

Havant Thicket Reservoir – North West Corner Reserved Matters Application Statement of Conformity with the Environmental Statement



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1. INTRODUCTION

The Havant Thicket Reservoir is an environmentally led project. The new reservoir will facilitate a reduction in abstractions from the river Test and Itchen as well as increasing the resilience of future water supply for the region. The delivery of the Havant Thicket Reservoir is key to Portsmouth Water realising its Vision of providing affordable, reliable and sustainable supply of high-quality water for its customers.

In support of the Northwest Corner Reserved Matters Application, relating to the Visitor Centre, Portsmouth Water has prepared a Statement of Conformity with the Environmental Statement.

Planning permission for the Havant Thicket Reservoir Scheme was granted in October 2021 by Havant Borough Council and East Hampshire District Council (application references APP/20/00990 and 51680/001). This approval was issued as a hybrid consent, combining full planning permission for certain elements with outline consent for others. The original application was accompanied by an Environmental Statement (Atkins, 2020), which documented the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

In 2024, separate Section 73 applications were submitted to both councils to introduce amendments to the design of the main embankment and associated infrastructure. These applications were supported by an Environmental Statement Addendum (2024), which assessed the environmental implications of changes to the embankment, Control House, culvert, and valve tower.

This Statement of Conformity reviews whether the detailed design proposals for the Visitor Centre would result in any new or materially different environmental effects compared with those identified in the 2020 Environmental Statement and the 2024 Addendum.

2. DESCRIPTION OF RESERVE MATTERS RELATING TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER

The Havant Thicket Reservoir Visitor Centre and Associated Recreational Facilities project in the North-West portion of the reservoir site comprises the following elements:

- A Visitor Centre, providing a focus for public engagement with the reservoir, with a reception and exhibition area, shop, café and restaurant facilities, an education / conference space, staff spaces, and toilets. We are proposing that this building has a location set over water.
- A services building, comprising of an energy centre, with all services which are better located on land, a café kiosk, catering stores and public toilets, including a Changing Places facility.
- An education bird hide, suitable for usage by a half-class group of 15 students.
- Associated landscape elements including car and bus parking, covered cycle stands picnic and play areas, paths, roads and boardwalks, signage and wayfinding, other ancillary facilities and infrastructure, and CCTV coverage.

The Northwest Corner Reserved Matters (Visitor Centre) is required to deliver the public-facing elements of the Havant Thicket Reservoir scheme, providing facilities for recreation, education, heritage interpretation and community engagement. The development should support public access and understanding of the reservoir's environmental, historical and water-resource functions, in accordance with the approved design principles and mitigation objectives.

Urban Fabric have been commissioned by Portsmouth Water to undertake the design of the Visitors Centre. The design of the Visitors Centre accords with the parameters, principles and standards set out in the Section 73 Development Specification (2024), as follows:

- Scheme Parameters – Table 2.2 of the Development Specification
- Scheme Environmental Design Principles – Paragraph 3.2 of the Development Specification
- Detailed Design Standards and Principles – Paragraph 3.3 of the Development Specification

The following drawings have been prepared by Urban Fabric for the northwest corner Reserved Matters application:

- Covering letter
- Application form
- Design and Access Statement
- Planning Statement

- Statement of Community Involvement
- Statement of Conformity with the Environmental Statement (Phase 9 – North West Corner) (this document)
- Application drawings

The application is seeking approval of the following 'reserved matters' for Phase 9 – North West Corner:

- Siting
- Scale
- External appearance
- Landscaping

3. ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL

3.1 Background

The Environmental Statement (ES) prepared in 2020 to support the hybrid planning application evaluated the potential for significant environmental effects of the Scheme across a range of topics. This included air quality, the historic environment, biodiversity, ground conditions, landscape and visual impacts, noise and vibration, traffic and transport, material resources and waste, water environment (including flows, quality and groundwater), climate, climate change resilience, population and human health, cumulative effects, and vulnerability to major accidents and disasters.

The ES Addendum produced in 2024 set out the proposed design amendments associated with the Section 73 applications and assessed whether these changes could give rise to any new or materially different significant environmental effects. The topic of vulnerability to major accidents and disasters was not taken forward for further assessment, as it was determined that the proposed amendments would not introduce any new or substantially different effects in this regard.

Overall, the 2024 ES Addendum concluded that, when mitigation and compensatory measures from both the original scheme and the Section 73 proposals are taken into account, the design changes would not result in any new or additional significant environmental effects.

3.2 Environmental Appraisal of Northwest Corner Reserved Matters

The 2020 ES and 2024 ES Addendum assessed the likely environmental effects of the Visitor Centre based on the approved scheme parameters, with an illustrative design submitted only to demonstrate a potential form of development. As the detailed design remains within the assessed parameters, the environmental topics have been reviewed to establish whether it could result in any new or materially different environmental effects. The topics considered as part of this review are set out in Table 1.

Table 1: *Summary of environmental topics reviewed for Northwest Corner Reserved Matters*

2020 ES / 2024 ES Addendum Topic	Environmental Appraisal Summary		
	2020 ES	2024 ES Addendum	NW Corner Reserved Matters application
Air Quality	The 2020 ES did not identify any significant adverse air quality effects during construction or operation.	The air quality effects arising from construction dust and construction road traffic emissions was no greater than those predicted in the 2020 ES. There was no change to the planned operation of the Scheme and the assessment of effects presented in the 2020 ES remained unchanged. All relevant committed mitigation continued to be applied to control potential residual effects from dust to non-significant levels. As such, no change to the significance of effects were identified from air emissions and dust sources from that described in the 2020 ES.	The air quality effects arising from construction dust and construction road traffic emissions is considered no greater than those predicted in the 2020 ES. There was no change to the planned operation of the Scheme and the assessment of effects presented in the 2020 ES remained unchanged. All relevant committed mitigation continued to be applied to control potential residual effects from dust to non-significant levels. As such, no change to the significance of effects were identified from air emissions and dust sources from that described in the 2020 ES.
Historic Environment	The 2020 ES reported that two heritage assets, comprising the Grade II* Leigh Park Registered Park and Garden, and the Sir George Staunton Conservation Area, would experience adverse effects that would be significant.	Any direct archaeological impacts arising from ongoing and future construction activities did not materially change from those assessed in the 2020 ES. Overall, the design revisions did not result in any change to the significance of effects on heritage assets reported in the 2020 ES.	Any direct archaeological impacts arising from ongoing and future construction activities did not materially change from those assessed in the 2020 ES. The position of the visitor's centre is located in the same northwest corner envelope as presented in the 2020 ES. Overall, the design revisions did not result in any change to the significance of effects on heritage assets reported in the 2020 ES.
Ground Conditions	The 2020 ES did not identify any significant adverse effects on ground	The significance of effects on ground conditions remained unchanged from those presented in	The design presented in the Reserved Matters application for the Phase 9 Visitors Centre is

2020 ES / 2024 ES Addendum Topic	Environmental Appraisal Summary		
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	conditions during construction with appropriate mitigation measures in place.	the 2020 ES. All relevant committed mitigation will continue to be applied to control potential residual effects to non-significant levels in accordance with the Record of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) presented in the CEMP. A Materials Management Plan has been prepared to manage the site won materials and demonstrate that it is being appropriately used on site within the main reservoir works. As such, there is no change to the significance of effects on ground conditions during construction from that described in the 2020 ES.	<p>consistent with the assessments undertaken in the 2020 ES and 2024 ES Addendum and as such, there will be no change to the significance of effects previously reported.</p> <p>All relevant committed mitigation will continue to be applied to control potential residual effects to non-significant levels in accordance with the Record of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) presented in the Outline Environmental Management Plan. A Materials Management Plan will be prepared to manage the site won materials and demonstrate that it is being appropriately used on site within the main reservoir works once a contractor is onboard. As such, there is no change to the significance of effects on ground conditions during construction from that described in the 2020 ES.</p>
Noise and Vibration	The 2020 ES reported that noise and vibration from construction works would not result in adverse effects that would be significant during daytime hours. During operation, no adverse effects were identified that would be significant on receptors.	During construction, noise and vibration would not result in adverse effects that would be significant during daytime hours with the implementation of mitigation measures. As such, the assessment presented in the 2020 ES remained unchanged. A Noise and Vibration Management Plan set out the mitigation measures to be adopted during construction.	The design presented in the Reserved Matters application for the Visitor Centre is consistent with the assessments undertaken in the 2020 ES and 2024 ES Addendum. The proposals do not introduce any new noise or vibration sources beyond those previously assessed, and the Visitor Centre is located within the approved development parameters.

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		During operation, the assessment of noise and vibration effects remained unchanged from the 2020 ES and there would be no significant adverse effects.	<p>Construction noise and vibration effects will be managed through the implementation of committed mitigation measures, including best practicable means and construction management controls. Operational noise impacts are limited to low levels of traffic activity and are not predicted to be significant.</p> <p>As such, there will be no change to the significance of noise and vibration effects previously reported, and no new or materially different significant effects will arise.</p>
Biodiversity	The 2020 ES reported that the Scheme would result in residual adverse effects that would be significant as a result of the direct loss of ancient woodland, habitat within Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, priority habitat and watercourses.	<p>The 2024 ES reported that a substantial area of habitat had already been cleared under the planning permission for the 2020 approved Scheme. No further land take or direct impact on ecological receptors was concluded with the proposed revisions to the Scheme.</p> <p>The Visitor Centre remains within the approved parameter area assessed in the 2020 ES and is not directly affected by the design changes considered in the Addendum. Overall assessment findings remain unchanged, with no new or materially different significant ecological effects</p>	<p>The Visitor Centre proposals are consistent with the ecological assessment, assumptions and mitigation established in the 2020 ES and confirmed in the 2024 ES Addendum. While not assessed in detail at the outline stage, the Visitor Centre is located within the approved development parameters and within an area of anticipated recreational use already considered within the ES.</p> <p>Potential biodiversity impacts associated with the Visitor Centre primarily relate to increased visitor activity, disturbance to sensitive habitats and species (particularly birds), lighting, and pressure on wetland and woodland habitats. These risks are typical of recreational development within sensitive landscapes and</p>

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			<p>are addressed through embedded mitigation and management controls. The design incorporates embedded mitigation in line with the ES, including habitat creation, buffering and management of recreational activity, consistent with the Biodiversity Mitigation and Compensation Strategy and Outline Environmental Management Plan.</p> <p>As such, the Reserved Matters proposals do not introduce new impact pathways or increase the magnitude of effects on ecological receptors. There will be no change to the significance of ecological effects previously reported, and no new or materially different significant effects will arise.</p>
Landscape and Visual	<p>The 2020 ES assessed the landscape and visual effects of the reservoir development, including the Visitor Centre and associated facilities within the northwest corner parameter area, located within a high value landscape comprising Staunton Country Park, woodland and public rights of way. The assessment identified that, with embedded mitigation including retention of vegetation, woodland planting and landscape integration, construction</p>	<p>The 2024 ES Addendum reviewed changes to the reservoir design, including embankment reconfiguration and associated infrastructure, and confirmed that these remain within the original assessment framework and do not alter the study area, methodology or mitigation established in the 2020 ES.</p> <p>The Visitor Centre remains within the approved northwest corner parameter area assessed in the 2020 ES and is not directly affected by the 2024 design changes. The Addendum</p>	<p>The design of the Visitor Centre and associated landscape proposals has been developed in accordance with the principles and parameters established within the 2020 ES and 2024 ES Addendum. The location and extent of built development remain within the approved northwest corner parameter envelope, ensuring consistency with the assumptions underpinning the LVIA. The scheme adopts a landscape-led approach, incorporating embedded mitigation measures including native woodland planting,</p>

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	effects would be temporary, and operational effects would reduce over time to minor or negligible, with no significant long-term adverse effects.	concluded that construction and operational landscape and visual effects remain unchanged, with no new or materially different significant effects and no change to the significance of effects previously reported.	<p>earth mounding, and the reinforcement of existing vegetation to ensure that built form and infrastructure are appropriately screened and integrated within the surrounding landscape. The layout minimises visual intrusion by concentrating development within a defined zone and maintaining open, naturalised landscape character across the wider site.</p> <p>These measures align with the mitigation strategy identified in the ES and ensure that potential landscape and visual effects are no greater than those previously assessed. As such, the Reserved Matters proposals will not give rise to any new or materially different significant effects, and the significance of effects remains unchanged from that reported in the 2020 ES and 2024 ES Addendum.</p>
Population and Human Health	The 2020 ES identified impacts on human health could arise during construction from the temporary reduction in access to open space which would be mitigated by maintaining safe access for the public, where possible.	With the implementation of mitigation, all construction phase residual effects on health determinants will remain unchanged from the 2020 ES. The likely significant effects assessed during operation of the reservoir, as presented in the 2020 ES, will also remain unchanged. A Construction Traffic Management Plan has been prepared which sets out how traffic and site operations will be managed during the main construction works and how construction staff	The design presented in the Reserved Matters application for the Phase 9 Visitors Centre is consistent with the assessments undertaken in the 2020 ES and 2024 ES Addendum and as such, there will be no change to the significance of effects previously reported for population and human health.

2020 ES / 2024 ES Addendum Topic	Environmental Appraisal Summary		
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		will travel to and from the site. The Noise and Vibration Management Plan sets out the mitigation measures adopted during construction. All relevant committed mitigation can continue to be applied as envisaged to control potential residual effects to slight adverse levels. As such, there would no change to the significance of effects reported in the 2020 ES with respect to population and human health.	
Traffic and Transport	The 2020 ES did not identify any significant adverse effects arising from traffic and transport during construction or operation with mitigation measures in place.	The 2024 ES Addendum reviewed design changes to the reservoir and confirmed that these do not alter the established traffic and transport assessment, including assumptions relating to the Visitor Centre and its anticipated opening year. Forecast traffic growth remains lower than that assessed in the 2020 ES, and no changes are proposed to access arrangements or trip generation. A Construction Traffic Management Plan has been prepared which sets out how traffic and site operations will be managed during construction. No changes were proposed to vehicular access or parking provision during operation. As such, the findings of the traffic and transport assessment in the 2020 ES remain unchanged and with no new or materially different significant effects.	<p>The Visitor Centre proposals are consistent with the access strategy, trip generation and assessment assumptions established in the 2020 ES and 2024 ES Addendum. Minor changes to the layout for parking provision during operation remain within the requirements, geographic area and scale assessed in the 2020 ES. The development remains within the approved parameters, with no changes to site access or anticipated visitor numbers.</p> <p>Construction traffic will be managed through the approved Construction Traffic Management Plan, and operational effects will be managed through a Travel Plan to promote sustainable travel.</p>

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			As such, there will be no change to the significance of traffic and transport effects previously reported, and no new or materially different significant effects will arise.
Material Resources and Waste	The 2020 ES did not identify any adverse effects that would be significant on the availability of construction materials, or from wastes produced during construction.	<p>The 2024 ES Addendum reviewed updates to material quantities and construction profiles and confirmed that the assessment methodology, study area and embedded mitigation measures remain unchanged from the 2020 ES.</p> <p>The Visitor Centre is not specifically affected by the design changes considered in the Addendum. The Addendum confirms that, despite increased material quantities across the Scheme, the direct and indirect impacts identified in the 2020 ES remain valid and no updated assessment is required.</p> <p>Accordingly, the significance of effects remains unchanged, with no new or materially different significant effects identified</p>	<p>The Visitor Centre proposals are consistent with the material resource and waste assumptions established in the 2020 ES and 2024 ES Addendum. The Visitor Centre and associated car parking were not assessed in detail within the 2020 ES due to the preliminary design stage; however, the scale and nature of development are minor relative to the overall Scheme and fall within the parameters assessed.</p> <p>Construction will follow established mitigation measures, including reuse of site-won materials, implementation of a Site Waste Management Plan and Materials Management Plan, and adherence to the waste hierarchy. As such, there will be no change to the significance of material resource and waste effects previously reported, and no new or materially different significant effects will arise.</p>
Water	The 2020 ES reported that there would be residual adverse effects that would be significant on aquatic habitats, habitat connectivity and	The changes to the Scheme did not alter the findings of the 2020 ES assessment and no additional mitigation will be required as part of the ongoing package of compensation and	The changes to the Scheme did not alter the findings of the 2020 ES assessment and no additional mitigation will be required as part of the ongoing package of compensation and

2020 ES / 2024 ES Addendum Topic	Environmental Appraisal Summary		
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	geomorphology. Compensation and mitigation measures were identified for the impacted water body of Riders Lane Stream.	mitigation measures. The effects on flood risk will also be no greater than those predicted in the 2020 ES. During operation, the significance of effects on the water environment also remained unchanged from the 2020 ES.	mitigation measures. The effects on flood risk will also be no greater than those predicted in the 2020 ES. During operation, the significance of effects on the water environment also remained unchanged from the 2020 ES.
Climate	The 2020 ES reported that the Scheme is unlikely to cause significant effects on climate or significantly affect the UK's ability to meet its emissions reduction targets.	The greenhouse gas emissions from changes to the Scheme in 2024, together with the additional assessment of emission sources not considered in the 2020 ES, would result in a 7% increase in construction emissions. However, the increase in emissions is not deemed material and the Scheme is anticipated to make a small contribution to the overall UK emissions. Therefore, the conclusion of the 2020 ES, that the Scheme is deemed unlikely to cause a significant effect on climate change remained unchanged. All relevant committed mitigation can continue to be applied as envisaged in the 2020 ES. The assessment of emissions during operation remained unchanged from the 2020 ES.	The design presented in the Reserved Matters application for the Phase 9 Visitors Centre is consistent with the assessments undertaken in the 2020 ES and 2024 ES Addendum and as such, there will be no change to the significance of effects previously reported.

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Vulnerability to Climate Change	The Scheme includes embedded mitigation to avoid, minimise or reduce potential impacts from changes in climate. No potential climate vulnerability impacts identified would have adverse effects that would be significant with embedded mitigation.	During construction, the significant effects assessed in the 2020 ES, such as the likelihood for extreme weather events, remained unchanged with embedded mitigation. The significant effects assessed during operation presented in the 2020 ES also remain unchanged with embedded mitigation.	The design presented in the Reserved Matters application for the Phase 9 Visitors Centre is consistent with the assessments undertaken in the 2020 ES and 2024 ES Addendum and as such, there will be no change to the significance of effects previously reported.
Cumulative and In Combination Effects	The 2020 ES reported that with mitigation, there would be no adverse cumulative or in-combination effects that would be significant.	There would be no change to the cumulative and in-combination effects arising during construction or operation. All relevant committed mitigation will continue to be applied as envisaged in the 2020 ES. As such, there were no changes to the significance of effects reported in the 2020 ES.	The design presented in the Reserved Matters application for the Phase 9 Visitors Centre is consistent with the assessments undertaken in the 2020 ES and 2024 ES Addendum and as such, there will be no change to the significance of effects previously reported.

4. CONCLUSION

This report has reviewed whether the proposed detailed design of the Visitor Centre, submitted as part of the Northwest Corner Reserved Matters application, could introduce any new or materially different significant effects compared with those identified in the 2020 Environmental Statement and the 2024 ES Addendum. The ES assessed the Visitor Centre based on approved scheme parameters rather than a fixed design, and the proposed detailed design remains within those assessed parameters. As such, no new or materially different environmental effects would arise. All agreed mitigation measures remain applicable and effective during both construction and operation, and the assessment therefore concludes that the Visitor Centre proposals do not result in any new or materially different environmental effects from those previously reported.