proposed residential development is to be located. The most vulnerable elements of the development would therefore be located outside of high risk flood zones, in accordance with policy principles. However, there is a watercourse along the northern side of the site which is a tributary of the River Hamble and the land surrounding this, including some of the land on the eastern side of the site, is within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The potential flood risks associated with the development have been assessed through a detailed Flood Risk Assessment, which will be subject to review through the application process by the Environment Agency. A detailed drainage strategy has also been prepared and it is considered that any required mitigation to protect against flood risks could be appropriately secured through condition and that the flood risk impacts would not be so significant as to warrant an EIA.

Protected trees

There are no protected trees on the site, but there are mature trees around the site boundaries that are considered worthy of retention. The development has been designed to minimise tree loss and damage as far as possible, and suitable protection measures for retained trees could be secured by condition.

Historic environment

There are no sites or buildings of historic significance in the immediate vicinity of the site and the site is not within a conservation area. The proposal would not be considered to result in significant effects on the historic environment.

Landscape impacts

The site lies on the edge of the settlement of Hedge End, adjacent to the countryside. There are no statutory landscape designations affecting the site, but the proposal would have an impact on the landscape and visual character of the area. A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared to assess these wider landscape impacts and this is subject to review through the application process. Detailed landscape plans have also been prepared which include enhancements to boundary planting and new landscaping and planting throughout the development. Whilst the landscape impact would be a key consideration in the assessment of the schemes acceptability, they would not be considered to be of a scale to warrant an EIA.

3. Types and characteristics of the potential impact

a) Magnitude and spatial extent of the impact:

As detailed above, the potential types and spatial extent of the likely impacts are not significant in EIA terms.

b) Nature of the impact:

The nature of the potential impacts are fully considered in Sections 1 and 2 of this assessment.

c) Transboundary nature of the impact:

It is not considered that any transboundary impacts are likely.

d) Intensity and complexity of the impact:

The impacts are not complex in EIA terms, as detailed in Sections 1 and 2 of this assessment.

e) Probability of the impact:

The impacts detailed in Sections 1 and 2 above are likely to occur but can be satisfactorily mitigated.

f) Expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact:

The impacts detailed in Sections 1 and 2 above are likely to be either temporary during the construction period or permanent during the implementation phase, but can be satisfactorily mitigated.

g) Cumulation of the impact of other existing and/or approved development:

As detailed in Section 1, the in-combination effect is not considered to result in significant effects in EIA terms.

h) Possibility of effectively reducing the impact:

As indicated in this assessment, the impacts can be reduced through design, S016 planning obligations and conditions.

Conclusion

The development has been screened against the relevant provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and the Planning Practice Guidance. This screening assessment has considered whether the proposed development is likely to give rise to significant effects on the Environment.

The development is not Schedule 1 development but falls under Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations. The site is not located within a sensitive area as defined by the EIA Regulations but the proposals exceed the defined thresholds in Schedule 2 for urban development projects of this nature, thus requiring the proposals to be assessed against the criteria in Schedule 3. For the reasons set out above it is considered that subject to mitigation, the development would not be likely to have significant environmental effects on the application site or its immediate surroundings, nor do the characteristics and location of development indicate that the development is likely to give rise to significant environment effects that warrant an EIA being undertaken.

Mitigation measures, which are typical for a development of this type and nature, would be necessary and these are able to be appropriately provided and controlled through the planning application process, including though the use of planning conditions and S106 planning obligations.

Accordingly, the screening assessment has identified that significant effects on the environment are not considered likely either alone or in combination with other development and, therefore, it is the opinion of Eastleigh Borough Council as the Local Planning Authority that the proposed development does not constitute EIA development as defined by the Regulations.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N Parker", with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Nick Parker
Planning Manager