



4.0 Scheme Development and Alternatives Considered

4.1 Site Feasibility and Identification

4.1.1 The Site is allocated in the NDLP Part 1 2011 to 2031 (NDLP) by Policy 21 – Gillingham Strategic Site Allocation. The NDLP identifies the site as follows:

“The southern extension of Gillingham will take the form of a sustainable mixed use development that will expand the built-up area of the town to the south and east. The eastern edge of the southern extension follows the floodplains of the River Lodden and the Fern Brook. Cole Street Lane forms the southern edge of the proposed development and the floodplain of the River Stour, south of the railway line, forms the western edge.

Within these boundaries are four main areas proposed for development, which are:

- land to the east of ham, including part of Park Farm;
- land to the south of Ham, including part of Newhouse Farm;
- land to the east of Lodden Lakes; and
- land to the south of Brickfields Business Park.”

4.1.2 As part of the preparation for the NDLP, a sustainability appraisal was undertaken to assess the options for development at Gillingham. Several options were considered for accommodating the growth for Gillingham and delivering enhanced infrastructure including town centre enhancements to meet the needs of the town.

4.1.3 Options considered were to limit growth up to 2016 to sites inside the current settlement boundary or to allow some Greenfield expansion and after this period, whether expansion of the town should be to the south and south east or to the north west.

4.1.4 The Site was identified as the most suitable option for a sustainable mixed use extension to Gillingham, with the capacity to sufficiently mitigate any negative effects associated with growth. Concentrating growth to the south of the town was considered to offer the greatest potential for:

- housing development to be sustainably located;
- economic development to create employment opportunities for the southern extension and the town as a whole; and
- the provision of supporting infrastructure, including sustainable transport measures, to increase self-containment by integrating the new development into the existing town.

4.1.5 Policy 21 states that:

“A Master Plan Framework will be prepared for the whole of the southern extension of Gillingham to ensure that: the site will be developed in a comprehensive and coordinated manner; and facilities and infrastructure are provided and delivered in step with housing and employment development.”

4.1.6 In order to satisfy the requirements of Policy 21 the Consortium has developed a Master Plan Framework (MPF) for the southern extension of Gillingham. The MPF addresses the following matters:

- Sets out the known constraints and opportunities presented by the Site;
- Outlines the collective vision for the Proposed Development;
- Sets a development framework master plan, identifying a clear land use budget, including all master plan components;

- Provides an urban design strategy outlining the strategic position of key place making components, including land use and density;
- Provides a sustainable transport strategy and explains the movement and access principles both in and around the southern extension;
- Describes and illustrates the green infrastructure strategy;
- Sets out energy efficiency principles;
- Explains the social, community, transportation and other physical infrastructure to be delivered in connection with the southern extension;
- Provides an indicative phasing schedule of development;
- Sets the framework for establishing a detailed Infrastructure Delivery Schedule (IDS) and the phased delivery of this infrastructure across the southern extension;
- Sets the framework for the S106 agreements that will secure infrastructure delivery across the southern extension; and
- Provides a framework for establishing commonality between multiple outline applications, the submission of reserved matters applications and discharging planning conditions.

4.2 Approach to Consultation

4.2.1 The Consortium and its consultants have undertaken extensive discussions with statutory and non-statutory consultees, the local community and landowners, with the accumulated findings all having an influence over the evolution of the MPF and the scope of the EIA. Consultation began at the earliest stage of the development to establish feasibility and has progressed through to the submission of the planning application.

4.2.2 A number of meetings have been held with Planning Officers from NDDC. The proposals have been discussed in detail and revisions made to the scheme where appropriate, along with the supplementary details that have also been discussed and agreed prior to this submission. The outcomes of this engagement process in terms of where it has influenced the MPF are detailed in section 4.3 and in Table 4.1.

4.2.3 In addition to pre-application discussions with Officers from NDDC, the engagement with stakeholders has included:

- Statutory Regulators – Utility providers;
- Dorset County Council Highways and Transportation;
- Dorset County Council Local Education Authority;
- Dorset County Council Historic Environment;
- Dorset County Council Natural Environment;
- Environment Agency;
- Highways England;
- Historic England;
- Natural England;
- Meetings with elected members of NDDC, Gillingham Town Council and East Stours Parish Council; and
- Formal consultation events for stakeholders and the local community (see Paragraph 4.2.4 below)



- 4.2.4 A consultation event was held at Rivers Meet Leisure Centre, Hardings Lane, Gillingham, SP8 4HX, (approximately 0.9 miles from the application site) on Tuesday 3rd November 2015. A presentation was made to invited stakeholders between 10am and 11.30am and the public exhibition held between 1pm and 8pm. The purpose of the event was to inform interested parties of the Consortium's intention to submit a MPF for residential development on the Site and to provide an opportunity to provide feedback. On display at the presentation and exhibition were a number of information boards which set out the background to the scheme and provided details of the Proposed Development. It was hosted by key members of the Consortium's project team who were available to answer questions and respond to comments raised.
- 4.2.5 The MPF and Infrastructure Delivery Schedule were submitted to NDDC in November 2017 for ratification.
- 4.2.6 Additional public exhibitions have been held by Welbeck Land and C G Fry & Son Ltd in September 2017 and November 2017 respectively in connection with their individual outline planning applications.
- 4.2.7 A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been submitted to NDDC in connection with the MPF for the Proposed Development, which includes full details of consultation undertaken and issues raised by respondents, those issues pertinent to the EIA process are set out in the sections below.
- 4.2.8 Technical consultation directly related to the production of this ES has included:
- Baseline data collection; and
 - Scoping of effects.
- 4.2.9 Further details of technical consultations (if relevant) are provided in each technical chapter and within the topic specific consultation trackers as appropriate.

4.3 Scheme Development

- 4.3.1 In accordance with Schedule 4, Part 1, Paragraph 2 of the EIA Regulations (HMSO, 2011) the ES is required to include an outline of the main alternatives considered in developing the proposal and the reasons for the choice to be taken forward. In this, consideration is given below to the potential firstly for an alternative site and secondly for alternative development proposals.

Alternative Sites

- 4.3.2 As confirmed above the Site is the subject of an allocation in the NDLP. NDDC previously carried out a comprehensive assessment of potential options for meeting the growth and the needs of Gillingham. This assessment is set out in the following documents:
- Assessing the Growth Potential of Gillingham (December 2009);
 - Market Towns Site Selection Background Paper (November 2013); and
 - Sustainability Appraisal incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1: Pre-submission Document (November 2013).
- 4.3.3 A number of areas capable of accommodating urban extensions were reviewed for the 2009 study. The starting point for identifying suitable sites was the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009). Site visits and a workshop with local stakeholders informed the development of four potential 'growth scenarios' for the town. These were:
- maximum growth – maximising potential of all land capable of supporting development;
 - southern focus – concentrating growth to the south of the town;
 - northern focus – concentrating growth to the north of the town; and

- incremental growth – dispersed growth in multiple directions to north and south of the town.
- 4.3.4 Working through the scenario-building approach, further testing of sustainability and a refinement process took place. The scenario that concentrated development to the south of the town was identified as the most sustainable option. This scenario was the only one that scored positively under all the evaluation criteria of:
- economic development and employment opportunities;
 - service centre functions and social infrastructure;
 - potential to increase self-containment and enable sustainable transport; and
 - environmental capacity.
- 4.3.5 The options for expanding Gillingham were the subject of extensive assessment through the sustainability appraisal process.
- 4.3.6 It was identified that to accommodate identified growth additional to that which could be accommodated inside the existing settlement boundary, the most sustainable option would be to plan for a 'southern extension' to the town. This extension was considered to have the capacity to sufficiently mitigate any negative effects associated with growth. The southern extension of Gillingham was envisaged to take the form of a sustainable mixed-use development that would expand the built-up area of the town to the south and east.
- 4.3.7 In conclusion, it is considered that the process followed in selecting the Site for an allocation was robust and appropriate and therefore there is no further need to consider alternative sites at this stage of the application.
- 4.3.8 It is therefore proposed that the Site is the only appropriate location for the Proposed Development for the following reasons:
- The Site has been identified as the preferred location for the expansion of Gillingham in an adopted NDDC policy document which is a material consideration in planning terms;
 - The Site is available;
 - The Site is deliverable by the Consortium; and
 - The Site will fulfil a need for housing, employment and infrastructure in the area.

Alternative Development Scenarios / Design Iterations

- 4.3.9 Whilst the Site is identified by the NDDC as being the preferred location to accommodate development of this nature, during preparation of the proposal, a series of development scenarios evolved for the Site that sought to accommodate both the aspirations of the Consortium, NDDC, consultees and the wider community.
- 4.3.10 Over a number of years, a series of baseline studies have been undertaken at the Site, the results of which are referenced in the various chapters of the ES. The results of these surveys have been used to refine the iterative masterplan into a position where it could be reviewed and consulted upon.
- 4.3.11 The overall layout of the Proposed Development has followed a process of design development. The physical site constraints and opportunities along with the responses from the consultation undertaken have provided the framework within which the layout design has evolved.
- 4.3.12 Constraints associated with the Site are set out in the MPF.

Figure 4.1: Illustrative framework master plan: response to the site constraints



that the solution presented in this planning application demonstrates an appropriate scheme that takes into account stakeholder views.

4.4.2 Table 4.1 below summarises the comments received from organisations and individual members of the public. These are reproduced in full in the Statement of Community Involvement (December 2015) prepared on behalf of the Consortium.

**Table 4.1 How Consultation has influenced the Scheme Design**

Consultee/ Stakeholder	Details of Consultation	Team Response	Scheme Implication
Public consultation	How will the SSA meet the need for new schools? The information provided is very vague.	The developers will make contributions comprising land and finance to the County Council which will deliver the necessary improvements when they are needed. The contributions will be secured through a S106 legal agreement.	Proposed change: The Consortium will meet the need for primary and secondary education arising from the SSA through the phased contribution of land and finance to DCC as education authority. DCC will then deliver the new facilities as and when they are required.
	Primary education improvements (the extension to the St Mary the Virgin) should be delivered earlier.	Noted.	Proposed change: The Consortium will work with DCC as local Education Authority to establish appropriate trigger points for the land and financial contributions to be made for education improvements. It will then be for the DCC to deliver the required improvements.
	Hospital, GP surgery and dentist's required.	The MPF includes provision for a local centre that, subject to operator demand, accommodates a GP/dentist's surgery and pharmacy in accordance with NDDC LP Policy 21. Potential operators of these facilities cannot be forced to open new surgeries but the Consortium will engage with NDDC and the funding/operating groups to establish their requirements and potential timescales for delivery.	Proposed change: The Consortium will engage with NDDC, the funding bodies and potential operators to establish their operational requirements and likely timescales. These can then be reflected flexibly in the outline and detailed planning applications.
	Lack of provision for entertainment facilities (bowling alley, cinema), eating establishments and high-street shops?	Incorporating such uses into the local centre would be inconsistent with the aims of LP Policy 21. Planning policy requires such uses to be located in the town centre.	Proposed change: The local centre could accommodate additional facilities such as a pub/restaurant subject to commercial and planning considerations.
	New community space should be located at Riversmeet, so that it is accessible to the whole community.	It is accepted that the scale, form and importantly the location of the new community space should be considered further with the local community.	Proposed change The Consortium will engage with the Town Council, GNPG and other local stakeholders to determine the preferred approach to delivering new community/meeting facilities.
	No new local services are provided until at least Phase 3, by which time between 550 and 800 households have been built. Build more infrastructure earlier.	The trigger points for delivering social and community infrastructure will be discussed further with NDDC and other stakeholders and appropriate trigger points will be included in the S106 agreements relating to individual planning applications.	Proposed change: The trigger points for delivering social and community infrastructure will be discussed further with NDDC and other stakeholders. The trigger points will be reflected in the IDS and appropriate trigger points will be included in the S106 agreements relating to individual planning applications.
	No measures are proposed to enhance the town centre public realm.	Improvements to the town centre public realm are not required by LP1 Policy 21.	Proposed change: The consortium will engage with the Town Council, GNPG and other local stakeholders to investigate the potential for the delivery of



		<p>It is envisaged that the new population will provide the opportunity for town centre businesses to capture new trade, which will in turn increase town centre footfall, thereby enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centre. In this sense, the Proposed Development will have a positive impact on the town centre.</p> <p>However, similar comments were made by others and as such the Consortium will consider this opportunity further as part of ongoing engagement with stakeholders.</p>	town centre improvements as part of the Proposed Development.
	Concern about space for cemeteries as the local one is at capacity.	It is reasonable to expect the Consortium to mitigate the effect of the Proposed Development on cemetery provision in Gillingham.	Proposed change: The Consortium will work with stakeholders to seek to mitigate the effect of the southern extension on cemetery provision.
Natural England	The masterplan should set out how the POS will be managed – we recommend that it is established as a Nature Reserve / Local Nature Reserve.	Provision of a Nature Reserve/LNR is an option.	Proposed change: Future management of the POS will be the subject of further engagement with relevant consultees through the planning process, with designation of a nature reserve one option to be considered.
	Also suggest the scheme would benefit from a strategic approach to protected species and in particular European Protected Species (EPS). For example a strategy for enhancement measures to ensure the local populations of otters, GCN, bats etc are enhanced, along with the adoption of appropriate method statements, may help remove the necessity of EPS licences.	This is the approach we would suggest to ecological mitigation. Text is suggested to make this clearer within the framework document.	Proposed change: A strategic approach to mitigation, compensation and enhancement of biodiversity will be adopted for the SSA. This will include retention, protection and enhancement of existing habitats, and creation of new semi-natural habitats including artificial nesting, roosting and hibernation sites for a range of species. This approach will minimise the risk of direct impacts upon protected species by retaining key habitats, however where impacts are unavoidable in-situ translocations will be carried out following best practice to maintain these populations on site.
Environment Agency	The Site Constraints the Ecology Section does not have any key design principles. This is considered a significant short fall in the master plan document as its intrinsically linked to the Local Plan Policy, as well as its own Design Principles and Vision.	The ecology section includes Key Design Considerations which reflect the Design Principles on Page 8. These could be slightly reworded to make this link clearer.	Proposed change: Protect and enhance key ecological features such as water bodies and water courses. Incorporate wildlife corridors including trees and hedgerows as part of a connected green infrastructure network.
	We do note that within the Framework Master Plan (page 20) that there will be opportunities for habitat creation to enhance and protect the River Lodden flood plain. This however, we feel should not be restricted to the floodplain but should reflect across the whole site, including the local river networks and any associated floodplains.	Habitat creation will take place across the site as is made clear in various sections.	Proposed change: Opportunities for new habitat creation across the site, including to enhance and protect the biodiversity of the River Lodden floodplain.



	We would also recommend that strengthening of the ecology section (Page 22) wording regarding to offer greater protection and enhancement of the River Lodden and its floodplain habitat, as well as the other local water features on the site.	The network of corridors and new habitat creation is mentioned but there is no specific mention of habitat protection.	Proposed change Key existing habitat features such as the River Lodden and its floodplain, water courses and water bodies will be protected and enhanced.
Public consultation	How will surface water run-off be dealt with?	Surface water runoff will be held on site in a series of open attenuation ponds (and connecting network of pipes, swales and ditches). The ponds will be deliberately over-sized such that in the design event less surface water runoff will leave the site than at present, thereby providing a reduced flood risk to low-lying properties in the downstream catchment.	Proposed change: By increasing the depth of the ponds the additional storage can be provided within the footprint of the ponds as currently shown on the MPF. We propose to expand upon this in the 'masterplan FRA' and provide additional notes on the surface water strategy drawings.
	Check accuracy of Environment Agency flood maps.	We will liaise with the Environment Agency and raise this concern with them. In practice it is very unlikely that local residents will have witnessed a 1 in 100 year flood and been able to map its flood extent over the open fields, but we will purchase the EA's complete flood records for this area, which typically includes aerial photography which should help define the edge of the flood plain. All new development including surface water attenuation ponds will be located outside of the 1 in 1000 (one thousand) year flood plain.	Change dependent upon further information to be sourced from the EA.
Environment Agency	<p>We would like the document to highlight other key design principles associated with flood risk. For example; providing the necessary buffer to the watercourses to protect the local biodiversity; no raising of ground levels in the flood plain; design constraints around bridges.</p> <p>We support that the document identifies 2.5 hectares of land use for the attenuation features, and that these locations are included on the Land Use Density maps. We trust that the location and sizing of these features are supported by an appropriate drainage strategy.</p> <p>The delivery of the strategic infrastructure is essential to the success of the scheme. The phasing and delivery of the drainage needs to be understood, design and implemented to ensure that this does not become compromised if several outline planning applications are submitted for the sites. This is especially important give the locations of the attenuations ponds in relation to the phasing strategy (page 64).</p> <p>We would anticipate that given the phasing strategy that the drainage features should be secure through the Section 106 and installed at the earliest stage of the development to ensure that they have time to establish for multifunctional benefit required.</p> <p>We also require the management of the strategic surface water management to be considered as early as possible within the process to ensure that there is an appropriate</p>	All of these items will be addressed as part of the Masterplan FRA. The Masterplan FRA, and its associated Masterplan surface water strategy, will sit below the Level 1 Strategic FRA (prepared by Halcrow in 2008) and above the series of site-specific FRAs which will be prepared to support future outline planning applications.	Masterplan FRA to be prepared ahead of submission of outline planning applications.



	responsible body for the maintenance for the lifetime of the development.		
Public consultation	Could we see more information on proposals for meeting the expected increase in local telecoms demand – mobile 4G, fibre broadband, fixed telecoms?	For a development of this size it is likely that substantial off-site improvements in all utilities, including telecoms, will be required. In advance of any outline planning applications being made, we will liaise with telecom providers to evaluate what the likely scale and programme will be for these improvement works.	Proposed Change: A Utilities Strategy will be submitted in connection with outline planning applications, addressing all utility connections
	Nothing is shown regarding the increased capacity of the sewage treatment works required.	For a development of this size it is inevitable that substantial off-site improvements in Wessex Water's sewerage system and / or the Sewage Treatment Works will be required. In advance of any outline planning applications being made, we will liaise with WW to evaluate what the likely scale and programme will be for these improvement works.	Proposed Change: A Utilities Strategy will be submitted in connection with outline planning applications to address all utility connections.
Survey Question 1	Access to the development would be via narrow roads in Woodpecker Meadow where cars are parked and children play (and similar related comments)	The comments of residents are noted. However, this option can be delivered in technical terms and is supported by the local Highway Authority. It will ensure that homes can be delivered early in the project as part of a logical extension to the existing urban envelope.	Proposed Change: The Consortium will undertake further technical assessment of the potential for access via Woodpecker Meadow as part of the outline planning application process.
	We live in Trent Square and think it is important that the nearby access point off Fern Brook Lane to the new housing does not allow for vehicles, and should be just a pedestrian/cyclist route. It would be unsafe for the children that play around the square area. Access for construction vehicles should be from the top of the estate on the new development.	The comments of residents are noted. However, this option can be delivered in technical terms and is supported by the local Highway Authority. It will ensure that homes can be delivered early in the project as part of a logical extension to the existing urban envelope.	Proposed Change: The Consortium will undertake further technical assessment of the potential for access via Cale Way / Fern Brook Lane as part of the outline planning application process.
	Concerns about the proposed vehicle access from Cale Way/Fern Brook Lane as this will increase through traffic on the existing estate. There is a potential to be a rat run there. There are also lots of children who play outside on the access road to the estate and a lot of congestion outside the care home with cars parked on the road – an accident waiting to happen.	The comments of residents are noted. However, this option can be delivered in technical terms and is supported by the local Highway Authority. It will ensure that homes can be delivered early in the project as part of a logical extension to the existing urban envelope.	Proposed Change: The Consortium will undertake further technical assessment of the potential for access via Cale Way / Fern Brook Lane as part of the outline planning application process.
	When will the travel plan be completed?	The Consortium's advisers continue to liaise with DCC and NDDC to finalise the Travel Plan. It is envisaged that the completed Travel Plan will be submitted with the outline planning applications as part of a "Framework Travel Plan".	Proposed change: The Travel Plan will be submitted in connection to the outline planning applications as part of the Framework Transport Assessment covering the Proposed Development.
Survey Q3 – Comments have been grouped into common themes	Much more consideration needs to be given, with DCC, to improving the B3092 south of Gillingham to Sturminster Newton, which has numerous narrow places and tight bends and Sturminster itself can be very congested.	An assessment of the likely impact of the proposed development at the A30 / B3092 East Stour Crossroads has been undertaken as part of the wider traffic modelling carried out. The analysis demonstrates that the additional traffic associated with the proposed Gillingham Southern Extension will not have a noticeable impact on the performance of the A30 / B3092 East Stour Crossroads and it will	Proposed Change: The Consortium will undertake further technical assessment of the potential impact on the B3092 through East Stour and Sturminster Newton as part of the outline planning application process.



		continue to operate without significant queuing and delay.	
	Fern Brook Lane is unsuitable to provide access to the new houses on Park Farm as it is often impossible for two cars to pass due to parked vehicles. All access should be via the roundabout and proposed new primary road.	The comments of residents are noted. However, this option can be delivered in technical terms and is supported by the local Highway Authority. It will ensure that homes can be delivered early in the project as part of a logical extension to the existing urban envelope.	Proposed Change: The Consortium will undertake further technical assessment of the potential for access via Cale Way / Fern Brook Lane as part of the outline planning application process.
	Will there be adequate pedestrian crossings along the principal street to facilitate movement from one side of the development to the other, for pedestrians to access school routes etc?	Suitable pedestrian/cycle crossing facilities will be provided along the Principal Street enabling safe linkages between the development parcels located to the north and south of the route.	Proposed Change: Suitable pedestrian/cycle crossing facilities will be provided along the principal street enabling safe linkages between the development parcels located to the north and south of the route.
	Water supply – concerns expressed regarding water supply and the effects on water courses from additional abstraction.	Comments noted	Proposed change: The Consortium will liaise with Wessex Water throughout the planning application and construction phases to ensure that an appropriate water supply is in place to serve the development.
NDDC	Letter/feedback detailed at Paragraph 3.24 of the submitted SCI.	Proposed change: All comments accepted with the exception of: Suggested new sentence at the end of paragraph 10.14 (Appendix 10). This is a private and commercially sensitive matter between the site promoters and not appropriate for inclusion within the IDS.	Changes will be made in line with the project team's response in this table.
	There is no plan for the building process to manage construction impacts on existing and new residents.	A Construction and Environmental Management Plan is likely to be required by planning condition attached to the outline planning permissions.	Proposed change: Construction effects on existing and new residents could be managed through a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (generic site-wide common to all permissions and more focussed site specific) that would be secured through planning conditions attached to the outline planning permissions.