



South East Strategic Reservoir Option
Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Chapter 15 - Socio-economics and communities

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Contents

15	Socio-economics and communities	1
15.1	Introduction	1
15.2	Legislation, policy and guidance	2
15.3	Consultation, engagement and scoping.....	9
15.4	Assessment methodology.....	13
15.5	Study area.....	26
15.6	Baseline conditions.....	26
15.7	Project parameters, assumptions and limitations	44
15.8	Embedded design mitigation and standard good practice.....	46
15.9	Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects	48
15.10	Next steps	54
	References	56

List of tables

Table 15.1	Relevant legislation, policy and guidance for socio-economics and communities	3
Table 15.2	Key Scoping feedback for socio-economics and communities	9
Table 15.3	Key ongoing engagement for socio-economics and communities	10
Table 15.4	Criteria for establishing the sensitivity of receptors	19
Table 15.5	Criteria for assessing the magnitude of impact	23
Table 15.6	Significance matrix	24
Table 15.7	Population by study area	27
Table 15.8	Employment and unemployment levels by study area	29
Table 15.9	Gross weekly pay	29
Table 15.10	Receptors assessed in the preliminary assessment	32
Table 15.11	Project parameters and assumptions forming the basis of assessment	44
Table 15.12	Construction: Relevant embedded design mitigation and standard good practice measures, their purpose and the securing mechanisms	46
Table 15.13	Operation: Relevant embedded design mitigation and standard good practice measures, their purpose and the securing mechanisms	48
Table 15.14	Additional mitigation identified to date in relation to the Socio-economics and communities assessment	54

15 Socio-economics and communities

15.1 Introduction

- 15.1.1 This chapter of the Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) Report provides the preliminary assessment of likely significant effects on socio-economics and communities from the construction and operation of the proposed **SESRO Project** (the Project, as detailed in Chapter 2: Project description).
- 15.1.2 Within this chapter, aspect-specific sections are included on:
- Legislation, policy and guidance (Section 15.2)
 - Consultation, engagement and scoping (Section 15.3)
 - Assessment methodology (Section 15.4)
 - Study area (Section 15.5)
 - Baseline conditions (Section 15.6)
 - Project parameters, assumptions and limitations (Section 15.7)
 - Embedded design mitigation and standard good practice (Section 15.8)
 - Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects (Section 15.9)
 - Next steps (Section 15.10)
- 15.1.3 This chapter considers potential effects associated with the disruption of access, amenity, potential land take and economic effects from the construction and operation of the Project.
- 15.1.4 Potential effects are considered in respect to receptors including local residents, communities, businesses, community facilities, walking/cycling/horse riding (WCH) provision, and economic receptors.
- 15.1.5 As noted in Chapter 4: Approach to the environmental assessment, the overall benefit of Thames Water's Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP), including SESRO and T2ST, to the economy, communities and human health is recognised in terms of delivering long term reliable and resilient water supply to customers across the South East region. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Project does not revisit these regional beneficial effects.
- 15.1.6 This chapter should be read in conjunction with Chapter 2: Project description and other chapters of key relevance, namely:
- Chapter 6: Aquatic ecology which assesses potential effects on watercourses, wetlands, and aquatic species, informed by water quality, hydrology and habitat data. These inform effects on local communities relying on water bodies for recreation, livelihoods or cultural value.
 - Chapter 9: Landscape and visual which evaluates changes to landscape character and visual amenity including views from key locations and impacts on designated landscapes. This informs assessment in relation to visual quality and amenity, influencing community identity, sense of place and attractiveness of the area for residents, visitors and tourism.

- Chapter 12: Traffic and transport which assesses changes in traffic flows, access and transport infrastructure, including implications for road safety and connectivity for all users.
- Chapter 13: Air quality which considers levels of pollutant concentrations and deposition rates which inform the assessment of quality of life and potential impacts on residential areas.
- Chapter 14: Noise and vibration which assesses noise and vibration from construction and operation, assessing potential impacts on sensitive receptors, including residential areas.
- Chapter 16: Human health which provides an assessment of potential effects on physical and mental health, considering environmental, social and economic determinants of health.

15.1.7 This chapter is supported by the following figures and appendices:

- Figure 15.1: Study area Accessibility and Land Take (500m and 5km)
- Figure 15.2: Study area Amenity (5km)
- Figure 15.3: Study area Economics (local authority and county level)
- Figure 15.4: Public Rights of Way, national and local routes (including cycling routes)
- Figure 15.5: Residential dwellings, community facilities, business and tourism receptors
- Figure 15.6: Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects
- Appendix 15.1: Preliminary assessment of effects for Socio-economics and communities

15.1.8 This PEI Report does not constitute a draft Environmental Statement (ES). Assessments reported within this PEI Report chapter are considered a reasonable 'worst case' as a precautionary approach has been taken where design, construction or baseline information is being developed. Nevertheless, the preliminary assessment is considered sufficiently robust to enable consultees to understand the likely significant environmental effects of the Project, based on current design information and understanding of the baseline environment. Gaps in information identified within the PEI Report will be considered and addressed as part of the assessment during the production of the ES, as noted in Section 15.10: Next steps.

15.1.9 Where initial likely significant effects are identified at this stage, these may ultimately be determined as not significant in the ES once data gaps are addressed and the design and mitigation are further developed. The ES will be submitted with the Development Consent Order (DCO) application and will provide the final assessment of likely significant effects; this will be informed by the ongoing EIA process and ongoing consultation and engagement.

15.2 Legislation, policy and guidance

15.2.1 Table 15.1 lists the legislation, policy and guidance relevant to socio-economics and communities for the Project and specifies where in the PEI Report information is provided in relation to these. A full policy compliance assessment will be presented within the Planning Statement as part of the DCO application.

15.2.2 National Policy Statements (NPS) form the principal policy for developments progressing through the Planning Act 2008 process. The NPS for Water Resources Infrastructure

(NPSWRI) is the primary NPS for the Project. In addition, the Secretary of State must also have regard to any other matters which they think are both important and relevant to the decision and this could include regional and local planning policies.

- 15.2.3 The Project is located mainly within the Vale of White Horse District, with the exception of the far eastern extent on the eastern bank of the River Thames, which falls within the South Oxfordshire District. The Project is wholly within the county of Oxfordshire. The regional and local planning policies most relevant to the assessment within this chapter are included in Table 15.1.

Table 15.1 Relevant legislation, policy and guidance for socio-economics and communities

Legislation, policy or guidance description	Relevance to assessment	Where in the PEI Report is information provided to address this
Legislation		
Water Industry Act 1991/Code of Practice on Conservation, Access and Recreation This is the primary Act in relation to the regulation of the supply of water. Section 3 details general duties to facilitate public access to open spaces and facilities managed by the water undertaker, including due consideration of the potential impact of proposals on the amenity of both rural and urban areas.	Sets out expectations regarding the provision of public access and facilities for leisure and recreation purposes for water undertakers.	The legislation has been used to guide the embedded design mitigation and good practice which is set out in Section 15.8: Embedded design mitigation and standard good practice.
National Policy Statement for Water Resources Infrastructure (NPSWRI)		
Paragraph 4.13.3 Impacts during construction and operational phases should be considered, such as job creation, increased spending in local economies, visual impacts, and traffic and transport impacts on local communities and amenities.	Sets out the socio-economic effects considered appropriate and included in the assessment.	The policy has been used to guide the assessment methodology which is set out in Section 15.4: Assessment methodology. The assessment of these effects is provided in Section 15.9: Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects.
Paragraph 4.13.4 Existing socio-economic conditions in the surrounding area should be described following appropriate consultation, and should refer to how the developments socio-economic impacts correlate with local planning policies. Existing	Sets out principles and good practice guidance for assessing socio-economic effects.	Local planning policies are set out in this table (Table 15.1). Existing socio-economic conditions in the surrounding area are described in Section 15.6: Baseline

Legislation, policy or guidance description	Relevance to assessment	Where in the PEI Report is information provided to address this
demographics within the area should be described and impacts on equalities groups should be assessed. Likely significant positive and negative socio-economic or equalities impacts should be assessed as part of an ES		conditions. Likely significant beneficial and adverse socio-economic effects are assessed in Section 15.9: Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects.
Paragraph 4.13.5 The assessment should cover any socio-economic impacts appropriate to the proposed development. Examples include: • the creation of jobs and training opportunities • the provision of educational and visitor facilities • the impact of the proposed new facility on tourism, local businesses or local services • opportunities to provide a direct water supply to local business water users	Sets out the socio-economic effects considered appropriate and included in the assessment.	The policy has been used to guide the assessment methodology which is set out in Section 15.4: Assessment methodology. The assessment of these effects is provided in Section 15.9: Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects.
Paragraph 4.13.6 Socio-economic impacts may be linked to other impacts such as visual impacts. Socio-economic impacts may also have an impact on the local economy and local businesses. Impacts should be included in assessments where relevant.	Sets out the socio-economic effects considered appropriate and included in the assessment.	The policy has been used to guide the assessment methodology which is set out in Section 15.4: Assessment methodology. The assessment of these effects is provided in Section 15.9: Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects.
Paragraph 4.13.7 Cumulative impacts on communities should be assessed, taking into account other infrastructure projects in the region scheduled for the same period.	The approach to assessing cumulative effects considers other infrastructure projects within the region with a similar timeframe.	The approach to assessing cumulative effects is detailed in the assessment methodology set out in Section 15.4: Assessment methodology. Further information on cumulative effects is

Legislation, policy or guidance description	Relevance to assessment	Where in the PEI Report is information provided to address this
		provided in Chapter 20 Cumulative effects assessment.
Other national policy		
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), 2024) - Paragraph 198 Sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Ensures that new developments take into account the likely effects on health, living conditions, and the natural environment, as well as their potential sensitivity to impacts arising from the development. It outlines the need to mitigate adverse impacts resulting from noise and to identify and protect tranquil areas that offer recreational and amenity value.	Sets out the socio-economic effects related to amenity to be included in the assessment and expectations for mitigation. Chapter 16: Human health covers effects related to health and living conditions.	The policy has been used to guide the assessment methodology which is set out in Section 15.4: Assessment methodology. The policy will also be considered in other chapters which need to be read in conjunction with this chapter as outlined in paragraph 15.1.6. The assessment of these effects is provided in Section 15.9: Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects.
NPPF - Paragraph 105 Details the need for public rights of way and access to be protected.	Sets out the effects to be included in the socio-economic assessment.	The policy has been used to guide the assessment methodology which is set out in Section 15.4: Assessment methodology. The assessment of these effects is provided in Section 15.9: Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects.
NPPF - Paragraph 103 Details the importance of access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity for communities.	Sets out the effects to be included in the socio-economic assessment.	The policy has been used to guide the assessment methodology which is set out in Section 15.4: Assessment methodology. The assessment of these

Legislation, policy or guidance description	Relevance to assessment	Where in the PEI Report is information provided to address this
		effects is provided in Section 15.9: Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects.
Regional and local policy		
South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041 (submission version – Plan is currently subject to Local Plan Examination) Contains developing planning policies that help address the climate emergency, restore nature, and meet the needs of residents. Policy IN7 – South East Strategic Reservoir Option (SESRO) safeguarding Outlines the Councils' expectations for the reservoir. This includes mitigating the impact of construction on local people; providing a construction management plan; providing an employment and skills plan, and a plan setting out how the workforce will be accommodated. In relation to recreation, the policy states the reservoir should include sport and recreation uses with a jetty and boathouse, cycle and walking trails and interpretation boards for visitors. The recreation should be accessible for disabled users and contain an education and visitor centre.	Sets out the Councils' expectations around mitigation and the provision of recreational amenities, which are being considered as part of the current Project design detailed in Chapter 2: Project description, and included within the assessment.	This has been used to guide the embedded design mitigation and good practice which is set out in Section 15.8: Embedded design mitigation and standard good practice.
South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011-2035 ENV12 Pollution - Impact of Development on Human Health, the Natural Environment and/or Local Amenity (Potential Sources of Pollution) Details the need to assess impacts on human health and amenity from sources including noise, emissions, and pollution. Local effects and neighbouring uses should be considered when assessing impacts.	Sets out the effects to be included in the socio-economic assessment. Chapter 16: Human health covers effects related to health and living conditions.	The policy has been used to guide the assessment methodology which is set out in Section 15.4: Assessment methodology. The policy will also be considered in other chapters which need to be read in conjunction with this chapter as outlined in

Legislation, policy or guidance description	Relevance to assessment	Where in the PEI Report is information provided to address this
		paragraph 15.1.6. The assessment of these effects is provided in Section 15.9: Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects.
Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 Sets out the spatial strategy and strategic policies for the district to deliver sustainable development. Core Policy 14: Strategic Water Storage Reservoirs Outlines the Council's expectation for the reservoir. This includes mitigating the impact of construction on local people, the environment, and roads. It also includes promoting recreational uses of the reservoir, including measures to avoid or mitigate adverse effects identified through the environmental impact assessment.	Sets out the Council's expectations around mitigation and the provision of recreational amenities, which are being considered as part of the current Project design detailed in Chapter 2: Project description, and included within the assessment.	This has been used to guide the embedded design mitigation and good practice which is set out in Section 15.8: Embedded design mitigation and standard good practice.
East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan (2021-2031) Sets out specific planning policies for East Hanney. EHNP13 Community Facilities and Infrastructure Details the need to address impacts arising from increased usage of existing community facilities and requires proposals to be supported by appropriate onsite and off-site infrastructure and services.	Sets out expectations regarding consideration and mitigation of effects related to existing community facilities.	This has been used to guide the embedded design mitigation and good practice which is set out in Section 15.8: Embedded design mitigation and standard good practice. The assessment of effects on community facilities is provided in Section 15.9: Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects.
Guidance		
The Additionality Guide (Homes and Communities Agency, 2014) Note: Although the Additionality Guide was withdrawn in 2022, there is no alternative or equivalent guidance, and it	The assessment of additionality of local economic growth uses the methodology from the guidance.	The guidance has been used in the assessment of economic effects set out in Section 15.9:

Legislation, policy or guidance description	Relevance to assessment	Where in the PEI Report is information provided to address this
remains widely accepted as a definitive source for employment additionality estimation. Sets out guidance on how to assess the additional impact or additionality of local economic growth.		Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects.
Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA 112 (Population and Human Health) (Highways England, 2020) Sets out the requirements for assessing and reporting the environmental effects on population and health from construction, operation and maintenance of highways projects.	Although the guidance specifically applies to highways projects, it still provides good practice guidance for assessing and reporting environmental effects for projects more generally relating to population. It is therefore relevant to the assessment of socio-economics and communities.	The guidance has been used to develop the assessment methodology which is set out in Section 15.4: Assessment methodology.
DMRB LA104 (Environmental Assessment and Monitoring (Highways England, 2020) Sets out the requirements for environmental assessment of projects, including reporting and monitoring of significant adverse environmental effects.	Although the guidance specifically applies to highways projects, it still provides good practice guidance for reporting and monitoring significant adverse environmental effects for projects more generally. It is therefore relevant to the assessment of socio-economics and communities.	The guidance has been used to develop the assessment methodology which is set out in Section 15.4: Assessment methodology.
Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Socio-economic assessment and improving EIA (IEMA, 2014) An article published by IEMA providing good practice guidance on socio-economic assessments.	Sets out principles and good practice guidance for assessing socio-economic effects.	The guidance has been used to develop the assessment methodology which is set out in Section 15.4: Assessment methodology.
IEMA Socio-economic Impact Assessment (IEMA, 2021) Provides a framework for undertaking socio-economic impact assessments	Sets out principles and good practice guidance for assessing socio-economic effects.	The guidance has been used to develop the assessment methodology which is set out in Section 15.4: Assessment methodology.

15.3 Consultation, engagement and scoping

- 15.3.1 Feedback from consultation and engagement is used to define the assessment approach and to ensure that appropriate baseline information is used. Feedback is also used to drive the design of the Project to avoid, prevent and reduce any likely environmental effects. In particular, feedback from key stakeholders has informed the Project's proposed mitigation measures. Specific mitigation measures relevant to the Socio-economics and communities assessment are summarised in Section 15.8: Embedded design mitigation and standard good practice of this chapter. Engagement is ongoing and will continue to inform the EIA and design process.

Scoping Opinion

- 15.3.2 The EIA Scoping Report (Thames Water, 2024) was issued to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on 28 August 2024. PINS provided its EIA Scoping Opinion (The Planning Inspectorate, 2024) on 8 October 2024, which included feedback from consultation bodies that it formally consulted.
- 15.3.3 Table 15.2 captures the key Scoping Opinion comments received from PINS and other key comments received from consultation bodies relevant to the Socio-economics and communities assessment, along with the Applicant's response to these. Key activities to inform the final assessment that will be undertaken between the PEI Report and ES are covered in Section 15.10: Next steps. The full consultee comments on the EIA Scoping Report and responses to these will be provided in the ES.

Table 15.2 Key Scoping feedback for socio-economics and communities

Stakeholder	Scoping comment	Applicant response
PINS	3.12.1 – In relation to the matter which has been scoped out relating to the impact to public services during operation, the Inspectorate agrees to scope this matter out provided that the anticipated workforce is quantified in the ES and this demonstrates that it will be sufficiently small not to impact public services.	The anticipated workforce will be quantified in the ES.
PINS	3.12.2 - In relation to the matter which has been scoped out relating to the temporary or permanent amenity effects from breeding flies, the Inspectorate agrees to scope this matter out.	Noted.
PINS	3.12.3 – The Inspectorate notes that the Applicant should make effort to agree the approach of the assessment with the relevant consultation bodies, to ensure it is appropriate to the construction, operation and maintenance of the Proposed Development	The Applicant intends to discuss and agree the approach with the relevant consultation bodies through the proposed Health and Community Technical Liaison Group.

Non-statutory public consultation

- 15.3.4 Non-statutory public consultation on the emerging proposals for the Project was undertaken with stakeholders and local communities in Summer 2024. Formal responses to this non-statutory consultation feedback have been provided within the 'Statement of Response' (Thames Water, 2025). Feedback relevant to the Socio-economics and communities assessment has been taken into account where appropriate.

Ongoing engagement

- 15.3.5 This section summarises the ongoing technical engagement for socio-economics and communities with key stakeholders since EIA scoping.
- 15.3.6 Table 15.3 provides a summary of the ongoing technical engagement for socio-economics and communities, including the issues raised and outcomes for the assessment.

Table 15.3 Key ongoing engagement for socio-economics and communities

Stakeholder	Topics	Outcome
Enterprise Oxfordshire	Engagement has been exploratory based around the following matters: • Community Employment Plans (CEPs) • Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan and shared skills brochures • Discussions around aligning the Project with other large-scale infrastructure projects in Oxfordshire regarding skills development and shared training facilities • Oxfordshire Tourism Destination Strategy • Social Contract Programme and Apprenticeship Levy • Oxfordshire Training Provider Network • Engagement with schools and colleges about the SESRO Project and potential employment pathways • Integrating the SESRO Project into virtual careers platforms across secondary schools and colleges (Oxfordshire Careers Hub)	Enterprise Oxfordshire expressed strong interest in supporting the Project's employment outcomes and will continue to engage on CEPs and other matters to help shape education and employment outcomes for the Project. Further engagement will be undertaken to co-design early careers and outreach activity, and to help maximise skills and employment opportunities for residents and SMEs.

Stakeholder	Topics	Outcome
	and Online Careers platforms)	
Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP)	Discussed inclusive employment strategy and approach.	Further engagement will be undertaken. Opportunity for the SESRO Project to align with inclusive economic equity goals and to align its employment strategy to support inclusive hiring.
Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)	Exploratory meeting to discuss opportunities for collaboration on job matching, targeted recruitment, and training initiatives using DWP funding.	Local Employment Hub proposed with DWP and Jobcentre Plus to connect jobseekers to the SESRO Project's roles and training.
South Oxfordshire Council and Vale of White Horse Council	Discussed the Councils' district-level priorities around employment and skills and the integration with existing plans.	A monthly joint meeting will be held to provide updates and gather local priorities around workforce development.
Abingdon and Witney College	Discussed opportunities to collaborate including co-designing a SESRO-specific training programme and T-Level and placement opportunities.	Further engagement planned for strategic collaboration.
Activate Learning	Discussed opportunities to collaborate on training/apprenticeships and T-Level placements.	Committed to collaboration. Awaiting further information for further engagement to design tailored support.
Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)	Discussed opportunities around skills and training provision for the construction sector.	CITB to advise on grants and initiatives that the SESRO Project could leverage.
Careys Construction	Discussed groundworks bootcamp model for plant operatives.	Space and training delivery options to be explored further.
UTC Oxfordshire	Discussed opportunities for apprenticeship and career promotion.	Committed to collaboration. Further engagement will be undertaken.
TV Chamber of Commerce	Discussed the following matters: • Workforce Development Partnership (WDP) focused on construction and skills required for the workforce. • Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).	Opportunity to align the Project with WDP actions and LSIP objectives and engage with further stakeholders.

Stakeholder	Topics	Outcome
	Logistics implications of the Project.	
Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT)	Discussed logistics needs of the Project.	Potential for further sector-based engagement to follow.
Adviza	Discussed providing support for vulnerable and marginalised groups.	Adviza suggested referral routes through community networks.
Oxfordshire Professional Education	Discussed apprenticeship coordination and corporate connections.	Potential for corporate engagement via employer links.
Oxfordshire County Council	Discussed opportunities for entrepreneurs and start-ups via workshops and business support.	Further engagement to be undertaken linking with the SME supply chain strategy.
John Mason School	Discussed opportunities to support mock interviews and apprenticeships for Year 11 students.	Strong interest in partnership with the SESRO Project for education engagement. Opportunities for ongoing collaboration and work placements for students.
HS2	Knowledge sharing around lessons learnt from education engagement via Tracks into Construction. Comparative legacy and skills approach for major infrastructure.	Further knowledge sharing to be undertaken. Learnings from HS2 Legacy Strategy can inform the Project's approach to training and employment.
HM Prison and Probation Service	Discussion around opportunities for prison leavers and release on temporary license (ROTL) candidates	Further engagement to be undertaken given the opportunity for the Project to support priority groups via employment and training pathways.
Sofea	Discussion around pre-employment and apprenticeship pathways for vulnerable young people as well as employability programme, volunteering and youth engagement.	Further engagement planned given opportunities to develop inclusive training offers aligned with the Project.
Oxford North Development	Discussed workforce development collaboration across infrastructure providers.	Potential to develop a steering group for major infrastructure employers in Oxfordshire to address skills gaps and align training in terms of a place-based approach.
Health and Community Technical Liaison Group –	Engagement will be undertaken prior to ES - the approach and	Engagement will be undertaken prior to ES.

Stakeholder	Topics	Outcome
this will include relevant officers from Vale of White Horse Council, South Oxfordshire Council, Berkshire Council, and Oxfordshire County Council as well as relevant health stakeholders (UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), Office for Health Improvements and Disparities (OHID) and the Bucks, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board)	methodology for socio-economic and communities assessment will be discussed and agreed with stakeholders.	

15.4 Assessment methodology

- 15.4.1 The project-wide approach to the assessment methodology is set out in Chapter 4: Approach to environmental assessment. This has informed the approach used in this Socio-economics and communities assessment.
- 15.4.2 This section outlines the methodology followed to assess the likely significant effects of the Project in relation to socio-economics and communities including:
- Effects scoped into the assessment
 - Study area
 - Criteria for determining likely significant effects
 - Assessment of cumulative effects
- 15.4.3 Any further data collection, studies or additional assessments that are still to be undertaken to inform the ES are set out in Section 15.10: Next steps.
- 15.4.4 The assessment methodology followed for the socio-economics and communities aspect evaluates potential effects on a range of socio-economic and community receptors. The methodology applies to both the construction and operational phases of the Project. The following important guidance and standards have been considered as part of the assessment methodology:
- IEMA Socio-economic Impact Assessment (IEMA, 2014 and 2021)
 - DMRB LA 112 (Population and Human Health) and LA104 (Environmental Assessment and Monitoring (Highways England, 2020)

Scope of the assessment

- 15.4.5 The scope of the assessment has been informed by the EIA Scoping process, including the EIA Scoping Report (Thames Water, 2024) and Scoping Opinion (The Planning Inspectorate, 2024), combined with subsequent changes to the Project design and an enhanced understanding of the baseline environment.

- 15.4.6 Matters that are scoped out of the Socio-economics and communities assessment are documented within Appendix 4.1: Matters scoped out of the EIA, along with justification for this scoping approach. In summary, matters scoped out are:
- Temporary or permanent amenity effects from flies breeding in the reservoir and wetlands during construction and operation
 - Permanent effects on public services during operation
- 15.4.7 Effects that are scoped in for the Socio-economics and communities assessment relevant to the construction phase are:
- **Amenity** - temporary or permanent amenity effects to community, residential or commercial receptors (including development and commercial land) due to increased noise, visual, air quality, or traffic effects acting in combination.
 - **Access** - temporary or permanent closure or diversions to WCH provision and temporary or permanent impacts on access to residential, community and commercial receptors (including development and commercial land).
 - **Land take** - temporary or permanent land take and associated impacts on community and residential receptors, including on provision of greenspace and community land, and temporary or permanent land take and associated impacts on commercial receptors (including development and commercial land).
 - **Economic** – this includes the following:
 - **Employment** - temporary employment effects arising during the construction phase.
 - **Economic activity** - temporary or permanent effects on the local economy from changes to economic investment in the region – including potential increase in Gross Value Added (GVA), which can be defined as the performance or value of an economic activity.
 - **Skills** - temporary or permanent skill or educational effects arising from construction – including training and experience for the local/regional population.
 - **Accommodation** - temporary effects on the housing market and temporary accommodation (tourism) due to the temporary increase in population associated with the construction workforce.
 - **Public services** - temporary effects on public services (education, health and emergency) due to the temporary increase in population associated with the construction workforce.
- 15.4.8 Effects that are scoped in for the Socio-economics and communities assessment relevant to the operation phase are:
- **Amenity** - permanent amenity effects to community, residential or commercial receptors (including development and commercial land), due to increased noise, visual, air quality, or traffic effects acting in combination.
 - **Access** - permanent closure or diversions to WCH provision, and permanent impacts on access to residential, community and commercial receptors (including development and commercial land).
 - **Land take** - permanent land take and associated impacts on community and residential receptors including provision of greenspace and community land, and land take and

associated impacts on commercial receptors (including development and commercial land).

- **Economic** – this includes the following:
 - **Employment** - permanent employment effects from operation on the local/regional population.
 - **Economic activity** - permanent effects on the local economy from changes to economic investment in the region – including potential increase in GVA.
 - **Skills** - permanent skill or educational effects arising from operation – including training and experience for the local/regional population.
 - **Accommodation** - permanent effects on accommodation.

15.4.9 Effects that have been scoped out for the Socio-economics and communities assessment are:

- **Permanent effects on public services** – the number of workers directly relating to the operation of the reservoir and associated facilities delivered by the SESRO Project would be relatively small compared to the construction phase.
- **Temporary or permanent amenity effects from flies breeding in the reservoir and wetlands** – given the context of the SESRO Project, distance from existing sensitive receptors and that fly swarms are temporary and short-lived, it is considered that significant amenity effects associated with flies are unlikely and this matter has, therefore, been scoped out of the EIA.

Study area

- 15.4.10 The methodology for defining the study area for each type of effect (access, land take, amenity, and economic) in the Socio-economics and communities assessment is based on a combination of regulatory guidance (DMRB LA112 2020 Standards for Highways, 2020a), professional judgment, and consideration of the potential scale and extent of the Project's effects. The selection of study areas reflects both the geographic scope of potential effects and the specific nature of each receptor being assessed.
- 15.4.11 Study areas were defined in the EIA Scoping Report based on the EIA Scoping Boundary. These have been reviewed and updated in the context of the draft Order limits for the PEI Report.
- 15.4.12 Important factors influencing the study area definition include the proximity of communities to the draft Order limits, the likelihood of significant effects occurring beyond the draft Order limits, and professional judgment to adapt the boundary to reflect functional (settlement inclusivity) and administrative (local authority) boundaries.
- 15.4.13 To ensure a robust and proportionate assessment, the study areas were tailored to the specific type of effect being considered - access, land take, amenity, and economic effects. In some cases, wider study areas were identified to align with assessments in related aspects, such as Chapter 12 Traffic and transport, ensuring consistency across the EIA. This multi-tiered approach allows the study area to reflect both local and regional scales of effect, enabling a comprehensive assessment of the Project's effects on communities.

- 15.4.14 For access and land take effects, the study area consists of a 0.5km buffer from the draft Order limits. In addition, a wider study area of 5km aligning with impacts identified by the Traffic and transport assessment (Chapter 12) is applied to reflect those impacts outside of the 0.5km study area, such as those arising from displaced traffic. For baseline data collection, a buffer of 5km surrounding the draft Order limits has been used to reflect the wider study area.
- 15.4.15 For amenity effects, the assessment will draw on the outputs of other relevant assessments, namely Chapter 9 Landscape and visual, Chapter 12 Traffic and transport, Chapter 13 Air quality and Chapter 14 Noise and vibration, therefore the widest extent of study area from these aspects is applied for baseline data collection purposes, in this case a 5km study area.
- 15.4.16 For economic effects, the study area includes local authority (Vale of White Horse district and South Oxfordshire district) and county (Oxfordshire) level boundaries depending on the data availability for relevant indicators. A number of datasets in relation to economic effects are only available at local authority level such as average weekly income and GVA.

Methodology

Baseline

Data collection

- 15.4.17 Baseline data collection has been undertaken to obtain information over the study areas. This section provides the approach to collecting baseline data.
- 15.4.18 The following data sources have been accessed to inform the baseline with respect to socio-economics and communities:
- Office for National Statistics (ONS) Census Data (ONS, 2021)
 - Ordnance Survey (OS) Maps (OS, 2023a)
 - Addressbase Plus (OS, 2024)
 - Open Street Map (OpenStreetMap, 2024)
 - PRoW Map (FootPathMap, 2024)
 - National Cycle Network (Sustrans, 2024)
 - Global Heat Map (Strava, 2024)
 - NOMIS Annual Survey Hours and Earnings (NOMIS, 2024a)
 - NOMIS Business Register and Employment Survey (NOMIS, 2024b)
 - NOMIS Annual Population Survey (NOMIS, 2025).
- 15.4.19 In addition to these data sources, the Socio-economics and communities assessment also draws on environmental baseline data collated for other aspects, specifically, baseline data presented in Chapter 6: Aquatic ecology, Chapter 9: Landscape and visual effects, Chapter 12: Traffic and transport, Chapter 13: Air quality, Chapter 14: Noise and vibration, and Chapter 16: Human health. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out separately from the PEI Report.

Site surveys

- 15.4.20 The study area baseline surveys undertaken for socio-economics and communities were:

- Public Right of Way (PRoW) surveys (undertaken in April 2025 to inform the assessment in Chapter 12 Traffic and transport) to validate the range of users and frequency of usage.

Future baseline

- 15.4.21 The assessment has considered the likely evolution of the baseline without the implementation of the Project. The future baseline for the Socio-economics and communities assessment includes the following:
- Any relevant other developments expected to be operational prior to or during the construction and operation of the Project which would introduce new receptors.
 - Changes in population levels, subsequent changes in labour supply and associated job change, including those arising from other major developments and growth strategies.
- 15.4.22 The following data sources have been accessed to inform the future baseline with respect to socio-economics and communities:
- Refer to Chapter 20: Cumulative effects for the methodology used to prepare the list of other developments relevant to the future baseline.

Criteria for the assessment of significance

- 15.4.23 The methodology for assessing effects is based on the principle that the environmental effects of the Project, in relation to a receptor, should be determined by identifying the receptor's sensitivity, assessing the magnitude of impact the Project would have on the receptor and then using professional judgement in combining these two elements to identify the significance of effect. The methodology for assessing effects is in line with Chapter 4: Approach to environmental assessment.
- 15.4.24 The assessment considers four different types of potential effects:
- **Access:** The access assessment evaluates how changes in traffic, parking, public transport, and walking/cycling provision impact access to community, commercial, and residential receptors within a 5km study area. Reduced access can result in community severance i.e. a reduction in the ability of community members to move around their community to access facilities and resources. The analysis considers the needs of different user groups, including older people, disabled individuals, and children, as well as the availability of alternative facilities. Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping is used to assess the extent of change in access by examining key transport links between receptors and users. The assessment draws on traffic and transport data to determine the magnitude of impact, ensuring that changes affecting community access are accurately identified. The assessment differs from the Chapter 12 Traffic and transport aspect as it considers the social and community implications of the effect rather than just movement efficiency, safety and delay.
 - **Land take:** The land take assessment analyses the extent of temporary or permanent restriction in the ability of a user to use a property or facility which in turn can affect the operation and commercial viability of that property or facility. Relevant receptors include community, residential, and commercial receptors including parks, PRoW, residential land, agricultural land, and businesses within the draft Order limits. GIS mapping determines the magnitude of impact by assessing ownership boundaries and proximity to the draft Order limits. The assessment incorporates research into individual

receptors to explore potential mitigation measures where there is likely to be direct land take.

- **Amenity:** The amenity assessment examines how the Project may influence public benefits that contribute to quality of life, including environmental factors such as air quality, noise, and visual changes. Sensitive community receptors, such as schools and hospitals, may be particularly sensitive to change. In addition, commercial receptors which are reliant on amenity features (e.g. hotels with scenic views) are also relevant. Residential receptors can also be affected. The assessment draws on the outputs from other environmental aspects, including Chapter 9 Landscape and visual, Chapter 12 Traffic and transport, Chapter 13 Air quality and Chapter 14 Noise and vibration, to ascertain if reported significant impacts could result in an overall amenity effect for residential, community and commercial receptors. Professional judgment is applied when combining the different assessment outputs.
- **Economic:** The economic assessment evaluates the Project's impact on employment, economic activity, skills development, accommodation, and public services. Changes in economic activity are measured using GVA estimates based on project expenditure at regional and national levels. At this stage, a high-level qualitative assessment of job creation during construction and operation has been undertaken based on the construction and operational workforce estimates. A quantitative assessment of direct, indirect and induced employment during construction and operation and the associated impacts on GVA will be provided as part of the ES. Skill development opportunities including apprenticeships and workforce training will also be explored. The estimation of changes in skills will depend on commitments or assumptions on local employment associated with the Project's construction and operation. The assessment of the impact of the construction workforce on the availability of accommodation and public services due to increased demand will be undertaken based on available information and assumptions relating to construction workforce numbers and accommodation arrangements.

Assessment of sensitivity

15.4.25 The socio-economic and community receptors which have been considered include:

- **Residential receptors:** private property and housing including gardens, private drives, and land allocated for housing.
- **Community receptors:** community land (e.g. common land, village greens, open green space, allotments, sports pitches, parks) and assets (e.g. village halls, education facilities, religious facilities, medical facilities).
- **Commercial receptors:** existing businesses and employment sites (including farm businesses and tourism receptors), and land allocated for business and employment.
- **Walkers, cyclists and horse riders (WCH) provision:** national routes, regional routes, local trails and PRow.
- **Economic receptors:**
 - **Employment:** level of unemployment is considered.
 - **Local/regional economic activity:** local or regional GVA is considered.
 - **Skills:** proportion of population with qualifications is considered.
 - **Accommodation:** depending on the size, phasing and management of the construction workforce required for the Project, receptors such as the local housing market and tourism accommodation is considered.

- **Public services:** health, education and emergency services (fire, ambulance, and police) may be affected by a temporary increase in population associated with the construction workforce required for the Project. Operation phase effects of workforce and visitors will also be considered.

15.4.26 Table 15.4 provides further detail on the criteria for establishing the sensitivity of receptors. These criteria are consistent with those set out in the EIA Scoping Report, with the exception of the percentages relating to residential receptors and economic receptors which have been removed and will not be used in the assessment. It is acknowledged that these percentages provide a starting point for establishing sensitivity. The percentages relating to residential and economic receptors could result in the sensitivity being skewed in a certain direction without allowing for the baseline context to be taken into account. Professional experience and judgement will therefore be applied to establish the level of sensitivity.

Table 15.4 Criteria for establishing the sensitivity of receptors

Sensitivity of receptor	Typical descriptors
Negligible	<i>Residential receptors: Not applicable (N/A)</i> <i>Community receptors:</i> 1. No or limited severance or access issues 2. Alternative facilities are available within the same community 3. The level of use is very infrequent (a few occasions yearly) 4. The land and assets are used by the minority (less than 50%) of the community <i>WCH provision: N/A</i> <i>Commercial receptors: N/A</i> <i>Economic receptors:</i> 1. Unemployment rate less than national/regional average 2. GVA per capita is higher than the national rate 3. Proportion of residents with highest level of qualification higher than national average 4. Private rented, owner-occupied, latent and tourism accommodation demand is less than the supply 5. Waiting times for public services are less than the national average
Low	<i>Residential receptors:</i> Project on unallocated sites providing housing with planning permission/in the planning process. <i>Community receptors:</i> 1. Limited existing severance between community and assets, with existing full Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 compliant access provision 2. Alternative facilities are available at a local level within the wider community 3. The level of use is infrequent (monthly or less frequent) 4. The land and assets are used by the minority (less than 50%) of the community 5. Users of the receptor have sufficient means and capacity to absorb the change

Sensitivity of receptor	Typical descriptors
	<i>WCH provision:</i> 1. Routes that have fallen into disuse through past severance, or that are scarcely used because they do not currently offer a meaningful route for either utility or recreational purposes, and/or 2. Rights of way for WCH crossing roads at grade with less than 4,000 vehicles per day. <i>Commercial receptors:</i> 1. Unallocated sites providing employment with planning permission/in the planning process 2. Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent) <i>Economic receptors:</i> 1. Unemployment is broadly in line with the national/regional average 2. GVA per capita is below or equal to national rate 3. Proportion of residents with highest level of qualification in line with national average 4. Private rented, owner-occupied, latent and tourism accommodation demand is equal to supply 5. Waiting times for public services are in line with the national average
Moderate	<i>Residential receptors:</i> 1. Houses or land allocated for housing located in a local authority area where the number of households is expected to increase by 2041 2. Existing housing and land allocated for housing (e.g. strategic housing sites) covering more than 1ha and / or more than 30 houses <i>Community receptors:</i> 1. There is severance of communities from their land or /assets but with existing access provision 2. Limited alternative facilities are available at a local level within adjacent communities 3. The level of use is reasonably frequent (monthly) 4. The land and assets are used by the majority (50% or more) of the community 5. Users of the receptor have limited ability to absorb the change <i>Commercial receptors:</i> 1. Existing employment sites and land allocated for employment (e.g. strategic employment sites) covering less than 1ha 2. Areas of land in which the enterprise is partially dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on a reasonably frequent basis (monthly) <i>WCH provision:</i>

Sensitivity of receptor	Typical descriptors
	1. PRow and other routes close to communities that are used for recreational purposes (e.g. dog walking), but for which alternative routes are available. These routes are likely to link to a wider network of routes to provide options for longer, recreational journeys, and / or, 2. Rights of way for WCH crossing roads at grade with more than 4,000 – 8,000 vehicles per day. <i>Economic receptors:</i> 1. Unemployment is in excess of the national/regional average 2. GVA per capita below national rate 3. Proportion of residents with highest level of qualification below national average 4. Private rented, owner-occupied, latent and tourism accommodation demand is equal to supply 5. Waiting times for public services are in line with the national average
High	<i>Residential receptors:</i> 1. Existing private property or land allocated for housing located in a local authority area where the number of households is expected to significantly increase by 2041 and/or, 2. Existing housing and land allocated for housing (e.g. strategic housing sites) covering more than 1ha and / or 30 houses. Note, private property and housing: a higher sensitivity value can be allocated where private property or housing provision is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution (e.g. private property in small rural villages) <i>Community receptors:</i> 1. Complete or substantial severance of communities from their land/assets, with limited or /no access provision 2. Alternatives are only available within the wider local planning authority or outside the local planning authority area 3. The level of use is frequent (daily or weekly) 4. The land and assets are used by the majority (50% or more) of the community 5. Users of the receptor has no or very little ability to absorb the change <i>Commercial receptors:</i> 1. Existing employment sites and land allocated for employment (e.g. strategic employment sites) covering more than 1ha 2. Commercial, development land and businesses: a higher sensitivity score can be allocated where a business is the main source of employment for a community with little/no provision for substitution 3. Areas of land in which the enterprise is dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure, and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required frequently (daily to weekly) <i>WCH provision:</i> 1. National or regional trails and routes that are used for both commuting and recreation that record frequent (daily) use. Limited or/ no potential for substitution

Sensitivity of receptor	Typical descriptors
	2. Users of the route have no or very little ability to absorb the change, for example, if these routes are used by vulnerable travellers such as the elderly, school children and people with disabilities, they could be disproportionately affected by small changes in the baseline due to potentially different needs 3. Rights of way for WCH crossing roads at grade with more than 8,000 vehicles per day <i>Economic receptors:</i> 1. Unemployment is considerably in excess of the national/regional average 2. Change in economic activity: GVA per capita below national rate 3. Proportion of residents with highest level of qualification considerably below national average 4. Private rented, owner-occupied, latent and tourism accommodation demand exceeds supply 5. Waiting times for public services above the national average

Magnitude of impact

- 15.4.27 The approach used to assess magnitude of impact for socio-economics and communities effects considers the nature and extent of impact upon receptors. The approach used is based on professional judgment and experience with reference to defined criteria that have been adapted from DMRB LA 112 (Standards for Highways, 2020a) and Socio-economic Impact Assessment (IEMA, 2021). Table 15.5 provides further detail on the criteria for assessing the magnitude of impact. These criteria are consistent with those set out in the EIA Scoping Report however the percentages relating to economic receptors have been removed and will not be used in the assessment. It is acknowledged that these percentages provide a starting point for assessing the magnitude of impact. The percentages could result in the magnitude of impact being skewed in a certain direction without allowing for the baseline context to be taken into account. An understanding of the local and regional economic profile combined with professional experience and judgement will therefore be applied to determine the magnitude of impact for economic receptors.
- 15.4.28 In relation to the assessment of amenity effects, the magnitude of impact is determined by a review of other assessments (Chapter 12 Traffic and transport, Chapter 13 Air quality, Chapter 14 Noise and vibration and Chapter 9 Landscape and visual). Only the medium and large magnitude categories are relevant for amenity effects given the assessment brings together two or more significant effects from other assessments. The receptors affected by amenity effects include residential, community and commercial.
- 15.4.29 The magnitude of impact for the economic assessment, in terms of skills, accommodation, and public services, is assigned using professional judgement taking into account the scale of the change, its duration, and whether the effect is direct or indirect. This follows the same magnitude scorings as outlined for residential, community and commercial receptors and WCH provision (high, medium, low, very low or no change).

Table 15.5 Criteria for assessing the magnitude of impact

Magnitude of impact	Description and nature of change
No change	No loss or alteration of access; no observable impact in either direction No change to the local or regional economy
Negligible	<i>Residential, community, and commercial receptors:</i> • Land take effect: Very minor loss or detrimental alteration to one or more characteristics, features or elements. e.g. acquisition of non-operational land or buildings not directly affecting the viability of property, community assets, and/or • Access effect: Very minor introduction (adverse) or removal (beneficial) of severance with ample access <i>WCH provision:</i> • Access effect: Less than 50 metres (m) increase (adverse) or decrease (beneficial) in WCH journey length <i>Economic receptors:</i> • Economic activity effect: Very minor change in GVA for the local or regional economy • Employment effect: Very minor change in employment for the local or regional economy
Small	<i>Residential, community, and commercial receptors:</i> • Land take effect: A discernible change in attributes, quality or vulnerability; minor loss of, or alteration to, one (or more) key characteristics, features or elements, e.g. amendment to access or acquisition of land resulting in changes to operating conditions that do not compromise overall viability of property, community assets, and/or • Access effect: Introduction (adverse) or removal (beneficial) of severance with adequate access provision <i>WCH provision:</i> • Access effect: More than 50m and up to 250m increase (adverse) or decrease (beneficial) in WCH journey length <i>Economic receptors:</i> • Economic activity effect: Minor change in GVA for the local or regional economy • Employment effect: Minor change in employment for the local or regional economy
Medium	<i>Residential, community, and commercial receptors:</i> • Land take effect: Partial loss of, or /damage to, important characteristics, features or elements, e.g. partial removal or substantial amendment to access or acquisition of land compromising viability of property, community assets, and/or • Access effect: Introduction (adverse) or removal (beneficial) of severe severance with limited or/ moderate access provision • Amenity effect: Two significant residual environmental effects including air quality; landscape and visual; noise and vibration; or traffic and transport.

Magnitude of impact	Description and nature of change
	<i>WCH provision:</i> - Access effect: More than 250m and up to 500m increase (adverse) or decrease (beneficial) in WCH journey length <i>Economic receptors:</i> - Economic activity effect: Moderate change in GVA for the local or regional economy - Employment effect: Moderate change in employment for the local or regional economy
Large	<i>Residential, community, and commercial receptors:</i> - Land take effect: loss of resource and/or quality and integrity of resource; severe damage to important characteristics, features or elements. e.g. direct acquisition and demolition of buildings and direct development of land to accommodate the Project - Access effect: Introduction (adverse) or removal (beneficial) of complete severance with no or /full access provision - Amenity effect: Three significant residual environmental effects including air quality; landscape and visual; noise and vibration; or traffic and transport. <i>WCH provision:</i> - Access effect: More than 500m increase (adverse) / decrease (beneficial) in WCH journey length <i>Economic receptors:</i> - Economic activity effect: Major change in GVA for the local or regional economy - Employment effect: Major change in employment for the local or regional economy

Significance of effect

- 15.4.30 The significance of effect is determined by combining the sensitivity of each receptor and the magnitude of impact. The resultant effects may be either adverse or beneficial, depending on the nature of the change. Table 15.6 shows how the sensitivity of a receptor and magnitude of impact are combined to deduce the significance of effect. Effects that are moderate or major are deemed to be significant.

Table 15.6 Significance matrix

Receptor sensitivity	Magnitude of impact				
	No change	Negligible	Small	Medium	Large
Negligible	None	Neutral	Neutral	Minor	Minor
Low	None	Neutral	Minor	Minor	Moderate (significant)
Moderate	None	Minor	Minor	Moderate (significant)	Moderate (significant)

Receptor sensitivity	Magnitude of impact				
	No change	Negligible	Small	Medium	Large
High	None	Minor	Moderate (significant)	Moderate (significant)	Major (significant)

- 15.4.31 For this preliminary assessment, the assessment of effects has assumed that ‘embedded design mitigation’ and ‘standard good practice mitigation’ relevant to the Socio-economics and communities assessment are in place (these measures are presented in Section 15.8: Embedded design mitigation and standard good practice). Nevertheless, as noted in Section 15.9: Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects, the preliminary assessment assumes that additional mitigation that may reduce any identified likely significant adverse effects is not applied, as the viability, nature, and extent of these are not confirmed at this stage in the EIA process. As a result, consideration of residual effects (those that remain after the implementation of all mitigation, including additional mitigation) has not been completed for this preliminary assessment; this will be undertaken in the ES. Additional mitigation that is being explored is presented in Section 15.10: Next steps.

Assessment of cumulative effects

- 15.4.32 The cumulative effects assessment approach for both inter- and intra-project cumulative effects is set out in Chapter 20: Cumulative effects. However, for this aspect an alternative approach to the assessment of inter-project cumulative effects has been undertaken for the different effects.
- 15.4.33 For access, land take and amenity effects, the Zone of Influence (ZOI) for the cumulative effects assessment is defined as the study area used in this assessment being a 0.5km buffer from the draft Order limits, plus the ZOI for other aspects that inform the Socio economic and communities assessment, including Chapter 12 Traffic and transport, Chapter 13 Air quality, Chapter 14 Noise and vibration, and Chapter 9 Landscape and visual. Effects derived from the Traffic and transport assessment are inherently cumulative as the relevant other developments are included in the future baseline for the traffic model (refer to Chapter 12: Traffic and transport for more detail). This assessment will take the same approach to cumulative effects as the Traffic and transport chapter.
- 15.4.34 The study area for economic effects (employment, economic activity, skills, accommodation and public services) covers the whole of Oxfordshire County. In order to enable a proportionate assessment of cumulative effects, and to avoid duplication of work completed as part of the local planning process, this assessment of cumulative effects is targeted to NSIPs within Oxfordshire County. It will also (at ES) include major developments within the local authority study area (Vale of White Horse district and South Oxfordshire district) which have been identified through engagement with the local authorities with a focus on major developments that generate comparable employment during construction and/or operation.
- 15.4.35 The outcomes of the inter-project cumulative effects assessment are reported in Chapter 20: Cumulative effects. The intra-project cumulative effects assessment is summarised within Chapter 20: Cumulative effects, and within Chapter 20 signposts are provided to the location of the intra-project cumulative effects assessment (where it has been possible to provide at this stage).

15.5 Study area

- 15.5.1 The study areas are defined according to the sensitivity of the receiving environment and the potential effects of the Project. The methodology used to define the study areas are outlined in Section 15.4: Assessment methodology above. The study areas for socio-economics and communities are shown in PEI Report Figures 15.1: Study Area Accessibility and Land Take (0.5km and 5km), 15.2: Study Area Amenity (5km) and 15.3: Study Area Economics (local authority and county level).
- 15.5.2 The study areas have changed since the EIA scoping stage as a result of changes to the design and the associated draft Order limits. See Chapter 2: Project description for details of the Project parameters and assumptions for the PEI Report.
- 15.5.3 The study areas for the four different types of potential effects are defined below:
- **Access:** – A 0.5km buffer surrounding the draft Order limits, including areas being considered for solar reprovion and A34 interchange area. This is referred to as the 0.5km study area. The 0.5km buffer may increase (up to 5km) or decrease based on the likelihood of significant effects occurring. This is possible given that there are settlements that are outside 0.5km of the draft Order limits (e.g. Abingdon or Marcham) but where residents may still be impacted in terms of access. In addition, a wider study area aligning with impacts identified by the Traffic and transport assessment (Chapter 12: Traffic and transport), is applied to reflect impacts outside of the 0.5km area, such as those arising from displaced traffic. This is referred to as the 5km study area. This study area may change in the ES depending on the outcomes of the traffic modelling.
 - **Land take:** – A 0.5km buffer surrounding the draft Order limits, including areas being considered for solar reprovion and A34 interchange area. This is referred to as the 0.5km study area and reflects the likely extent of land take effects.
 - **Amenity:** – The study area will align with other disciplines that inform the amenity assessment: Chapter 9: Landscape and visual, Chapter 12: Traffic and transport, Chapter 13: Air quality and Chapter 14: Noise and vibration. The widest extent of study area is applied, in this case a 5km study area from draft Order limits, including areas being considered for solar reprovion and A34 interchange area. Therefore, a 5km study area is applied for amenity effects which is reduced from the EIA Scoping stage where the study area was 10km. This change reflects updated draft Order Limits and aligns the Amenity study area with the maximum extent of effects from other relevant technical aspects.
 - **Economic:** – The study area for economic effects is at local authority (Vale of White Horse district and South Oxfordshire district) and county (Oxfordshire) level. There has been no change since the EIA Scoping stage.

15.6 Baseline conditions

- 15.6.1 To assess the significance of effects arising from the Project in relation to socio-economics and communities it is necessary to identify and understand the baseline environment within the study areas. This provides a reference state against which any potential effects on socio-economics and communities can be assessed. This section includes an overview on

existing and expected future baseline conditions, covering population and community, commercial and economy, and future baseline.

Existing baseline

- 15.6.2 This assessment has considered the known receptors within the study areas. Key existing baseline data for socio-economics and communities are included in PEI Report Figures 15.4: Public Rights of Way, National and Local Routes (including cycling routes), and 15.5: Residential dwellings, community facilities, business and tourism Receptors.

Population and community overview

Demographic overview

- 15.6.3 The majority of the draft Order limits boundary falls within the district of Vale of White Horse. A small section within the north-east of the draft Order limits boundary falls within the district of South Oxfordshire.
- 15.6.4 Vale of White Horse is one of the five Local Authority Districts (LADs) in the county of Oxfordshire. The district is largely rural, with scattered villages and towns. Vale of White Horse lies to the south-west of Oxford, with its northern boundary following the River Thames. The population is predominantly White (90.8%). The remainder of the population is 4.0% Asian, 2.5% Mixed, 1.7% Black, and 1.1% categorised as 'Other' (ONS, 2022a).
- 15.6.5 South Oxfordshire LAD lies to the south of Oxford. The population is predominantly White (93.1%), with the remainder of the population being 2.9% Asian, 2.3% Mixed, 1.0% Black, and 0.8% categorised as 'Other'.
- 15.6.6 There are 54,555 people residing in the Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) which intersect with the 0.5km study area, with the majority residing in Vale of White Horse. There are 148,901 people residing in the LSOAs which intersect with the 5km study area (ONS, 2022b).
- 15.6.7 In total, there are 138,913 residents in Vale of White Horse and 149,085 residents in South Oxfordshire. The total population of Oxfordshire is 725,291.

Table 15.7 Population by study area

Area	Population
LSOAs within 0.5km	54,555
LSOAs within 5km	148,901
South Oxfordshire	149,085
Vale of White Horse	138,913
Oxfordshire	725,291
England	56,490,048

Community receptor assets

- 15.6.8 There are 16 settlements that fall partially within 0.5km and a further 26 settlements, which fall either entirely or partially within the 5km study area, including Abingdon, Steventon,

Drayton, West Hanney, East Hanney, Grove and Wantage. There are also a number of smaller settlements throughout the study area.

- 15.6.9 There are over 160 community facilities within 0.5km and over 1,000 community facilities and services within the 5km study area. These include nurseries, primary and secondary schools, further education facilities, community halls and centres, places of worship, sports clubs, facilities and centres, hospitals, health centres, GP practices, concert halls, village halls, leisure centres and others.
- 15.6.10 In terms of walking, cycling and horse-riding provision, National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 5 runs north-south past the Abingdon Sewage Treatment Works (STW) within the draft Order limit boundary through Abingdon. NCN Route 544 runs east-west, from Didcot to Wantage, to the south of the site. There are 44 footpaths, 33 bridleways, 23 restricted byways and 22 Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs) within the 5km study area. The Thames Path National Trail runs along the eastern side of the River Thames within the draft Order limits boundary. The Ridgeway National Trail runs to the south of Wantage, partly within the 5km study area.
- 15.6.11 There are over 150 open spaces within 0.5km and over 900 open spaces within the 5km study area, including public open spaces, nature reserves, woodlands, amenity land, playgrounds, ponds, public parks, public gardens and cemeteries.

Commercial and economy overview

Commercial profile

- 15.6.12 There are over 820 commercial receptors within 0.5km and over 6,800 commercial receptors within the 5km study area. These include, for example, office buildings, post offices, industrial estate units, farms, shops, showrooms, retail units, warehouses, restaurants and work studios.
- 15.6.13 The Project is located primarily on agricultural land. There are three solar farms within the draft Order limits boundary: Steventon Solar Park to the south-east of the Project site, Landmead solar farm to the north-west and Hill Farm Solar Park to the south. The Great Western Main Line railway runs east to west within the draft Order limits boundary. Major roads within the draft Order limits boundary include the A415 to the north, A338 to the west and A34 to the east.

Employment

- 15.6.14 The percentage of economically active residents in employment is 97.1% in both the LSOAs located within the 0.5km and 5km study areas (ONS, 2022c). This is similar to the percentage of employed residents in South Oxfordshire (97.0%) and the Vale of White Horse (97.1%), and slightly higher than the figure for Oxfordshire as a whole (96.7%). These figures represent a higher rate of employment compared to the national average for England (95.1%).
- 15.6.15 The percentage of economically active residents who are unemployed is 2.9% and 3.0% in the LSOAs located within the 0.5km and 5km study areas respectively. This is similar to the percentage of unemployed residents in South Oxfordshire (3.0%) and the Vale of White Horse (2.9%), and slightly lower than the figure for Oxfordshire as a whole (3.3%). These figures represent a lower rate of unemployment compared to the national average for England (4.9%).

Table 15.8 Employment and unemployment levels by study area

Area	Percentage Employment (Economically Active: Employed Excluding Students)	Percentage Unemployment (Economically Active: Unemployed Excluding Students)
LSOAs within 0.5km	97.0%	3.0%
LSOAs within 5km	97.1%	2.9%
South Oxfordshire	97.0%	3.0%
Vale of White Horse	97.1%	2.9%
Oxfordshire	96.7%	3.3%
England	95.1%	4.9%

Gross weekly pay

- 15.6.16 The median gross weekly pay for residents of South Oxfordshire is £884.50, which is higher than the Vale of White Horse at £808.00. The average median gross weekly pay for Oxfordshire as a whole is £799.80, while the national average for England is £732.00 (ONS, 2025). Gross weekly pay in South Oxfordshire is therefore 21% higher than the national average, while the Vale of White Horse has a 10% higher gross weekly pay than the national average.

Table 15.9 Gross weekly pay

Area	Weekly Pay – Gross (£)	Percentage Above National Average
South Oxfordshire	884.50	21%
Vale of White Horse	808.00	10%
Oxfordshire	799.80	9%
England	732.00	-

Economy

- 15.6.17 Gross Value Added (GVA) is a measure of economic productivity showing the contribution of an area to an economy. It measures how much value is generated by an area – comparing costs to output. It can also be measured at a per head rate to take account of the population. Data by the ONS (ONS 2022d) shows that professional, scientific and technical activities have had the largest growth in Oxfordshire from 1998-2022 increasing by 382%. The second largest growth was in human health and social work activities at 292%, followed by education at 269%.

Future baseline

- 15.6.18 As set out in Chapter 4: Approach to the environmental assessment, the preliminary assessment of effects considers the likely evolution of the baseline without the implementation of the Project. Where climate change may alter future socio-economics and communities baseline conditions and therefore LSEs, this is discussed as part of the

In-combination Climate Change Impact (ICCI) assessment which brings together all climate related impacts on aspect assessments and is presented in Appendix 18.3: In-combination Climate Change Impact Assessment.

- 15.6.19 The population within the study areas is anticipated to grow over time, with population in the Vale of White Horse district predicted to increase by 23% between 2018 and 2043, with an annual rate of growth of 0.83%, (ONS 2019). For South Oxfordshire district, the population is projected to increase by 6.7% at an annual rate of growth of 0.26%.
- 15.6.20 In terms of population structure, in both authorities, it is projected that the proportion of the population within the 0-19 age group will decrease between 2018 and 2043 by 42% for Vale of White Horse and 21% for South Oxfordshire. A similar trend is projected for the age group of 25 to 44 years old – a decrease of 21% for Vale of White Horse district and 39% for South Oxfordshire district is projected. For the 65+ age group, there is a projected increase of 27% for Vale of White Horse district and a 9% decrease for South Oxfordshire. Population growth is likely to increase demand for housing and social infrastructure in the area whilst changes to population structure are likely to have implications for the types of social and community infrastructure required.
- 15.6.21 Future land use change is likely to occur in line with local and regional planning policy. Such policies have broad objectives to ensure that the management of development and infrastructure meets identified social, environmental and economic challenges.
- 15.6.22 The following developments have provisionally been identified as part of the future baseline and are of relevance to the Socio-economics and communities assessment:
- Dalton Barracks Garden Village – residential development of up to 5,250 homes, with 2,750 homes expected by 2043, 180 care units, six-ten gypsy/traveller pitches, and 7.4ha of employment land
 - Land Adjacent to Culham Campus – mixed-use development of up to 3,500 homes, 60 care units, 6–10 gypsy/traveller pitches, and 10ha of employment land
 - Valley Park, Didcot – residential development of up to 4,254 homes, with local centres, schools, special needs school, community and leisure facilities
 - Grove Airfield – residential development of up to 2,500 homes, with secondary and primary schools, a local centre, and community park
 - Monks Farm, North Grove – residential development of up to 885 homes and 6ha of employment land
 - North-west of Grove – residential development of up to 624 homes including 60 care units, public open space, and cemetery extension
 - Crab Hill (North East Wantage) – residential development of up to 1,500 homes, with employment space, a neighbourhood centre, primary school, and open space
 - Land East of Kingston Bagpuize – mixed-use development of up to 660 homes, 70 care units, a primary school, local centre, and new road infrastructure
 - Didcot Data Campus – employment-led development with up to 197,000m² of data centre and ancillary office space
 - Didcot Technology Park – employment-led development including up to 110,000m² of data centre, 20,000m² of battery storage, and 5,000m² for industrial processes
 - Cloud HQ Data Centre Campus – data centre campus including two data centre buildings, substations, backup generators, fuel storage, and landscaping and
 - South-east of Marcham – residential development of up to 90 homes.

- 15.6.23 Many of these developments are partially complete, and therefore some of the receptors identified have already been considered as part of the existing baseline.

Socio-economics and communities receptors considered in the preliminary assessment

- 15.6.24 Table 15.10 shows the Socio-economics and communities receptors in the study area that have been considered in the preliminary assessment for the PEI Report. In some cases, individual receptors have been grouped where anticipated effects and mitigation are likely to be very similar. The sensitivity of each receptor is defined in the table with commentary justifying the sensitivity category defined. The table also identifies the area ID and effect ID(s) relevant to each receptor. The effect IDs are unique identifiers of each effect assessed (discussed further in Appendix 15.1: Preliminary assessment of effects for Socio-economics and communities), whilst the area ID related to the spatial extent of the receptor assessed. Figure 15.6: Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects shows the locations of the majority of receptors that have been spatially defined for the preliminary assessment for the PEI Report, with relevant Area IDs noted. Spatial information relating to the County Council study area is shown on Figure 15.3: Study area Economics (local authority and county level). Further data gathering to inform the ES will inform any revisions to the defined spatial extents of receptors.

Table 15.10 Receptors assessed in the preliminary assessment

Receptor Name	Sensitivity	Sensitivity Commentary	Effect-ID(s)	Area-ID
Grove (North) residential properties to the north of Station Road, Grove	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-492	EIA-624
Grove (West) residential properties on Barley Way, Corn Lane, Straw Acre, Wheatfields and Townsend	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-491	EIA-595
People living in Abingdon-on-Thames (site-facing edges)	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-502	EIA-244
People living in Culham	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-503	EIA-231
People living in Denchworth	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-494	EIA-226
People living in Drayton	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-504	EIA-233
People living in East Hanney	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-497	EIA-225
People living in Marcham (to the east of Marcham along A415 Marcham Road only)	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-506	EIA-894
People living in Steventon	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-500	EIA-234
160 Hanney Rd, Steventon, Abingdon OX13 6AW	High	Property is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-521	EIA-926
3 Residential Properties at Farrow Farm, Hanney Rd, Steventon, Abingdon OX13 6AP	High	Property is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-517	EIA-926
3 Residential Properties at Honey Bottom Kennels, Orchard Cottage, Hanney Road, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6AP	High	Properties are integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-578	EIA-926
Bradfield Barn, Old Mans Lane, Grove	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-496	EIA-604

Receptor Name	Sensitivity	Sensitivity Commentary	Effect-ID(s)	Area-ID
Detached Residential Properties on Steventon Road, OX12 0HS	High	Property is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-555	EIA-887
Goose Willow Farmhouse, Steventon, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, England, OX13 6AP	High	Property is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-516	EIA-926
Picked Mead, Steventon, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, England, OX13 6AP	High	Property is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-515	EIA-926
Primrose Cottage, Hanney Road, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6AP	High	Property is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-519	EIA-926
Residential properties at Barrow Farm, Faringdon Road, Abingdon	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-501	EIA-613
Residential properties at Bradfield Grove Farm, Cow Lane, Grove	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-495	EIA-612
Residential properties on Mill Road, Marcham	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-505	EIA-611
Residential Property at Bramble Grange, Steventon, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, England, OX13 6AP	High	Property is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-579	EIA-926
Residential Property at Drayton Construction Ltd, Hanney Road, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6AW	High	Property is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-509	EIA-926
Residential Property at OX12 0FE	High	Property is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-557	EIA-860
Residential property at Venn Mill, Garford	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-498	EIA-606
Residential Property at Westbury House (The Whispering Bob	High	Property is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-520	EIA-926

Receptor Name	Sensitivity	Sensitivity Commentary	Effect-ID(s)	Area-ID
Broadcasting Co Ltd), Hanney Rd, Steventon, Abingdon OX13 6AW				
Residential Property at Willowbrook Farm, Hanney Road, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6BE	High	Property is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-577	EIA-907
Residents at Marcham Mill (NE area of Site)	High	Residential properties and their occupiers are highly sensitive.	SE-573	EIA-249
The Views, Hanney Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX13 6AW	High	Property is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-532	EIA-926
Duchess Nursery Steventon, The Hay Barn, Steventon, Oxfordshire, OX13 6RP	Moderate	The level of use is frequent (daily) however users of the receptor are likely to have sufficient capacity to absorb the change.	SE-582	EIA-922
St Michaels C of E Primary School, The Causeway, Steventon, Oxfordshire, OX13 6SQ	Moderate	The level of use is frequent (daily) however users of the receptor will have some capacity to absorb the change given the school is not a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) school or other specialist school which may have specific environmental needs for pupils.	SE-581	EIA-923
Grove Cemetery	High	Highly sensitive receptor which requires a quiet and tranquil environment - receptor has limited ability to absorb the change.	SE-493	EIA-832
South Oxfordshire Memorial Park and Crematorium	High	Highly sensitive receptor which requires a quiet and tranquil environment - receptor has limited ability to absorb the change.	SE-499	EIA-265
West End Allotments, Marcham Road, Abingdon, OX14 1TU	Low	Alternative facilities are available at a local level within the wider community, The land and assets are used by the minority (less than 50%) of the community, Users of the receptor have sufficient means and capacity to absorb the change.	SE-576	EIA-833
Registered common land at Abingdon	Negligible	The land location has been omitted from draft Order limits and will unlikely be impacted by construction or operation.	SE-564	EIA-830
Registered common land in Cowhane	Low	The land is infrequently used and the proposed works are unlikely to increase severance with nearby community.	SE-562	EIA-828

Receptor Name	Sensitivity	Sensitivity Commentary	Effect-ID(s)	Area-ID
Registered common land in Heywoods Close	Low	The land is infrequently used and has an alternative that is closer to communities.	SE-561	EIA-829
Several pieces of registered common land in the parish of West Hanney	Low	The land is infrequently used and the proposed works are unlikely to increase severance with nearby community.	SE-563	EIA-831
NCN Route 5	High	The section of NCN Route 5 within the draft Order limit forms part of the wider National Cycling Network, extending beyond the local area and connecting to major motorways that lead to other regions. The route has over 100 users per day and could be used for both commuting and recreation that record frequent use with limited potential for substitution.	SE-483	EIA-223
Thames Path	High	The section of National Trails within the Draft Order Limit forms part of the Thames Path National Trails, extending beyond the local area and providing scenery experience along the route. The route has over 100 users per day and is used for both commuting and recreation that record frequent use, with no potential for substitution.	SE-484	EIA-203
PRoW between A338 and Drayton	Moderate	PRoW between A338 and Drayton runs across the draft Order limits and provide efficient route for users to commute or use for recreational purposes. These PRoW are frequently used with over 100 users per day however as alternative routes are available, the sensitivity has been deemed to be moderate.	SE-293, SE-487	EIA-786
PRoW between East Hanney and Steventon	Moderate	PRoW between Marcham and Steventon connects to the communities of Marcham and Steventon, and is used for recreational or commuting purposes. These PRoW are frequently used with over 100 users per day however as alternative routes are available, the sensitivity has been deemed to be moderate.	SE-294	EIA-789
PRoW between Abingdon and Reading Road	Moderate	PRoW between Abingdon and Reading Road are close to several communities and could be used for recreational or commuting purposes. These PRoW are less frequently used with under 20 users per day. Alternative routes are available if the PRoW are	SE-291, SE-485	EIA-784

Receptor Name	Sensitivity	Sensitivity Commentary	Effect-ID(s)	Area-ID
		disrupted therefore the sensitivity has been deemed to be moderate.		
PRoW between Marcham and Drayton	Moderate	PRoW between Marcham and Drayton connects to the communities of Marcham and Drayton, and could be used for recreational or commuting purposes. These PRoW have between 20 and 100 users per day. Alternative routes are available if the PRoW are disrupted therefore the sensitivity has been deemed to be moderate.	SE-292, SE-486	EIA-785
PRoW between East Hanney and railway lines	Moderate	PRoW between East Hanney and railway lines connects to the community of East Hanney, but consist of primarily public footpaths and restricted byways, therefore is mainly used by active travel users for recreational purposes. These PRoW are less frequently used with under 20 users per day. Alternative routes are available if the PRoW are disrupted therefore the sensitivity has been deemed to be moderate.	SE-488	EIA-787
PRoW between East Hanney and Steventon	Moderate	PRoW between East Hanney and Steventon connects to the communities of East Hanney and Steventon, which runs across the draft Order limits and provide efficient route for users to commute or use for recreational purposes. These PRoW have between 20 and 100 users per day. Alternative routes are available if the PRoW are disrupted therefore the sensitivity has been deemed to be moderate.	SE-490	EIA-789
PRoW between Marcham and Steventon	Moderate	PRoW between Marcham and Steventon connects to the communities of Marcham and Steventon, and is used for recreational or commuting purposes. These PRoW are frequently used with over 100 users per day however as alternative routes are available, the sensitivity has been deemed to be moderate.	SE-489	EIA-788
People using the River Thames for recreational activity between Nag's Head Island and Culham Cut	High	Location is well used with more than 30 vessel transits recorded on average in the peak hour. Limited potential for substitution.	SE-583, SE-584	EIA-703

Receptor Name	Sensitivity	Sensitivity Commentary	Effect-ID(s)	Area-ID
A34 Self Storage, Unit 91 Steventon Storage Facility, Hanney Rd, Steventon OX13 6DJ	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-536	EIA-632
AFFA, Storage Facility, Hanney Rd, Steventon, Abingdon OX13 6DJ	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-544	EIA-632
Agricultural Property Group on Steventon Road, OX12 0HS	High	Areas of land in which the enterprise is dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure, and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required frequently (daily to weekly).	SE-554	EIA-908
Auto Cleanz Westcot, Goose Willow Farm, Hanney Road, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-522	EIA-927
Bramble Grange, Steventon, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, England, OX13 6AP	High	Areas of land in which the enterprise is dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure, and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required frequently (daily to weekly).	SE-514	EIA-927
Dan's Garage and MOT, The Workshop, Goose Willow Farm, Hanney Rd, Abingdon OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-548	EIA-927
Dragons Gate Koi, The Barn, Goose Willow Farm, Hanney Rd, Steventon, Abingdon OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-546	EIA-927

Receptor Name	Sensitivity	Sensitivity Commentary	Effect-ID(s)	Area-ID
Dragontek Body and Repair, Unit 3, Goose Willow Farm, Hanney Rd, Abingdon OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-551	EIA-927
Drayton Construction Ltd, Hanney Road, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6AW	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-510	EIA-927
Easy Storage, Hanney Rd, Steventon, Abingdon OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-550	EIA-927
F&H Logistic Service, Unit X Steventon Storage Facility, Steventon OX13 6DJ	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-542	EIA-632
GB Fabrications & Welding, Hanney Rd, Steventon OX13 6AW	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-534	EIA-927
Golf Buggy Services, Hanney Road, Abingdon, OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-526	EIA-927
Goose Willow Solar Farm, Hanney Road, Steventon, OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-528	EIA-848

Receptor Name	Sensitivity	Sensitivity Commentary	Effect-ID(s)	Area-ID
H & H Contract Scaffolding Ltd, Steventon Storage Facility, Hanney Road, Steventon, OX113 6DJ	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-524	EIA-632
Honey Bottom Kennels, Orchard Cottage, Hanney Road, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6AP (includes three residential properties)	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-512	EIA-927
Kiln Lane Farm, Kiln Lane, Abingdon, OX13 6RN	High	Areas of land in which the enterprise is dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure, and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required frequently (daily to weekly).	SE-553	EIA-909
Landmead Farm and Airstrip, East Hanney, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX13 5PA	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-530	EIA-851
Landmead Solar Farm, Landmead Farm, East Hanney, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX13 5PA	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-529	EIA-852
Malthouse Training Centre, Hanney Road, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-527	EIA-853
MDR Jet Washing, Hanney Rd, Abingdon OX13 6AQ	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-538	EIA-632

Receptor Name	Sensitivity	Sensitivity Commentary	Effect-ID(s)	Area-ID
MK Autos, Goose Willow Farm, Hanney Rd, Steventon, Abingdon OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-547	EIA-927
One Stop Worldwide, 91 Steventon Storage Facility, Hanney Rd, Steventon OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-540	EIA-632
Orchard Farm, Hanney Road, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-525	EIA-857
Orchard Farmhouse, Steventon, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, England, OX13 6AP	High	Property is integral to the character and function of the community with little/no provision for substitution due to the rural location.	SE-513	EIA-858
Oxfordshire Towbars, Hanney Rd, Abingdon OX13 6AW	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-533	EIA-927
Sandline, Oak Tree Farm/Hanney Rd, Abingdon OX13 6AP	High	Areas of land in which the enterprise is dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure, and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required frequently (daily to weekly).	SE-518	EIA-927
Savvi, The Barns, Hanney Rd, Steventon, Savvi OX13 6AW	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-535	EIA-927
Scrap/Salvage Yard of A338, OX12 0JA	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure	SE-556	EIA-864

Receptor Name	Sensitivity	Sensitivity Commentary	Effect-ID(s)	Area-ID
		and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).		
Self Store Steventon, Steventon Storage Facility, Hanney Rd, Steventon OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-539	EIA-632
SL Automotive, Unit 1b, Calf House, Goose Willow Farm, Hanney Rd, Steventon, Abingdon OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-549	EIA-927
Specialist Welding and Fabrication, Mereditch Barn, Hanney Road, Steventon, OX13 6AW	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-580	EIA-927
Steventon Solar Park, Hill Farm, Steventon, Oxfordshire, OX13 6SW	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-531	EIA-866
Steventon Storage Facility, Hanney Road, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6DJ	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-507	EIA-632
Storage Collect, Unit 53 Steventon Storage Facility, Hanney Rd, Steventon OX13 6DJ	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-537	EIA-632
Tio Climate solutions, Unit X&Y, Steventon Storage, Hanney Rd, Abingdon OX13 6DJ	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-543	EIA-632

Receptor Name	Sensitivity	Sensitivity Commentary	Effect-ID(s)	Area-ID
Tructyre, Unit 31, Steventon Storage Facility, Hanney Rd, Steventon OX13 6DJ	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-541	EIA-632
Truffitt Bespoke interiors, Unit 1b, Goose Willow Farm, Hanney Rd, Steventon, Buildings OX13 6AP	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-552	EIA-927
Verran Freight Ltd, Steventon Storage Facility, Hanney Road, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6DJ	Low	Areas of land in which the enterprise is not dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required on an infrequent basis (monthly or less frequent).	SE-545	EIA-632
Willowbrook Farm, Hanney Road, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6BE	High	Areas of land in which the enterprise is dependent on the spatial relationship of land to important agricultural infrastructure, and access between land and important agricultural infrastructure is required frequently (daily to weekly).	SE-508	EIA-874
5km study area	Moderate	Limited alternative facilities in the study area. The new recreational and leisure facilities will be semi-frequently accessed.	SE-290	EIA-835
County Council study area economy	Low	GVA per capita is similar to national rate.	SE-568	EIA-918
County Council study area employment market	Low	Unemployment is broadly in line with the national average - albeit slightly higher than national average.	SE-566	EIA-918
Local authority study area economy	Low	GVA per capita is similar to national rate.	SE-296, SE-567	EIA-881
Local authority study area employment market	Low	Unemployment is broadly in line with the national average - albeit slightly higher than national average.	SE-295, SE-565	EIA-881
Local authority study area housing market	High	Private rented, owner-occupied, and latent accommodation demand exceeds supply - as evidenced by the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire Joint Housing Needs Assessment (2024).	SE-297, SE-569	EIA-881

Receptor Name	Sensitivity	Sensitivity Commentary	Effect-ID(s)	Area-ID
Local authority study area public services	High	The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2024) confirms that additional health, emergency services and education facilities are required to support growth proposed as part of the Local Plan. Limited information is provided in relation to the current capacity and waiting times of public services. A sensitivity of high has been determined however further work is required to confirm this.	SE-572	EIA-881
Local authority study area temporary accommodation (tourism) market	Moderate	Temporary accommodation demand broadly aligns with supply although for some types of accommodation, demand exceeds supply - as evidenced by the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Hotel and Visitor Accommodation Study (2024).	SE-298	EIA-881
Local authority study area temporary accommodation (tourism) market	High	Temporary accommodation demand broadly aligns with supply although for some types of accommodation, demand exceeds supply - as evidenced by the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Hotel and Visitor Accommodation Study (2024).	SE-570	EIA-881

15.7 Project parameters, assumptions and limitations

- 15.7.1 Chapter 2: Project description relies on the use of relevant parameters and assumptions to allow flexibility in the final design of the Project, in accordance with the Rochdale envelope approach (Planning Inspectorate, 2018). This preliminary assessment for the Socio-economic and communities aspect uses the parameters and assumptions outlined in Chapter 2: Project description as well as additional parameters and assumptions specific to this aspect to ensure that the reasonable worst-case scenario is considered within this assessment.

Project parameters and assumptions specific to this aspect

- 15.7.2 Table 15.11 identifies the Project parameters, components and activities relevant to this assessment where assumptions specific to the preliminary Socio-economics and communities assessment have been generated. Further information on these assumptions can be found in Chapter 2: Project description.

Table 15.11 Project parameters and assumptions forming the basis of assessment

Project parameter / component / activity	Assumption (basis of assessment)
Site personnel influx / job creation	The peak construction workforce is assumed to be approximately 1,800 individuals.
Workforce accommodation	Workforce accommodation may be incorporated on site in the main construction compound.
Off-site transport movements	Up to 540 HGV movements per day are assumed during peak construction. Further details on the construction routes are provided in Chapter 2: Project description. This includes deliveries of materials and transport of spoil and equipment. Rail sidings would be in use to transport materials and waste and would accommodate an average of three arrivals and three departures per day for five days per week (across approximately 47 weeks per year). Further details on alternative scenarios are provided in Chapter 12 Traffic and transport.
General construction activities	Temporary closures and diversions of PRow are assumed for the duration of construction where routes intersect with worksites or haul routes. Further details on these closures and diversions are provided in Chapter 12: Traffic and transport. Where PRow diversions are to be adjacent to the existing route it is assumed that journey lengths would not increase by more than 50m.
All project components	Businesses in proximity to the draft Order limits would be able to continue operating as normal despite presence of temporary road closures / diversions.
Construction phase	High-level details of the construction programme and sequencing are provided in Chapter 2: Project description.
Operational workforce	Operational workforce includes up to 100 staff per day.

Project parameter / component / activity	Assumption (basis of assessment)
Visitor numbers	Assumes up to 1.058 million visitors per year in a high-use recreational scenario. Peak summer weekends may see up to 8,000 visitors per day.
Visitor vehicle movements	Visitor traffic is expected to be car-dominated (70–100%). The site is expected to be served by bus routes.
Recreation facilities to be provided on site	Provision of a 700sqm facility including toilets, information boards, and café. Provision of a 900sqm water sports building, 7 slipways, parking, and boat storage. Dedicated education centre and café with public access, supporting local engagement and educational use.
Publicly accessible areas to be provided on site	New WCH and cycle routes to be provided on site. Towpath will be provided for walking and cycling access (canal will not be navigable). All new green areas will be accessible to the public except in sensitive ecological zones.
Operational date	Water would be available for use from 2040 and the full Project would be open from 2043.

Assessment assumptions and limitations

- 15.7.3 This section identifies the aspect-specific assumptions and limitations made for the preliminary Socio-economics and communities assessment including those related to the availability of data to inform the assessment and assumptions used in the methodology. The assessment of effects in this chapter is preliminary and will be revisited in the ES in light of data available at that time and the design taken forward for submission. Assessments reported within this PEI Report chapter are considered a reasonable ‘worst case’ as a precautionary approach has been taken where design, construction or baseline information is incomplete. Nevertheless, the preliminary assessment is considered sufficiently robust to enable consultees to understand the likely significant environmental effects of the Project, based on current design information and understanding of the baseline environment. Gaps in information identified within the PEI Report will be considered and addressed as part of the assessment during the production of the ES, as noted in Section 15.10: Next steps. Assumptions and limitations identified in relation to the preliminary Socio-economics and communities assessment include:
- The economic effects reported at this stage are based on a high-level qualitative assessment based on the construction and operational workforce estimates. A quantitative assessment of direct, indirect and induced employment during construction and operation and the associated impacts on GVA will be provided as part of the ES.
 - In relation to construction worker accommodation, whilst it is anticipated that this may be incorporated on site in the main construction compound, the number of workers this is likely to accommodate has not been confirmed. It has therefore been assumed at this stage that no construction worker accommodation will be provided on site as this represents a reasonable worst-case scenario.
 - Amenity effects would usually be based on residual significant effects from air quality, landscape and visual, noise and vibration, and traffic and transport acting in combination. The amenity effects identified at this stage are based on the preliminary

effects from air quality, landscape and visual, noise and vibration, and traffic and transport, without additional mitigation being applied. The ES will report amenity effects based on residual significant effects from these aspects. As such, some of these amenity effects identified may be mitigated.

- Further research will be undertaken as part of the ES to ascertain potential job losses due to the closure of community or commercial facilities within the draft Order limits.

15.8 Embedded design mitigation and standard good practice

- 15.8.1 As described within Chapter 4: Approach to the environmental assessment, identified embedded design (primary) mitigation and standard good practice (tertiary) measures are assumed to be applied within this preliminary assessment, to reduce the potential for environmental effects.
- 15.8.2 Embedded design mitigation identified for the Project at this stage are noted in Chapter 2: Project description. These, and standard good practice measures to be applied, are described in greater detail within Appendix 2.2: Draft commitments register.
- 15.8.3 Table 15.12 and Table 15.13 list the embedded design mitigation and standard good practice measures applicable to the preliminary Socio-economic and communities assessment during construction and operation respectively, including the unique commitment IDs that relate to the Draft commitments register (where further detail on each can be referred to). The tables also state the purpose of each mitigation and the applicable securing mechanisms.

Table 15.12 Construction: Relevant embedded design mitigation and standard good practice measures, their purpose and the securing mechanisms

Embedded design mitigation or standard good practice measure (unique commitment ID)	Purpose of mitigation measure	Indicative securing mechanism
Good practice measures for protecting landscape and visual receptors during construction (SGP-13)	These measures would help to reduce visual intrusion and limit adverse effects on landscape character and views during the construction phase. This includes protection of existing vegetation, use of appropriate screening, and good site housekeeping to maintain visual amenity for local communities and visitors. Measures will be further defined in a Code of Construction Practice.	Under the terms of the DCO
Standard good practice measures to reduce impact of construction traffic on communities and the environment (SGP-19)	Measures will help to reduce traffic impacts to villages and towns, on active travel routes, and at sensitive community resources such as schools and healthcare facilities. Measures are further defined in the Construction Traffic Management Strategy contained within the Code of Construction Practice.	CoCP

Embedded design mitigation or standard good practice measure (unique commitment ID)	Purpose of mitigation measure	Indicative securing mechanism
Standard good practice dust mitigation measures (SGP-23)	These measures would help to reduce dust generation and limit impacts on air quality and local amenity during construction. This would benefit nearby residents, businesses, and sensitive receptors such as schools, healthcare facilities, and ecological habitats. Measures will be further defined in a Code of Construction Practice.	CoCP
Apply measures including Best Practicable Means to reduce construction noise and vibration (SGP-25)	These measures would help to reduce construction noise and vibration at source, minimising disturbance to nearby residents, community facilities, and other sensitive receptors. Measures will be implemented in line with Best Practicable Means and relevant standards. Measures will be further defined in a Code of Construction Practice.	CoCP
Liaison with communities prior to and during construction (SGP-27)	The provision of timely and accurate information relating to construction can help communities to adapt to changes caused by the Project, and reduce stress and anxiety effects associated with uncertainty. Communication should be two-way, so that the Project can proactively understand the needs and concerns of the community and target and adapt mitigation to address these.	CoCP
Land that is only required temporarily during construction to be reinstated (SGP-34)	Reinstating land used temporarily during construction would help to return it to its previous condition or agreed after-use, thereby reducing long-term effects on land use, agriculture, and community amenity.	CoCP
Design of temporary crossings during construction to maintain function and integrity of watercourses (SGP-35)	These measures would help to ensure that temporary crossings do not obstruct water flow or cause degradation of water quality, maintaining the function and ecological integrity of watercourses during construction. Measures will be further defined in a Code of Construction Practice.	CoCP
Temporary mitigation for Public Rights of Way and active travel route diversions (SGP-49)	Mitigation could include signage, communication with the community to understand needs and usage and to provide information, and provision of diversions. These measures would help to limit effects on users of the PRow and active travel routes. Measures will be further defined in a Code of Construction Practice.	CoCP

Table 15.13 Operation: Relevant embedded design mitigation and standard good practice measures, their purpose and the securing mechanisms

Embedded design mitigation or standard good practice measure (unique commitment ID)	Purpose of mitigation measure	Indicative securing mechanism
Permanent reinstatement or realignment of PRow (ED-25)	These measures would help to maintain connectivity and accessibility for users of Public Rights of Way in the long term. Realignment or reinstatement would reduce permanent impacts on local movement, recreation, and access to the countryside.	Under the terms of the DCO

15.9 Preliminary assessment of likely significant effects

Introduction

- 15.9.1 This section summarises the findings of the preliminary assessment of effects for socio-economics and communities, focusing on key effects that are initially anticipated to be 'significant', be they adverse, beneficial or neutral. The judgement of significance has been made assuming that embedded design mitigation and standard good practice mitigation relevant to socio-economics and communities is applied (these are noted in Section 15.8: Embedded design mitigation and standard good practice and provided in detail in Appendix 2.2: Draft commitments register). Nevertheless, the assessment assumes that additional mitigation is not yet applied, as the precise nature and extent of any additional mitigation measures is not confirmed at this stage in the EIA process. As a result, consideration of residual effects (those that remain after the implementation of *all* mitigation, including additional mitigation) has not been completed for the PEI report.
- 15.9.2 As noted in paragraphs 15.1.8 and 15.1.9, assessments reported within this PEI Report chapter are considered a reasonable 'worst case' in line with the precautionary approach that has been taken. Where initial likely significant effects are identified at this stage, these may ultimately be determined as not significant in the ES once data gaps are addressed, and the design and mitigation are further developed. The next steps for the Socio-economics and communities assessment, including further exploration of relevant additional mitigation, are set out in Section 15.10: Next steps.
- 15.9.3 Appendix 15.1: Preliminary assessment of effects for Socio-economics and communities, sets out the preliminary assessment of effects, receptor by receptor, for construction and operation phases respectively. The appendix is split into tables that list effects that are initially anticipated to be significant, and tables that list effects that are not anticipated to be significant. The tables identify the following for each effect:
- Receptor name, the Effect ID (a unique identifier for each effect), and sensitivity category
 - Project components and activities giving rise to the effect
 - Relevant embedded design mitigation and standard good practice mitigation (with unique Commitment ID, which relates to Appendix 2.2: Draft commitments register)
 - Magnitude of impact category and narrative

- Initial category of effect significance, including whether it is adverse, beneficial or neutral (taking account of embedded design mitigation and standard good practice mitigation)
- Description and duration of the effect
- Any additional mitigation and monitoring identified at this stage (with unique Additional Mitigation ID to enable cross reference to the measures noted in Section 15.10: Next steps)

Summary of likely significant construction effects

- 15.9.4 This section summarises the construction effects that are initially anticipated to be 'significant' through the preliminary assessment of effects for socio-economics and communities. It pulls out the key potential causes and receptors affected.

Key potential causes of effects

- 15.9.5 Chapter 2: Project description explains the construction components and activities for the Project. Key effects on socio-economics and communities may result from the following:
- General construction activities and machinery, introduction of temporary compounds, haul roads, construction traffic, rail sidings, stockpiles, fencing and signage which would temporarily increase the human influence and perception of built development. These causes of effect would be most likely to be perceptible for closer receptors; for distant receptors (beyond approximately 5km), this type of detail of construction activity is, generally, much less likely to be perceived.
 - Additional employment as a result of the construction of the Project.

Key likely significant construction effects

- 15.9.6 The likely major (significant) and moderate (significant) construction effects on socio-economic and communities receptors are summarised below and provided in full in Appendix 15.1: Preliminary assessment of effects for Socio-economics and communities

Major (significant) construction effects

- 15.9.7 The likely major (significant) effects on socio-economic and communities receptors resulting from construction comprise land take and economic effects. These are detailed below:
- Land take effects as a result of construction include the demolition of existing properties located within the draft Order limits. These effects are both permanent and adverse and will be experienced by the following receptors:
 - 20 residential properties, nine separate farms or small holding complexes (some including residential buildings)
 - Multiple isolated agricultural structures
 - Three solar farms
 - An industrial business complex at the Steventon Depot
 - Landmead airstrip and four business properties located at the former Goose Willow Farm

- Economic effects as a result of construction include adverse effects on the availability of accommodation and public services due to an influx of construction workers temporarily increasing the local population. These effects are indirect and temporary albeit long-term (defined as longer than five years in Chapter 4 Approach to the environmental assessment) throughout the construction phase. The effects will be experienced by the following receptors which extend beyond the draft Order limits:
 - Public services within the local authority study area - construction workers coming to site from beyond the study area may utilise public services which will put increased demand on them.
 - The local authority study area housing market - construction workers coming to site from beyond the study area may utilise accommodation which will impact the housing market.
 - The local authority study area temporary accommodation (tourism) market - construction workers coming to site from beyond the study area may utilise temporary accommodation which will impact the temporary accommodation market in terms of availability for other visitors.

Moderate (significant) construction effects

15.9.8 The moderate effects on socio-economic and communities receptors resulting from construction comprise access, land take, amenity, and economic effects. These are detailed below:

- Access effects as a result of construction include the temporary diversion of PRow and a NCN Route and the permanent effect on a section of the River Thames. These effects are direct and adverse and are expected to be experienced by the following receptors:
 - Six groups of PRow including PRow between Marcham and Drayton, Marcham and Steventon, Abingdon and Reading Road, A338 and Drayton, East Hanney and railway lines, and East Hanney and Steventon – these effects are temporary albeit long-term throughout the construction phase. These effects would contribute to accessibility effects for all users from nearby communities and the wider road network.
 - A section of NCN Route 5 located within the draft Order limits - this effect is temporary albeit long-term throughout the construction phase. It would result in accessibility effects for users from nearby communities.
 - People using the River Thames for recreational activity between Nag's Head Island and Culham Cut – the reduction in the width of part of this section of the River Thames by 10m to create the intake /outfall structure to the reservoir will result in an adverse effect, as it will impact recreational users by affecting their ability to travel or moor along this section of the river.
- Land take effects as a result of construction include the demolition of existing properties located within the draft Order limits. These effects are both permanent and adverse and will be experienced by the following receptors:
 - 37 commercial receptors located within the draft Order limits.
- Amenity effects as a result of construction include temporary increases in noise, visual or traffic effects acting in combination, leading to a change in the amenity, character

and enjoyment of users of residential and community receptors as a result of these significant effects acting in combination. These effects are temporary albeit long-term throughout the construction phase. These effects are indirect and adverse and are expected to be experienced by the following receptors:

- Bradfield Barn, Old Mans Lane, Grove
- Residential properties at Barrow Farm, Faringdon Road, Abingdon
- Residential properties at Bradfield Grove Farm, Cow Lane, Grove
- Residents at Marcham Mill (north-east area of Site)
- Residential properties on Mill Road, Marcham
- Residential properties to the north of Station Road, Grove
- Residential property at Venn Mill, Garford
- People living in Abingdon-on-Thames (site-facing edges), Culham, Denchworth, Drayton, East Hanney, Marcham (to the east of Marcham along A415 Marcham Road only), and Steventon
- St Michaels C of E Prima School, Steventon
- Duchess Nursery, Steventon
- South Oxfordshire Memorial Park and Crematorium
- Grove Cemetery
- Economic effects as a result of construction include temporary employment effects and associated increases in GVA productivity. These effects are direct and beneficial and are expected to be long-term throughout the construction phase. The effects will be experienced by the following receptors which extend beyond the draft Order limits:
 - Local authority study area and County Council study area employment market - it is currently estimated that the peak number of workers on site at any one time would be around 1,800 workers.
 - Local authority study area and County Council study area economy - there will be an uplift in GVA productivity as a result of additional construction employment.

Summary of likely non-significant construction effects

- 15.9.9 This section summarises the justification for construction effects that are initially anticipated to be ‘non-significant’ through the preliminary assessment of effects for socio-economics and communities. In particular, it pulls out the key embedded design mitigation and standard good practice mitigation that will be applied and are anticipated to reduce adverse effects to be non-significant.
- 15.9.10 The non-significant effects on socio-economic and communities receptors resulting from construction comprise access and land take effects. These are detailed below:
- Access effects as a result of construction include the temporary closure or obstruction of National Trails and temporary effects on access to registered common land. These effects are expected to be experienced by the following receptors:
 - Thames Path – a temporary diversion to a section of the Thames Path located within the draft Order limits will be required during construction. The effect is considered direct and adverse, with a negligible magnitude of impact as the diversion will increase the journey length by less than 50m.

- Registered common land in Cowhane, Heywoods Close, and West Hanney – there will be temporary effects on access to these areas of registered common land during construction. These effects are indirect and adverse however the magnitude of impact is negligible as the receptor will only experience very minor change.
- Registered common land in Abingdon on Marcham Road – this falls outside of the draft Order limits and will not be affected.
- Land take effects as a result of construction include the loss of land from the following receptor:
 - West End Allotments, Abingdon - part of the allotment falling within the draft Order limits will be permanently lost as a result of construction. This will be a direct adverse effect. The magnitude of impact will be small as the receptor will only experience very minor change which will not compromise the receptor as a whole.

Summary of likely significant operation effects

Key potential causes of effects:

- 15.9.11 Chapter 2: Project description explains the operation components and activities for the Project. Key effects on socio-economics and communities may result from the following:
- The Project includes provision of new recreational and leisure facilities including open space, Visitor Centre (Recreation Lakes Centre), Water Sports Centre, Sailing Club, and Education Centre on site.
 - Permanent diversion or enhancement of existing PRoW, and new PRoW proposed as part of the Project.
 - Additional employment during operation as a result of the Project.

Key likely significant operation effects

- 15.9.12 There are no major (significant) operation effects on socio-economics and communities. The likely moderate (significant) operation effects on socio-economics and communities are summarised below and provided in full in Appendix 15.1: Preliminary assessment of effects for Socio-economics and communities.

Moderate (significant) operation effects

- The moderate effects on socio-economic and communities receptors resulting from operation comprise access effects. These are detailed below:
 - Access effects during operation include the permanent diversion of PRoW, the permanent effect on access to a section of the River Thames, and access to new recreational and leisure facilities. These effects are permanent and direct and are expected to be experienced by the following receptors:
 - Four groups of PRoW, including PRoW between Abingdon and the A417 Reading Road, Drayton and Marcham, Steventon and East Hanney, and A338 and Drayton – the permanent diversion of these PRoW will result in an adverse effect to users of these PROW due to the increased journey distances on diverted routes.
 - People using the River Thames for recreational activity between Nag's Head Island and Culham Cut – the reduction in the width of part of this section of the River

Thames by 10m to create the intake /outfall structure to the reservoir will result in an adverse effect as it will impact recreational users by affecting their ability to travel or moor along this section of the river.

- People within the 5km study area – the provision of new recreational and leisure facilities on site, such as the recreational lakes, Nature Education Centre, Water Sports Centre, active travel provision and connections into existing PRow will result in a beneficial effect for users of these facilities.

Summary of likely non-significant operation effects

- 15.9.13 This section summarises the justification for operation effects that are initially anticipated to be 'non-significant' through the preliminary assessment of effects for socio-economics and communities. In particular, it pulls out the key embedded design mitigation and standard good practice mitigation that will be applied and are anticipated to reduce adverse effects to be non-significant.
- 15.9.14 The non-significant effects on socio-economic and communities receptors resulting from operation comprise economic effects. These are detailed below:
- Economic effects during operation include permanent employment effects and associated increases in GVA productivity as well as effects on the availability of accommodation due to permanent increases in local population as a result of operational employment. The effects will be experienced by the following receptors which extend beyond the draft Order limits:
 - Local authority study area employment market - it is currently estimated that there will be approximately 100 staff travelling to and from the site per day. This effect will be direct and beneficial however the magnitude of impact is small as it represents a minor change in employment for the study area employment market.
 - Local authority study area economy - there will be an uplift in GVA productivity as a result of additional operational employment. This effect will be direct and beneficial however the magnitude of impact is small as it represents a minor change in GVA for the study area economy.
 - Local authority study area housing market - the operation of the Project could attract more people to live within the study area who want to live close to their place of work. This could have an adverse impact on the study area housing market. This effect will be indirect, and the magnitude of impact is negligible as there is anticipated to be a very minor change in employment.
 - Local authority study area temporary accommodation (tourism) market - during operation, non-local workers may choose to move closer to their place of work and may seek temporary accommodation (such as rented properties, bed and breakfasts (B&Bs), hotels) in the study area. This could have an adverse impact on the study area temporary housing market. This effect will be indirect, and the magnitude of impact is negligible as there is anticipated to be a very minor change in employment.

15.10 Next steps

- 15.10.1 As part of next steps, the Project is proactively developing the design, refining the construction approach and continuing to define the environmental baseline, in conjunction with ongoing consultation and engagement. These activities will inform the EIA process and provide a robust evidence base for the ES. The aim is that where initial likely significant effects are identified at this stage, these may ultimately be determined as not significant in the ES once data gaps are addressed, and the design and mitigation proposals are further developed. Effects that remain after the implementation of all mitigation are referred to as 'residual effects'. These effects are not reported in the PEI Report as additional mitigation is not assumed to be implemented at this stage of the assessment. The assessment of the significance of residual effects after all mitigation is applied is a key outcome of the EIA process and will be reported within the ES, which will be submitted with the DCO application.
- 15.10.2 The next steps anticipated to be undertaken in relation to the Socio-economics and communities assessment prior to completion of the ES and submission of the DCO application are explained below.

Further exploration of additional mitigation

- 15.10.3 A key aspect of the next steps is to further explore additional mitigation that may reduce adverse effects that the preliminary assessment has initially identified as likely to be significant. Additional mitigation that has been identified for the Socio-economics and communities assessment is noted against relevant likely significant effects in Appendix 15.1: Preliminary assessment of effects for Socio-economics and communities. All additional mitigation that has been identified in relation to the Socio-economics and communities assessment to date is listed below in Table 15.14 along with a description of what each measure entails. Each measure has a unique Additional Mitigation ID to enable cross reference between Appendix 15.1: Preliminary assessment of effects for Socio-economics and communities and Table 15.14. As noted previously above, the preliminary assessment presented in the PEI Report assumes that additional mitigation is not yet applied, as the precise nature and extent of any additional mitigation measures is not confirmed at this stage in the EIA process.

Table 15.14 Additional mitigation identified to date in relation to the Socio-economics and communities assessment

Additional mitigation ID	Additional mitigation name	Description of additional mitigation measure
AM-11	Measures to reduce effects to navigation on the River Thames	Additional measures may be applied to ensure minimal disruption to the River Thames and vessels that use the waterway. Example measures could include: • Undertaking a Navigational Risk Assessment to cover construction, operation and emergency scenarios • Providing notice to mariners for construction works • Providing appropriate signage (during construction and operation)

Additional mitigation ID	Additional mitigation name	Description of additional mitigation measure
		- Engaging with the Environment Agency and other relevant stakeholders to reduce disturbance or - Obtaining relevant consents for river works

Other next steps

- 15.10.4 Other steps that are continuing or are planned to be undertaken to support the Socio-economics and communities assessment prior to completion of the ES and submission of the DCO application are noted below with an explanation of how these will inform the EIA process:
- In-person baseline validation surveys will be undertaken prior to the completion of the ES to proportionately validate the receptor assets already identified via desk-based research and to understand the likely impact on the users during construction and/or operation.
 - Further research on impacted community and commercial receptors will be undertaken as part of the ES to ascertain potential job losses due to the closure of community or commercial facilities within the draft Order limits.
 - A quantitative assessment of direct, indirect and induced employment during construction and operation and the associated impacts on GVA will be undertaken as part of the ES.
 - Further work will be undertaken around visitor numbers and construction worker accommodation to feed into the Socio-economic and communities assessment as part of the ES.
 - Further assessment work will be undertaken to understand the likely effects for users of the River Thames through a Navigation Risk Assessment during the construction and operation stages of the Project.
 - Further consideration will be given to opportunities to create lasting legacy benefits in education, recreation, community and amenity during Project operation as the Project develops.

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It's everyone's water