



Briefing Document

On behalf of
Oxfordshire Railfreight Limited

Prepared by Oxalis Planning Ltd
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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

- 1.1 This document, referred to as ‘the Briefing Document’, is intended to provide a straight-forward and helpful non-technical summary of the Oxfordshire SRFI (‘OxSRFI’) proposals. It has been prepared by the promoters and applicant for the proposals, Oxfordshire Railfreight Limited (referred to as ‘the Applicant’).
- 1.2 It has been prepared to support the Stage 1 (non-statutory) public consultation process being held from 9th May until 4th July 2022. The intention is that reading this Briefing Document alone will provide a good overview and summary of the proposals, explain the policy context for them, and set out the main elements and programme for the consultation process. A statutory Stage 2 public consultation is currently planned to commence in Winter 2022/23.
- 1.3 The OxSRFI proposals meet the definition of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). This means that, rather than preparing a planning application for determination by the Local Planning Authority (the District Council), an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) is being prepared. This will be examined by the Planning Inspectorate before being determined by the Secretary of State for Transport. Section 2 of this document includes further details about the process (and Section 5 gives information about the timetable).
- 1.4 Section 3 provides an overview of the main features of the policy and market context for the Proposed Development.
- 1.5 The assessment and other information from which this document is drawn remains a ‘work in progress’ and by definition may change as the process of preparing the application for a Development Consent Order continues. There is also the potential for changes as a result of the current Stage 1, and later Stage 2, public consultations, and ongoing consultation with a range of statutory and other consultees who are also reviewing and discussing components of the recent and ongoing technical work. However, preliminary technical information is available in draft form via the project website (<https://oxsrfi.co.uk/>), with the same information – draft Environmental Statement (ES) chapters and other draft documents – located in a local library and Council offices. Section 4 of this report contains more information about the ES, and Section 5 for consultation details.
- 1.6 The different elements of the OxSRFI scheme referred to throughout the Briefing Document are set out in the Glossary of Terms in **Appendix One** and are also shown on the Draft Components Plan contained in **Appendix Two**.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE OXFORDSHIRE SRFI PROPOSALS

The Site

- 2.1 The OxSRFI Main Site is located between the B430 and the former Upper Heyford Airfield, which is located to the west and it is immediately south of the Chiltern Main Line. It predominantly consists of agricultural land used for mixed arable and grazing purposes and includes the Ashgrove farmstead (“Ashgrove Farm”) which comprises a number of farm buildings and residences. The farmstead includes a listed building. Also within the Main Site is the In Vessel Composting Facility which is an operational commercial food and garden waste composting facility. The Site Location Plan is included at **Appendix Three**.
- 2.2 The village of Ardley is located to the north of the Main Site and north of the Chiltern Main Line and separated from the Main Site by intervening agricultural land and established woodland. The village of Middleton Stoney is located approximately 1.5km to the south of the Main Site, separated by intervening agricultural land and associated landscape and field boundary features. Within the intervening land lies the farmstead of Manor Farm.
- 2.3 To the east of the Main Site and east of the B430 is the Viridor Ardley Energy Recovery Facility (“Viridor ERF”) as well as the Ardley Fields Household Waste and Recycling facility and Ardley Landfill Site. Further south of the waste facilities is an active Dewars Farm minerals quarry (limestone and clay).
- 2.4 The M40 motorway runs nearby to the east of the Main Site, as well as to the east of both Ardley and Middleton Stoney, with the town of Bicester beyond the M40 in a south-easterly direction from the Main Site.
- 2.5 The proposed Highways Works include land on both the eastern and western sides of M40 Junction 10 which is largely in agricultural use already directly influenced by highways infrastructure and includes the Padbury Brook watercourse. The route of the proposed Ardley Bypass is to the east of Ardley, and crosses a number of existing field hedgerow boundaries, as well as the Chiltern Main Line.
- 2.6 Similarly, the proposed Middleton Stoney Relief Road crosses agricultural land to the north and east of the village and include sections of woodland as well as the Gagle Brook corridor

Description of the proposed development

- 2.7 The proposed development currently comprises a number of elements, described in brief below.:

- An **intermodal rail terminal** served via new connections to the Chiltern Main Line (part of the Strategic Rail Freight Network), including container storage;
 - Up to **603,850 sqm** (approx. 6.5 million square feet) of warehousing, including ancillary office accommodation, plus up to 201,283 sqm of additional floorspace in the form of mezzanines. Maximum building heights are proposed at 25m;
 - **Improvements to Junction 10 of the M40** involving works on the A43 east of the M40, new slip roads to and from the M40
 - an **Ardley Bypass** to the east of Ardley;
 - A **Heyford Park Link Road** which runs from Camp Road south-east of Heyford Park and south of the proposed development to a new junction on the B430;
 - A **Middleton Stoney Relief Road** around the north-eastern side of the village connecting from a new junction on the B430 to the existing B4030 which links over the M40 to Bicester, supported by a bus gate west of the village;
 - The **Principal Access** to the Main Site will be from a new roundabout on the B430 in the north-eastern corner of the Main Site, south of the railway line. This primary access will serve all HGV and car traffic accessing the site;
 - A **Secondary Access** into the Main Site will be provided from the Heyford Park Link Road for bus, pedestrian, cyclists and emergency vehicles only;
 - Relocation of the **In Vessel Composting Facility** within the Main Site;
 - Retention of the Grade II listed Threshing Barn at Ashgrove Farm as part of the **Central Hub** of estate management and communal facilities for the other development on the Main Site;
 - Retained key **landscape features** and new landscaping and planting, including on the proposed **earthwork bunds** within the Main Site.
- 2.8 The number and precise location of the proposed buildings, and their detailed appearance, are not yet known or fixed. These details would be submitted for agreement with the Local Planning Authority in due course if a DCO is approved by the Secretary of State. However, key characteristics and details regarding the proposed buildings, including the maximum building heights and plateau levels, will be fixed as part of the application process, and defined on a 'Parameters Plan' (see **Appendix Four**). The Parameters Plan forms the basis of the Environmental Impact Assessment.
- 2.9 The Illustrative Masterplan (see **Appendix Five**) shows one potential form of development which would be in accordance with the proposed parameters.

Aims and Objectives of the Proposal

- 2.10 The OxSRFI proposal seeks to respond to the increasing market demand for rail freight interchanges in the UK, and to the significant strength of the distribution and logistics sector along the M40 corridor. The proposals respond directly to the ‘National Policy Statement for National Networks’ (NPS) – see Section 3 of this document – which recognises there is a need for a network of SRFIs across the UK to support economic and environmental objectives.
- 2.11 The OxSRFI scheme would provide rail served warehousing and freight interchange facilities at a strategic location on the national rail and road networks. It would provide the opportunity to increase the proportion of freight moved by rail which would deliver environmental and congestion benefits locally and across the wider region and beyond.
- 2.12 The rail infrastructure within the Main Site (including the Rail Terminal) would be completed in advance of first occupation of any building. As with other SRFI, a proportion of the warehousing could be occupied whilst the connections to the Chiltern Main Line are being procured and provided by Network Rail..
- 2.13 The J10 Highway Improvements would significantly improve what is currently a congested junction. The proposed improvement scheme would see both journey times and congestion improve substantially in the future.
- 2.14 A package of other highways improvements would ensure that the anticipated changes to traffic would not have significant effects on nearby communities. A key focus has been the need to address potential traffic issues through the villages of Ardley and Middleton Stoney along the B430. Accordingly, the Proposed Development includes an Ardley Bypass, a Middleton Stoney Relief Road and Heyford Park Link Road which would remove significant levels of through traffic through the village centres.
- 2.15 The OxSRFI scheme will play a direct role in enabling the transition towards a more sustainable economy through enabling a further shift of freight from road to rail, which will help reduce the effect of transport and economic activity on climate change. In addition, the design approach for OxSRFI is based on key design principles focused on the creation of a high-quality built and natural environment for employees and visitors to the site, including delivering highly efficient buildings with minimised carbon footprints during both construction and in operation.
- 2.16 The OxSRFI scheme will deliver somewhere in the region of 9,500 jobs across a range of skills and qualifications. The estimated Gross Value Added (GVA) from the proposals is around £333 million per annum which represents a significant investment in the local economy. The construction process would also generate a mixture of temporary and permanent employment, over the construction period.

2.17 In summary, the objectives of the OxSRFI are to:

- Play a direct role in meeting the need for a network of SRFIs as defined by national policy in the NPS (see Section 3 of this Document);
- Respond to the market demands and opportunities for strategic distribution development along the M40 Corridor, and enable an increased shift towards rail freight;
- Contribute towards realising economic as well as environmental objectives at the local and national level through sustainable design, construction, and operational stages of the development;
- Deliver substantial transport infrastructure improvements (to both strategic and local infrastructure);
- Offer opportunities to attract new inward investment, business growth, and new employment in a key and growing economic sector.

Why is the OxSRFI a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project?

2.18 Whether or not development is a “Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project” (NSIP) and needs a development consent through the Planning Act 2008 (“the Act”), rather than planning permission, depends upon whether or not development comes within the description of NSIPs set out in the Act.

2.19 Rail Freight Interchanges (often abbreviated to ‘RFI’ or ‘SRFI’) are defined in Section 26 of the Act as nationally significant infrastructure projects if they meet certain criteria. The OxSRFI is an RFI and meets the criteria set out, as follows:

- The Site must be at least 60 hectares in area.
- The rail freight interchange must be capable of handling—
 - consignments of goods from more than one consignor and to more than one consignee, and
 - at least 4 goods trains per day.
- The rail freight interchange must be part of the railway network in England.
- The rail freight interchange must include warehouses to which goods can be delivered from the railway network in England either directly or by means of another form of transport.

2.20 As a transport NSIP the application is determined by, the Secretary of State for Transport rather than by the local planning authority. The Planning Inspectorate will receive the application on behalf of the Secretary of State and will undertake a thorough examination process. As part of the examination, they will seek input from a range of consultees and other interested parties, including the local authority. On completion of the examination the Planning Inspectorate will issue a report and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State.

- 2.21 The Proposed Development also includes two highway NSIPS because elements of the Highway Works affect the strategic road network and meet the criteria for nationally significant highway works contained in section 22 of the Planning Act 2008. These NSIPs, along with the SRFI NSIP, will all be part of the same application process and are being the subject of a single environmental impact assessment process. If the application is approved, they will all be authorised by a single Development Consent Order.
- 2.22 Further details about the process are available at:
<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>

What is a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange? Why do we need it?

- 2.23 In simple terms SRFIs and RFIs operate like ports, with goods arriving and transferred from train to lorry, or vice versa, as part of the supply chain and distribution of freight and goods to, and within, the UK. The activity related to the movement of goods is often referred to as 'distribution' or 'logistics' and is an important economic sector and employer in its own right.
- 2.24 Distribution activity directly supports the economy at both the national and local levels and is a growing sector with increasing demand through the online retail market. Government policy recognises its importance (see below regarding national policy) and the emphasis of Government policy is on encouraging a shift of distribution activity from road to rail to both help deliver environmental improvements, such as air quality and climate change objectives, and to remove HGVs from the roads to help reduce congestion.
- 2.25 Goods and products are transported to and around the UK as part of retail and commercial supply chains and transactions on a constant basis, and an increasing use of on-line retailing forms part of often complex and extensive distribution networks. The move to online retail accelerated during the Covid pandemic, further underlying the UK as one of the most mature markets for online retail in Europe. In this sense, the distribution sector is not only important to the economy, but also to the day to day lives of a large proportion of the UK population on a regular basis. Many household goods as well as many types of food and clothing arrive from overseas in containers at sea ports before then being transferred by train or lorry to freight interchanges or distribution hubs to continue their journey on to the end customer.
- 2.26 Some goods will come to an SRFI and be stored before being collected or sent somewhere else at a later date, while others will only be at the SRFI long enough to be moved from one vehicle to another before continuing their journey. Some goods might be processed or packaged at, or close to, an SRFI before being moved again. The freight and goods which will use OxSRFI could come from, or be sent to, destinations around the UK via the road and/or rail network, including via one of the UK's key sea ports, many of which are connected to the rail freight network.

SRFI Locational Requirements and the OxSRFI

- 2.27 In December 2014 Government published the National Policy Statement (NPS) for National Networks. The NPS sets the national vision and policy for the future development of nationally significant infrastructure projects on the national road and rail networks. The NPS recognises that the locations where SRFI's will be appropriate across the country will be limited. This is largely because SRFI's are required to have good access to both the strategic rail and strategic road networks, as well as having access to the markets they will serve. In part due to these and other functional requirements, including the defined minimum size of SRFIs (60 hectares/148.2 acres) and typical need for 24-hour operations, the government recognises that SRFI's may need to be located in the countryside as there are few sites within urban areas which meet these key criteria.
- 2.28 Given the nature of the SRFIs, due to rail access requirements, there are relatively few locations which are sufficiently close to both road and rail networks while also being in locations where such development would be appropriate in terms of land-use planning and environmental considerations.
- 2.29 The proposed site is in an attractive and strategically significant location for distribution and logistics activity being located along the M40 between London and Birmingham and with the Chiltern Main Line – part of the strategic rail freight network - running adjacent to it. The OxSRFI location means it is within 4.5 hours of a large proportion of the UK population.
- 2.30 The location is therefore well placed to expand the existing network of SRFIs, with good access to both Midlands and South-Eastern markets and distribution networks. The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OXLEP) also recognises the strength and importance of the logistics and distribution sector to the local economy and this is reflected in the LEP's Local Industrial Strategy (August 2020).

3.0 SUMMARY OF THE POLICY CONTEXT

National Policy Statement

- 3.1 The NPS is explicitly intended to provide guidance for promoters of nationally significant infrastructure projects and forms the basis for the examination of NSIP projects and decisions by the Secretary of State. The NPS makes explicit references to Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges and their role in facilitating the movement of freight from road to rail. This is seen as central to Government's vision for transport.
- 3.2 The Government's vision for transport is for a low carbon sustainable transport system that is an engine for economic growth but is also safer and improves the quality of life in our communities. The Government therefore believes it is important to facilitate the development of the intermodal rail freight industry. The transfer of freight from road to rail has a part to play in a low carbon economy and in helping to address climate change (NPS para 2.53). The environmental benefits of increased use of rail forms part of the justification for the general support for a policy of moving from road to rail .
- 3.3 To deliver the Government's vision of transport networks which deliver economic and environmental benefits, the NPS is clear that a network of SRFIs is a key element in aiding the transfer of freight from road to rail, supporting sustainable distribution and rail freight growth and meeting the changing needs of the logistics industry (para 2.47).
- 3.4 Since the NPS was published further national vision and strategy documents have been published by Government which elaborate and clarify the priorities and objectives for development of rail freight in the UK. The information published includes revised forecasts of freight growth and trends commissioned by the Department for Transport (DfT) which help to provide a context for further investment in rail freight infrastructure, including the need for additional SRFIs.

Rail Freight Strategy (2016)

- 3.5 The Rail Freight Strategy was published by Department for Transport (DfT) in September 2016. It sets a vision for how rail freight can continue to grow, and for the broader logistics sector and rail industry to innovate to relieve congestion on the road network.
- 3.6 The strategy is clear that the full economic and carbon benefits of rail freight can only be realised if the industry is able to grow in key sectors and respond to a number of trends and opportunities in the rail freight sector. The opportunities include innovation to respond to demands for reliable, flexible, and rapid delivery services, driven by retailer and consumer demand. Intermodal ports traffic and containerised freight are expected to form part of the continued growth of demand for increased use of rail freight. DfT expects the volume of containers moved by rail to double over the 15 years from 2016.

Decarbonising Transport – A Better, Greener Britain (2021)

- 3.7 The ‘Decarbonising Transport’ document prepared by the DfT (2021) states a commitment by the Government to: *“support and encourage modal shift of freight from road to more sustainable alternatives, such as rail...”* (p. 138)
- 3.8 The document goes on to state that: *“The modal shift of freight from road to rail would not only lead to a reduction in GHG levels, but also reduce congestion and noise pollution”* (p. 139)

Sub-regional and local context

- 3.9 The Oxfordshire Local Economic Partnership (OXLEP) Delivery Plan (2021/22) states that over the last decade, OXLEP has overseen a £3.1bn growth programme for Oxfordshire and helped secure £1bn of direct investment. By March 2025, OXLEP aims to:
- Support or accelerate 11,000 new homes;
 - Support 2,500+ new learners;
 - Secure £993m+ in Enabled Funding; and
 - Supported 26,000+ indirect jobs
- 3.10 The OXLEP’s Local Industrial Strategy (August 2020) notes that the logistics sector is key to supporting new jobs growth over the next decade and that improvements to the strategic rail network and other infrastructure projects will be vital for supporting the sub-regions growth and prosperity and increasing productivity.

4.0 LIKELY IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE OXSRFI

- 4.1 The Proposed Development will have a range of potential effects including economic and social effects as well as physical and environmental effects. As with any large development scheme, the Proposed Development will provide a mixture of potentially very positive and potentially adverse effects. Through a high-quality design, which considers the context of the site and the impact of the proposals from the outset, and with the incorporation of mitigation, many potentially adverse effects can be successfully minimised, or even eliminated altogether..
- 4.2 The application will be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). As part of that process an Environmental Statement (ES) will be submitted alongside the application for development consent. The ES will ensure that decisions are taken having considered the likely significant environmental effects. Government has described the purpose of an EIA as a means of drawing together, in a systematic way, an assessment of a project's likely significant environmental effects. This helps to ensure that the importance of the predicted effects, and the scope for reducing or mitigating them, are properly understood.
- 4.3 A draft ES has been prepared and published for the Stage 1 (non-statutory) public consultation period to help the public and others understand the likely impacts and effects of the proposal. The draft ES chapters, presented as a 'Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)', remain a 'work in progress' and will be completed and finalised in due course, but are intended to help local residents and others understand the assessment work that is underway. This draft ES follows a Scoping Opinion request which was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in June 2021 and also reflects the considerable amount of data gathering and additional assessment undertaken since the summer 2021.
- 4.4 An important component of the ES is explaining the ways in which the proposal has been designed or will be delivered in order to minimise, or mitigate, any likely negative effects, and to maximise any likely positive effects or benefits. Work will continue on the ES following the Stage 1 consultation period, and it will be updated in advance of the Stage 2 (statutory) public consultation which is currently planned to commence in Winter 2022/23.
- 4.5 The ES will comprise a number of themed chapters, each dealing with a different aspect of the proposals and its likely significant effects:
- Transport
 - Air Quality (including Odour)
 - Noise and Vibration
 - Ecology (including Arboriculture)
 - Landscape and Visual
 - Lighting

- Water Environment (including Flood Risk, Drainage and Water Quality)
 - Heritage (Built and Archaeology)
 - Ground Conditions
 - Socio-Economics
 - Waste
 - Agricultural Land
 - Climate Change
 - Cumulative Impacts.
- 4.6 While the ES itself will contain a full chapter on each of the above, the summary below contains the principal elements of the emerging ES anticipated to be of most interest to the public.

Transport

- 4.7 The strategy is being informed by an ongoing Transport Assessment (TA) process which is being steered by a Transport Working Group (TWG) including National Highways, Oxfordshire County Council, and the Applicant, which has been in place since 2020. The transport work will be informed by detailed modelling using an approved traffic model, and the results will be shared with, and scrutinised by, the TWG over the coming months.
- 4.8 The emerging highways improvements are described in the Highways Works plan in **Appendix Six** with sections below dedicated to the core components of the proposed strategy.

Junction 10 Improvements

- 4.9 The transport assessment work undertaken to date has identified capacity issues at both Junction 9 and 10 of the M40 alongside traffic congestion issues (partly caused by rat running) in the villages of Ardley and Middleton Stoney. Notwithstanding the highway improvements that have been identified at M40 Junction 10 as part of the Oxfordshire Housing Growth Deal, these issues are predicted to get worse as a result of the significant housing led growth already planned around Bicester and other background traffic growth.
- 4.10 A range of options for accessing the SRFI site and addressing the congestion issues have been considered and discussed with the TWG, including the formation of a new junction onto the M40. The preferred approach, which is described in the Draft Components Plan (**Appendix Two**) involves a combination of works to both the strategic road network at and around junction 10 together with other new roads and local road improvements around Ardley and Middleton Stoney, as described in Section 2 above.

4.11 The benefits of this approach are considered to include:

- significantly reduced congestion at M40 Junction 10 and improved journey times.
- all through traffic removed from Ardley village.
- significant reductions in the level of traffic passing through the centre of Middleton Stoney.

4.12 Journey times through Junction 10 will be improved. Initial forecasts suggest the improvements in journey time through the junction complex as shown in the below table. This is the average improvement across all journeys through the junction and remains subject to further work.

Period Improvement in journey time (average of all movements) – initial assessment, not yet final	
AM peak (0700 to 1000 hrs)	40%
Interpeak (1000 to 1600 hrs)	14%
PM peak (1600 to 1900 hrs)	17%
Off-peak (1900 to 0700 hrs)	9%

Ardley Bypass

4.13 A new Ardley Bypass is to be delivered as part of wider improvements to M40 Junction 10. The Bypass is proposed from the Ardley Roundabout (at the western side of the current Junction 10 of the M40) on an alignment east of the B430. It would tie-in with proposed re-located south facing M40 slip roads, and the preferred approach would see the existing Ardley Road bridge over the Bypass route.

4.14 The existing B430 will be stopped up to the south of Ardley village and north of the new Main Site access roundabout, and so all through-traffic would be removed from the village.

4.15 The Ardley Bypass would bridge over the Chiltern Main Line railway to serve the Main Site and re-join the existing B430. The Bypass will include drainage and landscaping associated with the new road and junction arrangements. It will include amendments and diversions to existing rights of way.

Middleton Stoney Relief Road

4.16 This is a new single carriageway road to the north-eastern side of Middleton Stoney which will provide a link from the B4030 to the B430 north of Middleton Stoney. The proposed route for the Relief Road has been informed by environmental and technical assessments, with other possible options having been considered and discounted.

4.17 While detailed assessments and modelling are ongoing, the Middleton Stoney Relief Road (with the bus gate on the B4030 west) is forecast to remove around a third of the existing traffic from the village centre.

Heyford Park Link Road

- 4.18 This is a new single carriageway road which will provide a link from the B430 north of Middleton Stoney to Heyford Park. The western extent of this new link will tie in with the current Camp Road.
- 4.19 A Secondary Access will be formed off the Heyford Park Link Road at the southern end of the Main Site. This is proposed as a bus (public transport) and cycle and pedestrian access only – all vehicular traffic will use the main access further north from the B430.

Proposed HGV Routing strategy

- 4.20 The OxSRFI development will be subject to a HGV routing strategy to restrict HGVs from travelling to and from the south of the site on the B430. The HGV routing strategy would be enforced through a combination of physical restrictions to prevent HGVs exiting the site from being able to travel south on the B430, paired with an enforcement methodology, likely to be based on Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras. Therefore, the OxSRFI would not increase HGV traffic flows on local roads to the south of the site.

Public Transport Strategy

- 4.21 Public transport will play an important role in providing access for staff coming to the site. The exact routes and any necessary supporting infrastructure will be determined as detailed work and consultation progress.
- 4.22 The preferred approach is to implement a relatively flexible public transport strategy, to allow services to evolve and be amended over time in terms of destinations served, service frequency and hours of operation in response to the needs of site occupiers and employees. This will help to ensure that the services are suitable to serve the principal settlements where the employees travel from (expected to be largely from Bicester, Banbury and Brackley), maximise the attractiveness of a bus commute to and from the site, and help to ensure the services are commercially sustainable in the long run. This approach will also allow opportunities to work collaboratively with other developments nearby, for example significant new development planned in Bicester and Heyford Park, and to ensure investments in new services are 'joined up'.

Walking and Cycling

- 4.23 The Proposed Development will improve connectivity through the provision of footpath and cycle way connections through the Main Site. This will include new provision along the access roads within the Main Site but also via diversions to existing Bridleways which cross the Main Site. Such routes will be diverted and extended to form a loop within the landscaping areas, including a connection over the SRFI rail sidings to link

to the existing bridge over the Chiltern Main Line. This would provide a connection to existing bridleways and footpaths that run northwards into Ardley.

- 4.24 The proposed new roads (Ardley Bypass and Middleton Stoney Relief Road) will incorporate public footpaths and cycle routes with at grade crossings provided to enable continued access and connectivity. Connections will be retained along the Bypass and Relief Road including an underpass to allow continued movement and connections with the existing network for all users including equestrians.

Air Quality (including Odour)

- 4.25 Detailed assessments of the likely effects on air quality will be undertaken once the transport modelling is complete later this year. Detailed modelling will be used to predict nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) concentrations at identified sensitive receptor locations including designated ecological sites.
- 4.26 The ES will also assess odour related to the proposed relocation of the Severn Trent Green Power 'In Vessel Composting (IVC)' Facility within the Main Site.
- 4.27 To understand existing Air Quality in the area the assessment will make use of data collected by the local authority as well as project-specific NO₂ diffusion tube monitoring at locations in Upper Heyford, Ardley, Bicester, Middleton Stoney and Weston-on-the-Green. Overall, air quality is generally good in the area around the Application Site and the Proposed Development is not located within, or in the vicinity of, any Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA).
- 4.28 The proposals will include a package of measures to minimise effects on air quality. Many measures will focus on transport as one of the main sources of pollutants and will include specific Travel Plan measures relating to use of public transport, walking and cycling, as well as enabling use of electric vehicles.
- 4.29 More widely, as a result of shifting the movement of goods from road to rail, the Proposed Development will help reduce the reliance of road freight and HGV trip lengths, and therefore produce benefits in terms of overall emissions reductions.

Noise and Vibration

- 4.30 Noise Surveys have been undertaken to determine the existing noise and vibration conditions at potentially 'sensitive receptors' around the proposed development. These include locations in Ardley, Middleton Stoney and the eastern side of the Heyford Park development and the former Upper Heyford Airfield as well as isolated dwellings or farms.

- 4.31 For most nearby survey and receptor locations the existing noise environment is dominated by road traffic noise from local roads (such as the B430 and B4030) with sites closer to the M40 also influenced by noise from the motorway.
- 4.32 The emerging scheme includes mitigation measures ‘embedded’ within the proposals, principally the proposed landscaping and bunding around the main site and the earthworks strategy which reduces the ground levels and sinks much of the built development area into the landscape. The assessment of the noise effects will be completed once the transport modelling work is complete and will help influence final design of the highways improvements (including whether bunding or acoustic fencing is required).
- 4.33 Noise (and air quality) benefits are likely in both Ardley and Middleton Stoney as a result of the proposed new roads which will see significant reductions in traffic through the centre of the villages. The extent of these effects will become clearer once the detailed traffic modelling has been undertaken.
- 4.34 The noise ES chapter will consider:
- Construction Noise: albeit temporary in nature, this will be assessed and measures to limit effects will be proposed;
 - Operational Road Traffic: including the effects of introducing the Ardley Bypass and Middleton Stoney Relief Road;
 - Operational Noise from the Main Site and Railway: the assessment will consider the potential for the rail freight terminal and other activity on site to create additional noise effects on off-site locations.
- 4.35 Preliminary work suggests that the vast majority of locations nearby will experience no adverse effects either during the day or at night due in part to the distance between them and the site, as well as due to the mitigation measures proposed. Some properties closest to the Main Site are likely to experience some operational noise from the SRFI due to their proximity to the site boundary and generally low ambient noise levels. The scheme design includes embedded mitigation which will minimise any adverse impacts. There is likely to be increased railway noise at receptors very close to the Chiltern Main Line due to the additional freight train movements, and the extent of this impact will be investigated and determined in the subsequent assessment work, but is not expected to be significant. The rail terminal being effectively ‘sunk’ well below surrounding ground levels will help mitigate off-site effects from rail related noise, and initial results indicate that the majority of the nearest receptors to the rail terminal will experience only minor residual changes in background noise.

Ecology (including Arboriculture)

- 4.36 A full suite of ecological surveys is being carried out, and began in 2018, with update surveys in 2020 and 2021, and further species-specific surveys also undertaken this

year (2022). A full tree survey of the Main Site was completed in 2021. The completed survey work provides a good sense of the baseline characteristics which will inform both an assessment of the likely effects of the proposed development and inform the mitigation strategy to minimise effects.

- 4.37 The vast majority of the Main Site comprises improved and species-poor semi-improved grassland field compartments. These habitats support limited botanical diversity and are common locally, often with regular management or disturbance and no associated notable species. However, there are some areas of greater interest, and records of a number of protected species within the site and neighbouring habitats, including bat, amphibians, two species of reptile, numerous bird records including several Schedule 1 species and Birds of Conservation Concern (Red List), riparian species associated with the River Swift including otter, as well as badger, hedgehog, and hare.

Wildlife Sites and designations

- 4.38 The Main Site includes a small part of the adjoining Ardley Cutting and Quarry SSSI – this is known to contain a range of habitats from tall ruderal vegetation, mixed scrub, early successional secondary woodland and species-poor calcareous grassland to areas of species-rich short calcareous grassland. The SSSI is of national level importance. The parts of the SSSI which lie within the Application Site have been subject to Phase 2 survey.
- 4.39 Nearby non-statutory sites include:
- Six Local Wildlife Sites, a single Cherwell District Wildlife Site (DWS) and three Proposed Cherwell District Wildlife Sites (pDWS) within 1km of the Application Site boundary.
 - Ardley Road Verge Nature Reserve DWS lies mostly adjacent the Main Site to the south east. The verge and associated grassland support rank grassland, rough calcareous grassland, scrub and hedgerows. The site is of County level importance.
 - The Heath pDWS (woodland) and Trackway adjacent to The Gorse pDWS lie adjacent to the south-western Main Site boundary. These support areas of species-rich grasslands, woodlands and associated waterbodies. The pDWS sites are of local level importance, and some woodland habitats of County level importance.
- 4.40 The proposed Highways Works include a range of existing unmanaged species rich grassland and areas of semi-improved or semi-improved neutral grassland of local or site level importance only. Much of the proposed Highways Works are on arable land, with botanical and ecology interest limited to field margins.

Watercourses

- 4.41 The Main site includes part of the Padbury Brook Tributary which through the north-western field compartment of the Main Site. The channel is narrow, approximately 3m wide and shallow, approximately 10cm deep with a slow flow and silty substrate.
- 4.42 The Gagle Brook Tributary bisects the Main Site from north to south. The channel is approximately 1-3m wide and shallow. The Brook also flows south through the corridor of the proposed Middleton Stoney Relief Road. The emerging proposals would retain much of this corridor and the associated trees and other habitats. These watercourses are of local level importance.

Trees and hedgerows

- 4.43 A total of 247 individual trees, 117 groups of trees and four woodlands are present within the Application Site. The majority of trees are associated with hedgerows and are in variable condition as is typical of trees associated with farmland.
- 4.44 The majority of the individual trees (211) and groups of trees (115) were recorded as being of within Categories B and C of the national definitions set out in BS5837. Only 18 individual trees and a single woodland were recorded as being of high arboricultural quality and within Category A. Although the mature trees do add to the structural diversity of the habitats with which they are associated, in their own right they represent a common and widespread habitat and are of no more than local level importance.
- 4.45 There are a total of 51 hedgerows within the area of the Main Site. These are nearly all species poor, consisting entirely of native species and are of local level importance. There are a further 28 hedgerows within or adjacent to some of the Highways Works, yet to be fully assessed.

Retained and additional biodiversity (net gain)

- 4.46 In addition to retaining existing trees and hedges where possible within the Application Site, the emerging landscaping proposals would see significant new habitat creation which follows the strategy of delivering a 10% net gain in biodiversity compared to the existing baseline of the application site.
- 4.47 The new habitat creation would include:
- In excess of 40 hectares (ha) of new native woodland, scrub and tree planting – significantly in excess of the existing trees/ woodland to be lost. Equates to in excess of 100,000 new native trees and other plants;
 - In excess of 12km of new native and species rich hedgerows – equates to over 50,000 new native plants

- Over 50 ha of new calcareous and other wildflower grassland – significantly in excess of the area to be lost
 - Over 5ha of wetland and waterside habitats including sustainable drainage basins and swales designed and managed for biodiversity benefit
 - Extensive new off road footways/ cycleways/ bridleways – connecting up and extending existing surrounding routes – including circuitous trails
- 4.48 The new and retained habitats will be incorporated into the significant on-site green infrastructure and landscaping within the scheme, much of which also forms part of the visual screening of the proposed buildings and infrastructure. The new and retained habitats will also help ensure a high-quality environment for employees and visitors to the site, and the extensive ‘green infrastructure’ provided will include walking and cycling routes for employees and other visitors to the site.

Landscape and Visual

- 4.49 The emerging assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the proposals considers the relationship of the proposed development with the landscape and communities around it. This includes consideration of potential effects on of the nearest villages of Ardley and, Middleton Stoney, but also with new development planned at Heyford Park and a wide range of locations which have views of the site from the countryside and villages beyond.
- 4.50 There are no designations of landscape value that are applicable to the site or its immediate context, such as National Parks, AONB`s or Special Landscape Areas.
- 4.51 The topography of the Main Site generally falls from north to south and also from east to west. With new perimeter mounding as part of the proposals, the natural topography and emerging landscaping scheme will provide the opportunity to substantially screen the development and minimise any landscape and visual impacts upon the surrounding settlements and areas. The emerging strategy maximises the opportunities afforded by existing features on the ground and the site’s topographical characteristics to deliver a suitably strong landscape boundary to the west, south and north in particular. Therefore, while the Proposed Development will result in permanent change to the existing landscape, the effects will be minimised, and both landscape and visual effects will reduce over-time as the new landscaping matures.
- 4.52 The Draft Illustrative Masterplan (see **Appendix Five**) presents the emerging strategy to the landscape layout and design of the site. The core principles of the emerging approach to the landscape strategy include:
- The provision of approximately 132 hectares (ha) of land on the Main Site dedicated to landscape, GI, and habitat related proposals – representing approximately a third 44% of the total Main Site area.

- Conserved mature wooded areas, trees and habitats, particularly along the central watercourse and around the perimeter of the Main Site. This conserved existing planting and habitats will be appropriately and actively managed for arboricultural and biodiversity benefits.
- A mix of new native woodland, trees, hedgerows, scrub and open calcareous and conservation grassland habitats, extending around the built development zones. This will encompass broad landscape swathes to all sides of the Main Site and alongside all new highways and junction areas.
- Perimeter strategic mounding, also extending around all sides and aspects of the Main Site. Bund heights vary but are up to 8.5m to 10m high and 75m to 100m wide in places. In conjunction with the conserved trees and planting and new woodland, scrub and other planting, this proposed mounding and planting will provide mitigation and visual screening to views from all directions around the Main Site.
- Sustainable drainage ponds/ swales and other measures sited in the broad landscape areas and also within the main development areas. In addition to satisfying drainage requirements, these will be designed for landscape, amenity and biodiversity benefits, with other surrounding habitats including open conservation grassland and scrub.
- New public access routes providing a variety of multi-user routes and opportunities within and around the Main Site. This will include circuitous loops around the perimeter landscape and GI areas, and connections to and extensions of existing routes and PROW within the immediate context of the Application Site.

4.53 In terms of effects, at the local level, the effects will vary on different receptors at different stages of the development process. The scheme will include a range of mitigation measures, many of which are incorporated or embedded into the scheme design and layout. These include siting and heights of the Proposed Development, as well as the earthworks and ground modelling proposed, as summarised above.

4.54 Construction effects, which are temporary, will be minimised through best practice measures relating to the management of site activities. This will include protection of retained trees and woodland areas through the construction process, and the phased but early delivery of the outer landscaping and earthwork bunds. Also, temporary screen fencing where relevant will be used.

4.55 Once the Proposed Development is operational the residual landscape and visual effects will reduce over time as the landscaping and planting matures, and this will be managed and maintained over the longer-term.

Lighting

4.56 A lighting assessment is being undertaken. This will inform future decisions about the detail of a lighting strategy including the placing and type of lighting features on the

site. A key focus is to ensure that the proposed development will have minimal direct effects on neighbouring communities and other off-site 'receptors'

- 4.57 The lighting strategy will be designed to prevent glare and light spill to locations off-site, including upward light that can contribute to sky glow. The landscaping and earthworks strategy will screen much of the lighting on the site from being directly visible from outside the site and so will form part of the mitigation for lighting as well as other potential visual effects. With a high-quality strategy in place, lighting effects from the proposed development are expected to be negligible for the vast majority of views and communities and no more than minor for the remaining few.

Water Environment (including Flood Risk, Drainage and Water Quality)

- 4.58 The majority of the Application Site is in the lowest category of risk of surface water flooding (Zone 1)). Some areas of Flood Zone 3 (defined as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of fluvial flooding) are shown within areas affected by the proposed Highways Works relating to the Padbury and Gagle Brooks.
- 4.59 A Flood Risk Assessment is being prepared, and a hydraulic model is also being prepared of the small watercourses across the Application Site which comprises the Gagle Brook (crosses the Middleton Stoney Relief Road), the Ashgrove Brook (a tributary of the Gagle Brook which cross through the Main Site) and, the Padbury Brook (crosses north of the M40 Junction 10 Highways Improvements). The results of the modelling will inform the final drainage strategy set out in the Flood Risk Assessment which will demonstrate how the development site will be drained effectively, and without exacerbating creating or any downstream risks of flooding to land or property.
- 4.60 A drainage strategy is being developed to ensure the site can accommodate and store rainwater collected on impermeable surfaces in a sustainable and predictable way. As shown on the Draft Illustrative Masterplan (**Appendix Five**), the proposals include provision of drainage attenuation features (including ponds) to store and retain rainwater runoff including an allowance for climate change. The attenuation ponds will be designed to slowly release water at a maximum rate equivalent to the existing average greenfield runoff rate. This will reduce any downstream flood risk and provide significant betterment for more extreme storms, as well as providing resilience against the predicted impacts of climate change.
- 4.61 Drainage ponds also have benefits in terms of ecology and habitat creation, and management of surface water can also benefit local water quality as well as providing amenity benefits to employees and local people.

Heritage (Built and Archaeology)

- 4.62 There is one designated heritage asset, a Grade II listed Threshing Barn on the Main Site. The development would include the retention of the barn incorporated into the Central Hub area as shown in the indicative Draft Central Hub plan in **Appendix Seven**. The development would seek to preserve the immediate setting of the Barn through the retention of the surrounding farmstead which provides the greatest contribution to the significance of the barn. This would include the retention of the farm courtyard and surrounding buildings such as the cowhouse, farmhouse and stables. Emerging proposals are for the Barn and hub to contain estate management and communal facilities which would be for use by employees.
- 4.63 There are a number of Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, and a Registered Park and Garden in the wider local area. A draft Built Heritage Statement has been prepared to understand the impacts of the proposed development on nearby built heritage assets, but it concludes the proposals have a limited relationship with off-site listed buildings or other heritage features.
- 4.64 Archaeological investigations are on-going across the Application Site, and these include geophysical survey and evaluation trenching. The results of the surveys are still being assessed however initial indications are that the site contains some archaeology (including from Roman and Iron Age periods). Initial work suggests the development would have negligible to minor impacts on archaeology with standard practice mitigation measures such as excavation of all features of interest and recording and reporting prior to development.

Socio-Economic Issues

- 4.65 Using standard employment densities, and experiences of similar schemes elsewhere, the site is expected to accommodate somewhere in the region of 9,500 jobs once operational. This estimate of employment is generated using national standard job density data published by the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) which suggests the site will deliver an average of one job per 77 sqm. The Transport Assessment will assume a worst-case scenario in terms of potential traffic based around the highest likely employment assumptions.
- 4.66 A range of new job types will be created, covering a wide range of skills and qualifications, and using experience and data from other similar sites it is possible to estimate an approximate mix of job types. Based on trends in the distribution sector, around a quarter of jobs will be defined as 'highly skilled', with a similar amount classed as 'low skilled', and the remainder (approximately half) 'middle skilled'. The typical breakdown of jobs in this sector would generally include:
- 8% driving roles.

- 21% in office based roles including Information Technology, customer service, sales, and engineering support;
 - 12% in managerial roles.
 - 6% other roles.
- 4.67 Typically around 80% of all jobs would be full-time, with the remaining 20% part-time, and there would be a mixture of shift based as well as standard hours jobs. The assessment of economic benefits is based on an area derived from Census data regarding travel to work patterns. The employment and economic impacts of the scheme are likely to be focused on Oxfordshire, particularly the area around Bicester.
- 4.68 Gross Value Added (GVA) as a measure of economic value from the proposals is estimated to be around £333 million per annum. That represents a significant investment in the local economy and is in addition to the capital costs of development which are likely to be well in excess of £500 million. The construction process would also generate a mixture of temporary and permanent employment, over the construction period.
- 4.69 The Public Transport Strategy (referred to above in further detail) proposes to increase the availability of bus access to the Proposed Development through a flexible approach which will include new or enhanced bus services and improved or new foot and cycle routes to the site. These measures will directly connect the site to the principal settlements from which the employees are to be sourced (Bicester, Banbury, Brackley), enabling access to the site from a range of settlements, including by those without access to a car.

Climate Change and Sustainability

- 4.70 National and local planning policy seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainable development, with Government targets for the UK to be 'zero net carbon' by 2050 as a direct response to climate change. This will see fundamental and structural changes to how the UK generates or secures energy, how we travel, and how we construct and use buildings over the coming years and decades, with Building Regulations and other standards becoming increasingly stringent to increase sustainability.
- 4.71 As an SRFI, the proposals will play a direct role in enabling the transition towards a more sustainable economy with rail freight being around 73% more carbon efficient than road freight, and so through enabling a further shift of freight from road to rail, the proposals will play a direct role in reducing the effect of transport and economic activity on climate change. In addition to this, the design approach for OxSRFI is based on key design principles focused on the creation of a high-quality built and natural environment for employees and visitors to the site, including delivering highly efficient buildings with minimised carbon footprints during both construction and in operation.

- 4.72 A sustainability strategy will form part of the final application, tied in part to the mitigation of effects on climate change. Preparation of the strategy is underway but key elements of it are set out below.
- 4.73 The emerging approach will be future-proofed to focus on ‘net zero’ operations on-site as the national policy context continues to evolve but is designed to encompass and where possible out-perform the requirements of the latest Building Regulations with regard to carbon dioxide emissions. This will be delivered by adhering to principles of the energy hierarchy with a ‘fabric first’ approach to building construction and other measures to reduce consumption, as well as incorporating ways of generating electricity in a sustainable way.
- 4.74 The Applicant is committed to target the construction process being zero net carbon through a combination of supply chain and procurement practices which incorporate suppliers with good environmental credentials and sustainable products, by operating an efficient construction process and operation on-site, and through the off-setting of residual carbon. The construction procurement and supply-chain will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to identify opportunities to eliminate carbon.
- 4.75 For the operational stage, the approach will centre on reducing the inherent energy demand of the development as well as seek to generate electricity in a sustainable way. This will be through use of high-quality materials and design to minimise energy demand and maximise efficiency, as well as use of sustainable building services. The following will feature at the heart of the sustainability strategy:
- Building envelopes designed to deliver the low energy and high efficiency characteristics required to achieve a BREEAM ‘Excellent’ rating, or better.
 - Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) A-rating for all distribution buildings on-site, and building management systems to enable monitoring and management of energy use by occupiers;
 - Solar Photovoltaic Panels (PV) used widely across the site, with the potential to meet all of the regulated energy requirements (base energy requirements of the buildings alone) from renewable sources;
 - Use of Solar Thermal or Solar Water Heating Systems to minimise use of grid energy for water heating;
 - Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) for space heating/cooling in the office areas
 - Enhanced ‘U values’ to limit heat/energy loss, and high levels of air tightness (in excess of standards required by Building Regulations);
 - Proportion and distribution of glazing to ensure good levels of daylight which promotes well-being and reduces electricity consumption through artificial lighting;
 - Intelligent, high efficiency LED light fittings to reduce energy consumption through daylight dimming and infra-red (movement based) controls;

- Use of water saving and monitoring/control devices to minimise water consumption including low flow rate showers, low flow dual flush WC's and flow restrictors on taps;
 - At least 10% of car parking spaces to be EV charging spaces;
 - On-site recycling of waste materials (construction and operational waste);
 - Inclusion of surface water attenuation/protection measures to minimise watercourse pollution and support habitat creation while responding to the increasing requirements created by climate change;
 - Extensive provision of new walking and cycling, as well a public transport access to the site to enable travel by means other than the car, and ease of movement around the site;
 - Significant new green infrastructure and tree planting, including significant biodiversity net gain (10% targeted), to aid habitat enhancement and to create shade and spaces for recreation and active travel.
 - To target 90% of construction waste being diverted from landfill.
- 4.76 The ES will consider both the impacts of climate change on the Proposed Development and the influence of the Proposed Development on climate change. Work is ongoing at this stage as part of the evolving assessment work across all disciplines.

5.0 CONSULTATION ISSUES AND PROCESS, CONSULTATION PROGRAMME, AND PROJECT CONTACTS

- 5.1 Informal consultation and engagement about the Proposed Development has been underway for some time.
- 5.2 The applicant has been holding discussions with a large number of local partners and bodies, including discussing technical work to advance the Transport Assessment and to better understand the rail infrastructure issues associated with the proposals. This has helped shape and inform the project and the emerging proposals.
- 5.3 Following the submission of the ES Scoping Opinion in July 2021 the project is now at the early (non-statutory) public consultation. The Applicant has prepared a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC), with input from the local authorities of Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council. The SoCC explains the ways in which we will consult with the public and is available via the project website. It is also at the libraries and Council Offices referred to in paragraph 5.7 below.
- 5.4 The documents set out in the table below are also available to view on the project website and at the venues referred to in paragraph 5.7 below:

OxSRFI Documentation for Stage 1 Consultation				
Document	Title	Author	Number	Revision
Briefing Document		Oxalis Planning Ltd		
Outline Draft Development Consent Order		Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP and Morag Thomson (Freelance Solicitor)		
Outline Explanatory Memorandum		Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP and Morag Thomson (Freelance Solicitor)		
Working Draft Preliminary Environmental Information Report		Oxalis Planning Ltd and ES Team		
Components of Proposed Development Plan		BWB	OxSRFI-BWB-GEN-XX-SK-CH-SK015	P07
Works Plans	Works Key Plan	BWB	None	-

Rights of Way Strategy Plan	Footway Cycleway Rights of Way Strategy Overview	ADC	DR-042	P3
Location Plan	Location Plan	BWB	OxSRFI-BWB-LSI-XX-DR-CH-00001	P05
Parameters Plan	Development Parameters Plan: Main Site (Draft)	FPCR	8308-L-12	S
Illustrative Masterplan	Illustrative Masterplan (Draft)	FPCR	8308-L-23	K
Highway Plans	Highway Works Overview	BWB	OxSRFI-BWB-GEN-XX-SK-CH-SK041	P03
	M40 Junction 10 Overall General Arrangement	BWB	OxSRFI-BWB-GEN-XX-SK-CH-SK042	P01
	Ardley Bypass General Arrangement and Vertical Alignment	BWB	OxSRFI-BWB-GEN-XX-SK-CH-SK038	P02
	Heyford Park Link Road East and B430 Junction General Arrangement	BWB	OxSRFI-BWB-GEN-XX-SK-CH-SK026	P01
	Middleton Stoney Relief Road General Arrangement	BWB	OxSRFI-BWB-GEN-XX-SK-CH-SK025	P03
	Heyford Park Link Road West General Arrangement	BWB	OxSRFI-BWB-GEN-XX-SK-CH-SK023	P03
	OxSRFI Principal Access Roundabout General Arrangement	BWB	OxSRFI-BWB-GEN-XX-SK-CH-SK018	P03
Rail Plans	Rail Terminal Illustrative Layout	Intermodality Limited	D5.33	-
	Indicative Longitudinal Section – Sheet 1	Trust Rail Solutions	19036-TRS-INT-RD-TRK-DRG-00002	P05
	Indicative Longitudinal Section – Sheet 2	Trust Rail Solutions	19036-TRS-INT-RD-TRK-DRG-00003	P03

5.6 The Stage 1 (non-statutory) consultation in-person exhibitions and online webinars are being held in May 2022. During the period from 9th May to 4th July 2022 comments can be made via the following methods:

- At the consultation exhibitions:
 - Thursday 12th May, 13:30–19:30: Heyford Park Chapel, OX25 5TE;
 - Saturday 14th May, 12noon–17:00: Ardley with Fewcott Village Hall, OX27 7PA;
 - Friday 20th May, 13:30–19:30: Heyford Park Chapel, OX25 5TE;
 - Wednesday 25th May, 13:30–19:30: Upper Heyford Village Hall, OX25 5LB.

- By hand (or post – see below) via a printed comments form available at the public exhibitions;
- Online via the comments form on the project website: <https://oxsrfi.co.uk>
- By email to: oxsrfi@havingyoursay.co.uk
- By telephone using the project phone message line: 0333 358 0502
- By post to: 'Freepost OxSRFI'

5.7 In addition to the exhibitions referred to above, hard copies of key project information can be viewed at the following locations over the same consultation period:

Cherwell District Council	Bicester Library	Oxfordshire County Council
Bodicote House	Bicester Library Franklins	County Hall
Bodicote	House Wesley Lane	New Road
Banbury	Bicester OX26 6JU	Oxford
Oxon		OX1 1ND
OX15 4AA		

5.8 USB sticks are also being provided to the following Parish Councils and can be viewed by arrangement with the relevant Clerk:

- Ardley with Fewcott
- North Aston (Meeting)
- Middle Aston (Meeting)
- Steeple Aston
- Bucknell
- Fritwell
- Lower Heyford and Caulcott
- Middleton Stoney
- Upper Heyford
- Somerton
- Stoke Lyne
- Chesterton
- Heyford Park
- Hardwick with Tunsmore (Meeting)
- Souldern
- Fringford
- Caversfield
- Bicester Town
- Kirtlington
- Deddington
- Tackley
- Rousham (Meeting)

5.9 The application to the Planning Inspectorate will include a Consultation Report which will provide a description of the range of consultation and engagement activity throughout the evolution of the project. This will include a full and detailed description

of the statutory consultation and engagement, including a summary of issues raised by local people and other consultees, and the Applicants responses to them.

5.10 The expectation is that the application will be submitted in early 2023.