16 Socio-Economics

Introduction

16.1 This section of the Environmental Statement considers the potential for social and economic impacts to occur during the construction and operational phases of the development. The socio-economic assessment provides a review of local demographics, economic development, employment, housing, and community facilities, and incorporates the findings of a specialist Retail Impact Statement that has been undertaken by DTZ. The consideration of ‘community facilities’ is wide ranging, including provision of retail and leisure facilities and amenities, cultural services, open space and health and education facilities. The existing socio-economic conditions have been reviewed and the potential impacts arising from the proposals have been predicted, thereby allowing any potential mitigation measures to be identified early.

Methodology

16.2 Information on local socio-economic patterns and trends has been obtained from a variety of sources. Research into the extent of community facilities in the area has largely been limited to the information contained on the Waverley Borough Council and Farnham Town Council websites, and does not extend to the privately managed facilities.

16.3 The majority of demographic information has been obtained from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) 2001 Census Data Estimates for England and Wales. A number of other specific documents relating to issues such as housing are referred to throughout this assessment, and full references are provided at the end of this section. The Census information has been presented at borough and ward level to enable comparison of conditions near the application site and the wider context.

16.4 The significance of impacts has been assessed in accordance with the guidance supplied by RPS, the EIA co-ordinators, to ensure consistency across the entire assessments. The methodology outlined above is compatible with that outlined in the Scoping Report submitted to Waverley Borough Council.

Baseline conditions

16.5 The application site is situated within Farnham Moor Park ward and currently provides a variety of uses including a supermarket, a local theatre, health centre, bowls club, tennis courts and car parking. As the site is located adjacent to Farnham Castle ward, and to enable
a comparison of conditions within the two wards, both wards have been considered. The baseline socio-economic conditions of the existing population, regeneration, housing, open space, employment, economic development and community facilities are described below.

Population

16.6 The populations within Farnham Moor Park and Farnham Castle wards, as measured in the 2001 census, were 4,361 and 4,070 respectively. Table 16.1 below shows a breakdown of the population within each ward as compared with the wider South East and national situation. Analysis of the data shows that the general population trends across the areas are consistent. The data shows that there are slightly less residents aged 0-19 within Farnham Moor Park than the regional and national situation, but that there are slightly higher numbers of retirement age residents. The same is true for the adjacent ward of Farnham Castle, although the difference is more pronounced, and there are substantially higher numbers of residents aged 16-44, and lower numbers of residents aged 45-64.

Table 16.1 Population composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age ranges</th>
<th>Percentage of population per area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farnham Moor Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>5.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-15</td>
<td>12.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-19</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-44</td>
<td>34.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>24.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>18.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16.7 According to the 2001 census information, 90.92% of the English population, and 95.10% of the South East population were white, compared with 97.41% of the Farnham Moor Park, and 95.65% of the Farnham Castle wards. Within the latter two wards, the largest ethnic minorities groups were represented by mixed race, Asian/Asian British and Chinese or other ethnic group.

Regeneration

16.8 A planning brief has been prepared by Waverley Borough Council, in relation to the East Street ‘Area of Opportunity’. It is recognised that parts of the application site are suffering neglect, and that there is uncertainty over the future of some of the sites most prominent features. Plans for regeneration of the area have been taken forward by the independent East Street Steering Group which is supported by Waverley Borough Council and the Town Council.
and includes representatives of landowners, developers, the planning authority, the local health trust, and the Chamber of Trade.

16.9 The planning brief for the area has been prepared following extensive consultation through ‘Action Planning’ events, an urban design workshop and a public exhibition. Since then, more extensive consultation has informed the specific proposals as proposed through this planning application.

16.10 Opportunity exists for development in this area to create a high quality townscape to complement that of the adjoining Conservation Area. Farnham is characterised by a mix of building periods and styles and the adopted Local Plan states that any development should enrich this distinctive character blending with the existing fabric of the town and providing a varied townscape.

Index of multiple deprivation

16.11 The Index of Multiple Deprivation was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in December 2007. Previous versions have been published in 2001 and 2004. It was calculated by collecting data for 37 indicators for seven main topic areas or domains, each measuring a different aspect of deprivation:

- Income Deprivation Domain
- Employment Deprivation Domain
- Health Deprivation and Disability Domain
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation Domain
- Barriers to Housing and Services Domain
- Crime Domain
- The Living Environment Deprivation Domain

16.12 Results from the seven domains were then combined into an overall Index of Multiple Deprivation. A total of 32,482 Super Output Areas (SOAs) were assessed in England. A number of SOAs fall within the Farnham Moor Park and Farnham Castle wards. The SOA with a rank of one is the most deprived, and 32,482 is least deprived on this overall measure. The indices of multiple deprivation within Farnham Moor Park ward range from 22,265 to 31,249, and within Farnham Castle ward from 25,695 to 30,658. It has not been possible to compare indices of deprivation between 2001 and 2007 because of the change in data collection from ward level to SOAs.

16.13 Nationally, Waverley Borough Council is ranked 348 out of 355 local authorities in terms of the 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation. Levels of deprivation in the borough are therefore low.
Employment

16.14 Unemployment within the wider Waverley area was recorded as 1.6% through the 2001 census. The unemployment figure within Farnham Moor Park ward is 2.2%, while within Farnham Castle it is 1.9%. Both figures are lower than the national average, which is currently at 5.3% (November 2007).

16.15 A variety of uses currently exist on the site, including a supermarket, shops, bowls club and tennis courts, all of which provide sources of local employment. Jobs are currently provided through existing use of the application site.

Economic development

16.16 The County of Surrey is close to London, and as such, has a dynamic economy and large population, over half of which are economically active. According to the ‘Economic Profile’, contained on Surrey County Council’s website, the skills and occupational attributes of Surrey’s local workforce are strong. There are high levels of entrepreneurship and above average percentages of the resident workforce are employed as managers and senior officials. Employment levels are very high although the county’s commercial premises have varying levels of occupancy.

16.17 Waverley Borough Council agreed an ‘Economic Opportunities Strategy’ for the area in July 1997. The strategy is based upon a partnership between the business community and the borough council together with others. The themes of the strategy include: actions for the borough (including maintaining relevant skills within the labour force and encouraging people to use local businesses and services); actions for the towns (including maintaining the relevance and prosperity of the towns in the borough); and actions for the Council (including effectively deploying the Council’s assets to implement the strategy).

Retail provision

16.18 Farnham town centre has some 44,500sq.m of retail and service floorspace (excluding vacant floorspace), and over 245 outlets. The centre has a higher than average proportion of comparison outlets. The vacancy rate (in terms of percentage of outlets) is half that of the national average. In total there are just thirteen vacant units, all of which are under 350 sq.m in size and many are poorly configured and/or are in peripheral locations. This represents 3.9% of the total stock and considerably lower than the national average (8.4%). There is one managed centre in the town, The Lion & Lamb Yard. Opened in 1995, the 6,600sq.m centre is anchored by Waitrose and Ottakers. Other anchors elsewhere in the town centre include Woolworths, Boots and Sainsbury’s. There is a single department store in the town, Elphicks, and independent store comprising some 3,000sq.m floorspace over two retail floors. There are no multiple department stores within the town. Further analysis of retail issues is contained
in the supporting Retail Impact Statement. Table 16.2 below details the current provision of retail floorspace in Farnham.

Table 16.2 Retail Floorspace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Floorspace</th>
<th>GB Average Floorspace %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>6,763</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison</td>
<td>19,277</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>16,431</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44,471</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>1,672</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Services include retail, leisure and financial and business.

Housing

16.19 Table 16.3 below shows a breakdown of the housing mix by tenure for the Farnham Moor Park and Farnham Castle wards, as well as for the wider Waverley area. According to the 2001 Census information, the main household split in the Waverley area comprised those with dependent children, although there was a high proportion of one-person households. Farnham Castle held a larger proportion of one-person households in comparison to Farnham Moor Park and Waverley Borough Council as a whole. The average household size within Waverley Borough Council is 2.36 people.

Table 16.3 Housing tenure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing tenure</th>
<th>Percentage by area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farnham Moor Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner occupied</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council / Housing Association</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private rented</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other rented</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16.20 One of the consequences of the economic success of Surrey is the high demand and costs of housing in the area. The Waverley Borough Housing Needs Survey Update (2005) states that the overall house price increase in the borough has been 44.9% since 2001. In particular, the entry level stock (terraced housing and flats) had risen very significantly. The increase in price of flats/ maisonettes (31.3%) over the period 2001-2005 was significantly in excess of wage inflation. The survey stated that entry to the housing market is clearly dependent on availability, a factor which is particularly critical for low income households who can only enter
the market in any numbers where there is an adequate supply of affordable dwellings. It is stated that there is anticipated to be an annual shortfall of affordable housing of 622 units per year.

16.21 The survey also contains information on population projections and sets out the projected population increase within Waverley Borough Council of 8.6% between 2001 and 2026. The most significant area of growth is anticipated to be in the over 65 age group. A survey of residents indicated a high demand for one and two bedroom units.

Education

16.22 There is a range of primary and secondary schools in the area surrounding the application site. The Surrey Schools Organisation Plan 2003/2004 - 2008/2009 states that reduced birth rates in Surrey are likely to lead to under-subscription of schools. For Waverley, the plan states that, overall, surplus of primary places throughout the borough is anticipated to remain stable at approximately 12%. With regard to secondary school places, it is anticipated that the present pattern of provision will meet the expected pupil numbers. Forecasts suggest that in the short term there will be a fluctuating year seven demand with demand falling in the medium term leading to a rise in overall capacity figures.

16.23 Educational attainment is high within Waverley in general, with only 18.4% of the population aged 16-74 having no qualifications (compared to 28.9% nationally). Similarly, educational attainment is high within Farnham Moor Park and Farnham Castle, with only 17% and 16.6% of the population aged 16-74 having no qualifications, respectively.

Health care

16.24 Table 16.4 below shows census health information relating to Farnham Moor Park and Castle wards, compared to the wider Waverley and England areas. The information suggests that residents in the immediate and wider area have fewer health problems than English residents as a whole.

Table 16.4 Health problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% With limiting long-term disease</th>
<th>% Those whose general health not good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farnham Moor Park</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farnham Castle</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waverley</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16.25 Guildford and Waverley Primary Care Trust (PCT) is responsible for the delivery of primary care in this area. It works with 29 GP Practices and other independent contractors including dentists and pharmacists, and provides community services such as health visiting, district nursing and therapies like physiotherapy. The PCT operates three Community Hospitals, in Haslemere, Cranleigh and Farnham, and a specialist rehabilitation hospital in Milford, and provides specialist services, including Breast Screening, Genito Urinary Medicine and Wheelchair Services.

16.26 NHS services are offered by main hospitals and trusts, including the Farnham Hospital and Centre for Health, which is convenient to the application site. The NHS Local Services search indicated approximately four GP surgeries, three dental surgeries, nine opticians and six pharmacies serving the site. The Gostrey Centre is located within the application site, and is a day centre specialising in the care of the elderly. The centre cares for people over 50, and people with mental and physical disability are included in special groups. On offer within the centre are lunch, bathing services, laundry, hairdressing, chiropody and organisation of outings and holidays.

Open space, sport and recreation

16.27 There is a number of parks and recreation grounds surrounding the application site, including:

- Borelli Walk (Landscape Open Space)
- Marden Recreation Ground (Landscape Open Space & Playground)
- Oast House Crescent Recreation Ground (Landscape Open Space)
- Riverside Walk (The Maltings) (Landscape Open Space)
- Farnham Sports Centre (General Amenity)
- Morley Road Recreation Ground (Recreational Area)
- Farnham Park (Park)
- Evelyn Borelli Garden of Rest (Park)
- Gostrey Meadow (Park)
- Haren Gardens (Park)

16.28 Brightwell Gardens amenity space is located within the application site itself. There is also a number of sports facilities, play areas and playgrounds in the wider area.

Other attractions / community facilities

16.29 There are a wide variety of other attractions and community facilities in the Farnham area. Attractions include Farnham Castle, Alice Holt Woodland Park, Birdworld and Underworld and Waverley Abbey. Other facilities include the retail, leisure and community services within the town centre. There is also a large number of churches within the area.
Nuisance and amenity
16.30 Open space and public realm areas within the application site are currently under-used and are in need of upgrading.

Assessment of effects

Construction / demolition effects
16.31 The following section identifies the likely effects of the project on the receiving environment during the demolition/construction phase. These are assessed according to the headings set out in the baseline section.

Population
16.32 The demographic make up of the local population is not likely to be affected by this phase of development, particularly as there is only a small level of residential development on the application site at present. Therefore, the significance of the impact is considered to be neutral.

Regeneration
16.33 This phase of development is likely to result in short-term adverse impacts, resulting from the logistical and townscape disturbance caused by construction activities. Ongoing construction activity may also cause short-term barriers to employment and services, thus reducing regeneration activity. Overall, the impact significance is considered to be minor adverse, given its short timescale and contribution to long-term gain for the area.

Employment and economic development
16.34 During this phase, it is anticipated that site operatives will be directly employed on the application site. In addition, there will be a wide range of spin-off and indirect sources of employment resulting from the development, for example within construction supply and local catering companies. There will be resultant benefits for the economy in the surrounding local area. The impact significance is assessed as moderate beneficial, given the extent of investment being introduced to the area.

16.35 There is potential for disturbance to existing sources of employment within the application site as a result of construction activity. However, this is assessed as being of minor adverse significance, given the short timescale during which these impacts will occur, and considerate construction management.
Retail provision

16.36 It is expected that short-term disturbance to retail provision within the application site will occur as a result of construction activities. However, the significance of the impact is considered to be minor adverse as a result of the continuation in operation of the Sainsbury’s Supermarket and the other low grade of uses on the site currently, and the anticipated short timeframe of the effect.

Housing

16.37 As there is currently very minimal residential provision on the site, it is anticipated that this impact will be of neutral significance.

Education & health care

16.38 Educational facilities are not likely to be affected by this phase of development. There is the potential for additional demand on health care facilities as a result of the introduction of construction workers to the area. This phase may also cause disturbance to the services to the Gostrey Centre, although it is intended that access will be maintained and the services provided while the ‘new’ Gostrey Centre is constructed. The impact significance is assessed as minor adverse given the short timescales for disturbance and the alternative facilities to be provided.

Open space, sport and recreation

16.39 During construction / demolition, it is likely that disruption will occur to Brightwell Gardens, the Riverside Walk, the Tennis Courts and Farnham Sports Centre. These impacts are considered to be minor adverse in significance, in particular as the Brightwell Gardens are currently suffering from neglect, but also because there is a range of alternative facilities available within the wider area for the short-term period of disruption. The Tennis Club are also being relocated to new facilities at the Riverside.

Other attractions/ community facilities

16.40 It is not considered that any impacts will occur to these attractions/ facilities as a result of this phase, hence the impact is assessed as neutral in significance.

Nuisance and amenity

16.41 It is anticipated that most impacts on amenity and cause of nuisance will occur during this stage, due to construction activities and associated disturbance in terms of traffic and noise impacts. These impacts are all assessed in the relevant chapters, but in terms of impacts to human beings, it is considered that at this stage of development, impacts will be of moderate adverse significance. However, a range of mitigation measures proposed as part of
construction management are anticipated to reduce the significance of the impacts to minor adverse.

**Operational effects**

16.42 The following section sets out the impacts anticipated to arise once the proposed development is built and occupied.

**Population**

16.43 Using the Surrey Planning Collaboration Project (2006) formulae, the proposed development would generate a residential population of approximately 395 people. Given the mix of residential units of mostly one and two bedroom units (with a small number of three bedroom units), it is anticipated that most of the new population will be of the 20+ age range given the demographic range as detailed in Table 16.1 above.

16.44 The new population is likely to increase the viability of new retail and leisure facilities within the site and to contribute to a more vibrant and sustainable town centre. Hence, the impact significance is assessed to be moderate beneficial.

**Regeneration**

16.45 The proposed development represents substantial investment in the local area, and responds directly to the Local Planning Authority's and local community's vision for the site. The tangible investment in the area is anticipated to overcome the current problems of neglect in the East Street area and to provide a high quality townscape to complement that of the adjoining Conservation Area. The enhancement of the application site is anticipated to bring broader benefits to the wider Farnham area, hence the impact significance is assessed as moderate beneficial.

**Employment and economic development**

16.46 The investment in the area, and the provision of a range of enhanced retail and leisure facilities on the site, is likely to result in the provision of a number of employment opportunities. The strength and success of the Surrey workforce will help to ensure that there is sufficient spending power to support the proposals. The proposed development responds directly to the Local Planning Authority's Economic Opportunities Strategy by encouraging people to use local businesses and services and maintaining the relevance and prosperity of the towns. The impact significance is assessed as moderate beneficial.

**Retail provision**

16.47 The proposed retail floorspace contained in this application will sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the existing town centre retail area of Farnham. The East Street scheme
is located within the town centre boundary and meets the tests set out in PPS6 and in local planning policy. The proposed development represents a significant and much-needed private sector investment in the future retail ‘offer’ of the town and will go some way to stemming the decline of this part of the town. It is considered that the proposed development has the potential to act as an important catalyst for further retail provision and bolster Farnham’s attraction as a shopping destination. Hence, the impact significance is assessed as moderate beneficial.

**Housing**

16.48 The proposed development will result in the introduction of high quality private and affordable housing to a sustainable location. The proposed proportion of affordable housing is 30%, the split of which has been discussed and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. The provision of housing in this area of high demand, the high level of affordable housing, and the emphasis of delivery on one and two bedroom units means that the housing needs of the area have been addressed. The impact significance is therefore assessed as moderate beneficial.

**Education & health care**

16.49 Given the number and size of the proposed units of one and two bedroom units (with only a small number of three bedroom units), it is anticipated that there will be limited demand for additional educational places created by the proposals. Using the Surrey Planning Collaboration Project (2006) formulae a total of 37 Primary and 26 Secondary School age children would be generated by the proposed development. The Surrey Schools Organisation Plan has indicated that there is sufficient education provision in the County to meet expected demands. The impact significance is assessed as neutral. However, to ensure this is the case, consultation with the Local Education Authority will be carried out as part of the planning process.

16.50 The services provided by Gostrey Centre will be greatly enhanced through the proposed replacement Gostrey Centre facility. There will be a need to ensure that there is adequate provision for health care of the new residents, and this will be the subject of further discussion between the Local Planning Authority and the healthcare providers. In terms of the proposals, it is likely that the impact significance will be neutral, as healthcare provision is considered at a strategic level and the projected population should be included in the County/Borough projections for health care provision.

**Open space, sport and recreation**

16.51 The proposals include provision for high quality landscaping and more direct linkages to the riverside. In addition, the new proposals will be accessible to a range of existing open spaces
and sports and recreation facilities in the area. Hence the overall impact significance is assessed as minor beneficial.

**Other attractions / community facilities**

16.52 The proposed development will be accessible to the range of facilities outlined in the baseline description. In addition, the proposals will provide another resource in the form of the proposed cinema. Hence, the impact significance is assessed as minor beneficial.

**Nuisance/ amenity**

16.53 The proposed development has been carefully designed in accordance with a range of guidance and building regulations to ensure the compatibility of land uses in such close proximity, particularly in relation to noise. The proposals represent an improvement on the existing situation in terms of accessibility and movement through the site, and landscaping. Full details of these issues are included in the relevant chapters of the ES. In terms of socio-economic conditions, these are anticipated to be enhanced and the impact significance is assessed as moderate beneficial.

**Summary of effects**

16.54 Table 16.5 summarises the significance of the main impacts identified in this chapter:

**Table 16.5 Summary of effects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Significance of effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regeneration activity</td>
<td>Minor Adverse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment &amp; economic development</td>
<td>Minor adverse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail provision</td>
<td>Minor Adverse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; health care</td>
<td>Minor Adverse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open space, sport &amp; recreation</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other attractions</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuisance and amenity</td>
<td>Moderate Adverse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Effect</td>
<td>Minor Adverse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further mitigation

16.55 The preceding text sets out the proposed mitigation measures, such as implementation of considerate construction management, and consultation to be undertaken with health care and education authorities. It is considered that the proposed development will represent a significant improvement on the existing situation in socio-economic terms, therefore no further mitigation is proposed.

Cumulative effects

16.56 There are no other proposed developments in the immediate area that are likely to cause significant cumulative effects with these proposals. However, the Local Planning Authority will need to ensure that the relevant health and education authorities are advised of any major developments as soon as possible to that adequate provision of services can be factored into the relevant plans and strategies.

Conclusion

16.57 The socio-economic assessment has been undertaken to assess the impact of the proposals on the existing and future population. It has established that there is a number of adverse impacts associated with the construction and demolition stage of development, predominantly in relation to the disruption to existing retail and other town centre services, as well as general nuisance and amenity effects. These are generally minor in significance.

16.58 The proposed development provides a range of long term benefits in terms of regeneration and economic development of the area, responding to housing need and the reversing of recent under-investment in this part of the town centre.

References

DTZ (2007) East Street Farnham, Retail Impact Statement

ONS Website


Waverley Borough Council (1997) Economic Opportunities Strategy Waverley Borough Council Website

Waverley Borough Council (2000) Planning Brief for East Street Farnham Waverley Borough Council

Waverley Borough Council (2005) Housing Needs Survey Update Waverley Borough Council