9 Land Use

9.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter as defined in Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) is to understand the present land use and effects of landtake associated with the Proposed Scheme (both permanent and temporary), considering the effects of property demolition, loss of agricultural land, impacts on development land, as well as the loss of land used by the community (for example, public open space).

In addition, consideration has been given to socio-economic impacts arising from the Proposed Scheme, although this is recognised as being outside the requirements of DMRB.

9.2 Assessment Methodology

9.2.1 Approach

The overall approach follows that set out in Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Volume 11, Section 3, Part 6 Land Use.

The DMRB guidance requires that consideration is given to:

- *Demolition of private property* – where properties require demolition for a scheme to be built.
- *Land used by the community* – for example land take affecting public open space and recreation areas. In addition, the socio-economic impacts of the Proposed Scheme in respect of economic regeneration as well as impacts on local businesses and employment have been considered (although this is not required by DMRB).
- *Effects on development land* – considering the impacts of the Proposed Scheme’s land take on sites designated for development in relevant statutory plans.
- *Effects on agricultural land* – considering land take, type of agriculture and severance. Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 7 “Sustainable Development in Rural Areas” stipulates that “…the best and most versatile agricultural land is a
national resource and that considerable weight should be given to protecting such land from
development”.

9.2.2 Study Area
For the purposes of the assessment, the study area is taken as being the route
corridor, as well as a 500m strip on either side of the Proposed Scheme.
Consideration is given to the following:

• Do minimum: No Proposed Scheme
• Do something (1): The Proposed Scheme
• Do something (2): The Proposed Scheme and associated development
• Do something (3): The Proposed Scheme and associated development
  including CVLR and SLIN

9.2.3 Receptors
The land affected by the Proposed Scheme is largely in agricultural use and
includes 4 farms: Upton Lodge, Heath Farm, Wood Farm and Norwood Farm.
Key receptors include the proposed Country Park to the west of the Proposed
Scheme, which will comprise of a significant area of public open space to be used
by the local and wider community under the Do Something 2 and 3 options.

9.2.4 Information Sources and Surveys
Information sources have included Ordnance Survey mapping, Land Registry data
in respect of land ownership, the Northampton Local Plan (1997) and the South
Northamptonshire Local Plan (1997). Desk based information gathering was
supported, supplemented and verified through a site visit in July 2006.

Public Rights of Way surveys were carried out by the company ‘Count on Us’
during July 2006 which provided a source of information on the use of existing
Public Rights of Ways (PROWs) for farm access.

9.2.5 Consultation
Consultation letters were sent to farms, schools and local businesses, as follows,
potentially impacted by the Proposed Scheme:
• Farms: Heath Farm; Norwood Farm; Upton Hall; Upton Lodge and Woodfarm Cottage.
• Schools: Duston Upper School; Quinton House School; and Ryelands Middle School.
• Local Businesses: Gerald White Group; T&S Threadgold; St Crispins Hospital; and St Crispins Social Club.

A response was received from Upton Lodge Farm who stated their concerns about the potential impacts on livestock grazing and being cut in half as a result of the Proposed Scheme. No responses were received from the local farming interests (however, note that the latter are also being consulted separately as part of ongoing consultations relating to development in the area).

9.2.6

Significance Criteria
Significance Criteria in respect of community and socio-economic impacts, impacts on development land and impacts on agricultural land were identified during the assessment process and are set out below. As the Proposed Scheme does not involve demolition of private property, no significance criteria is proposed in respect of this issue.

Table 9.1: Significance Criteria: Community & Socio-Economic Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Adverse</th>
<th>Reduction in employment or business opportunities as a result of the sterilisation of employment land.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loss of national/regionally important community facilities and/or land (including recreation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Adverse</td>
<td>Barriers/difficulties in accessing employment areas or businesses as a result of development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loss/reduction of locally important community land with no opportunity for mitigation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Adverse</td>
<td>Impaired access to local businesses/employment areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partial or temporary effect on local community land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Potential change is likely to be unrecognisable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Minor Beneficial | Increased employment/regeneration opportunities in the local area.  
| | Improved provision of community space/land in the local area. |
| Moderate Beneficial | Increased employment/regeneration opportunities in the sub-region.  
| | Improved sub-regional facility provision (including public open space) with benefits for new and existing community. |
| Major Beneficial | Regionally/nationally important employment and regeneration opportunity as a result of the scheme.  
| | Substantial improvements in public open space provision in the region, with excellent access from the sub-region. |

**Table 9.2: Significance Criteria: Effects on Development Land**

| Major Adverse | Loss of more than 20 ha of potential development land as a result of the scheme proposals. |
| Moderate Adverse | Loss of between 5 to 20 ha of potential development land as a result of the scheme proposals. |
| Minor Adverse | Loss of up to 5 ha of potential development land as a result of the scheme proposals. |
| Neutral | No loss of development land or impacts on residential properties. |
| Minor Beneficial | Development proposals will enable/contribute to the development of up to 5 ha of allocated development. |
| Moderate Beneficial | Development proposals will enable/contribute to the development of between 5 to 20 ha of allocated development. |
| Major Beneficial | Development proposals will enable/contribute to the development of more than 20 ha of allocated development. |
Table 9.3: Significance Criteria: Agricultural Land

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Adverse</td>
<td>Proposed Scheme will directly sterilise over 20 ha of the best and most versatile agricultural land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Adverse</td>
<td>Proposed Scheme will directly sterilise up to 20 ha of the best and most versatile agricultural land, or sterilise more than 50 ha of lower grade agricultural land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Adverse</td>
<td>Proposed Scheme will sterilise lower grade agricultural land/impact on the use of higher grade land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>No permanent effect on agricultural land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Beneficial</td>
<td>Proposed Scheme will restore or enhance the value or the use of agricultural land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Beneficial</td>
<td>Proposed Scheme will restore or enhance the value of up to 20 ha of the best and most versatile agricultural land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Beneficial</td>
<td>Proposed Scheme will restore or enhance the value of more than 50 ha of the best and most versatile agricultural land.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.3 Baseline Conditions

9.3.1 Land Use

The area affected by the Proposed Scheme currently consists of agricultural fields (see Drawing ES 9.2). The open agricultural fields and field gates are characteristics of the rural nature of the area. There are no permanent buildings within the study corridor.

9.3.2 Land used by the Community

Land within the Proposed Scheme traverses 2 Local Planning Authorities, Northampton and South Northamptonshire (see Drawing ES 4.1 South Northamptonshire and Northampton Borough Local Plan (1997) Designations).

To the west of the Proposed Scheme is South Northamptonshire. Land in this area is designated as a Special Landscape Area and Important Local Gaps in the South Northamptonshire Local Plan (1997) as illustrated in ES Drawing 4.1.
Special Landscape Areas in the South Northamptonshire Local Plan (1997) are defined as “...areas of the county which are of particular high landscape value and quality...”. Furthermore, “…the Council will seek to conserve and enhance the quality of the landscape...development opportunities in the Special Landscape Areas will be limited...”.

With regards to Important Local Gaps, South Northamptonshire Council has identified three areas where additional protection is necessary to protect settlements from the threat of coalescence. Of concern is the land to the west of the Proposed Scheme. The Plan states “...the council is concerned about the increasing threat of urbanisation of Northampton. There is a continuing concern that villages and their environs could be absorbed into a potential expansion of Northampton, thus threatening village identities and the open land between them”.

Policy EV7 of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan (1997) stipulates: “in the special landscape areas planning permission will only be granted for development which will not have a detrimental impact on their character and appearance. Particular attention must be paid to design, materials, siting of buildings and the use of land”. For areas designated as Important Local Gaps Policy EV8 stipulates “in order to prevent the coalescence of settlements the Council will not permit development which would significantly intrude into the following important local gaps...between the Northampton Borough boundary and the nearby villages and Hamlets and Harpole, Kislingbury, Rotherthorpe...”.

To the east of the Proposed Scheme is Northampton Borough. Land in this area is currently designated as green space and land proposed for residential development in the Northampton Local Plan (1997). The Plan defines Green Space as “...open space areas within Northampton which make an important contribution to the quality of urban life”. Furthermore, the Plan stipulates that such spaces may include “land used for agriculture...Such areas may form natural links with open countryside, open space within the river valley (and) linear corridors of open space”.

Policy E6 of the Northampton Local Plan (1997) stipulates that in “…green space areas, planning permission will only be granted where the proposed development would not unacceptably prejudice the function of the areas”. The safeguarded route for the Proposed Scheme, incorporated in the Northampton Local Plan (1997), traverses this area of green space.

Currently the areas designated as ‘Special Landscape Area’, ‘Important Local Gap’ and ‘Green Space’ are primarily used for agricultural activity. Community use of it is confined to the PROWs which traverse the area. Levels of use for recreational
purposes are described in Chapter 11 - Pedestrian, Cyclists, Equestrians and Community Effects.

St Crispins’ Social Club is located within the Study Area approximately 250 metres from the Proposed Scheme.

Residential development is in place south of Berrywood Road forming part of the St Crispins Estate.

9.3.3 Development Land

A safeguarded route for the Proposed Scheme was incorporated in the Northampton Local Plan when adopted in 1997. In addition, land to the east of the Proposed Scheme, north of the A4500 Weedon Road, is designated for development, which is to be primarily residential in nature. This is illustrated in Drawing ES 4.1.

9.3.4 Agricultural Land, Land Ownership and Farm Access

Agricultural uses within the scheme corridor include a mixture of cereal crops (to the north of A4500 Weedon Road) and grazing land. To the west of the Proposed Scheme is largely used for grazing sheep. Fields to the north west are grass used for grazing, livestock was present at the time of the site visit in July 2006.

The land is classified as Grade 3\(^1\) as shown on Drawing ES 9.1.

Paragraph 28 of PPS 7 “Sustainable Development in Rural Areas”, states that “...little weight in agricultural terms should be given to the loss of agricultural land in grades 3h, 4 and 5, except in areas (such as uplands) where particular agricultural practices may themselves contribute in some special way to the quality of and character of the environment of the local economy”.

DMRB recommends that where more than 20 ha of best and most versatile land in Grades 1 to 3a are likely to be lost of agricultural production, DEFRA (formerly MAFF) should be consulted as to whether a more detailed survey is needed. Permanent land take associated with the scheme is anticipated to be 9.43 ha. It is therefore not considered that a more detailed survey is required.

\(^{1}\) Note: Agricultural Land Classification mapping available from DEFRA does not include sub-division of grade 3 land into grades 3a and 3b)
To the North of A4500 Weedon Road, a significant proportion of the agricultural land within the Study Area is owned by English Partnerships and leased to agricultural users. Fields to the west of the Proposed Scheme is controlled by Redrow Housing (see Drawing ES 9.3).

Access to the land is currently on Sandy Lane and A4500 Weedon Road together with the Public Rights of Ways LB1, LB8 and KP16.

9.4 Potential Impacts

9.4.1 Construction Impacts

Construction works are currently planned to commence in March 2007 and are programmed to last approximately 12 months, ending in March 2008. Construction hours are likely to be 0700-1900 hours Monday to Friday and 0700-1300 hours on Saturday. Variations from these times are unlikely but, if required, it is recommended that the prior written consent of the Borough’s Principal Environmental Health Officer be sought. There is no intention for works to occur 24 hours a day.

The site compound is likely to be located immediately to the north of A4500 Weedon Road, east of the Proposed Scheme and close to the existing Upton Lodge Farm. Access to the site compound and construction corridor is likely to be taken from A4500 Weedon Road. It is expected that most of the construction corridor will continue to be accessed from this point for the duration of the works. The exception will be the works to Berrywood Road and the far north of the Proposed Scheme, where additional access is likely to be created from Berrywood Road. Drawing ES 15.1 provides details of the site compound location and site access.

The do minimum scenario has not been assessed for temporary effects. The do something scenarios for temporary effects are considered to be Minor Adverse, due to the following reasons.

Land used by the Community

Under the do something scenarios, temporary landtake of 35.92 ha will be required for the construction site. This landtake will predominantly be in the designated “Special Landscape Area”, “Important Local Gaps” and “greenspace” areas to the west and east of the Proposed Scheme. The Proposed Scheme will sever community access to this area from the west as for safety reasons the public will
not be able to use bridleway KP16 where it crosses the Proposed Scheme during the course of the works. A temporary diversion will be put into place to ensure access is still provided, Chapter 11 – Pedestrians, Cyclists, Equestrians and Community Effects provides more details of this route. Where the construction programme allows, and where safe and practical to do so, it may be possible to reopen the bridleway to the public on special occasions such as Bank Holidays. It is foreseen that, throughout the construction programme, signs advising the status and diversion of public access will be placed at the entrances of all affected Public Rights of Ways. Public Right of Ways surveys did not indicate high levels of use of this area. Overall, the impacts are considered to be Minor Adverse during the 12 month construction period.

**Development Land**

It is not considered that construction activity will impact on development land. Impacts under the do something scenarios are thus considered to be Neutral.

**Agricultural Land**

Construction activity will result in temporary landtake of 35.92 ha of land currently used for agricultural purposes. However, it is expected that the majority of the farm holdings would lose the use of some agricultural land to accommodate the construction process of the Proposed Scheme. Advanced dialogue with farmers to establish whether alternative accesses can be found will sought. Where practical, replacement farm access may be provided via the haul road, during construction. Early consultation to ensure planting and harvesting regimes are taken into account is required to ensure the effects of these impacts are minimised. Impacts under the do something scenario 1 are considered to be Minor Adverse.

Under the do something scenarios of 2 and 3, it is expected that the majority of farm holdings will lose all of their agricultural land to accommodate the Upton Lodge development. There is no Grade 1 agricultural land within the proposed Upton Lodge development. The majority of the land that will be affected is Grade 3. Thus impacts on agricultural land under the do something scenarios 2 and 3 are considered Minor Adverse.

**Operational Impacts**

**Demolition of Private Property**

The Proposed Scheme and the Upton Lodge development will not involve the demolition of any buildings. Therefore under the do minimum and do something 1, 2 and 3 scenarios, impacts are considered to be Neutral.
Land Used by the Community
The impacts under the do minimum scenario are considered to be Neutral.

Under the do something 1 scenario new footways are proposed on either side of the Proposed Scheme with a combined footway/cycleway on the eastern side. This is expected to result in significant benefit to pedestrians and cyclists, providing a north-south link which is separated from traffic. Impacts are considered to be Minor Beneficial.

The do something 2 and 3 scenarios include proposals for a Country Park to the west of the Proposed Scheme. The provision of a Country Park will provide open space amenities both for the new community as well as the surrounding area. It is envisaged that a range of sports pitches, a new wetland planting and comprehensive network of footpaths and cycle ways are to be incorporated. The Country Park is expected to provide an important sub-regional community facility and improve the quality of the land available for recreational use by the community.

The Upton Lodge development proposals includes: a 4.8 ha park and ride facility in the south-west corner to support the town’s sustainable transport policies; New employment uses comprising of around 4.5 ha at the intersection of A4500 Weedon Road and the Proposed Scheme, which is intended to consist of a range of office and high tech uses in a campus setting, thus expected to result in improved employment opportunities locally; and 3.8 ha containing a primary school and community building to serve as a social centre for the new residents.

Under the do something 3 scenario, new footways are proposed on either side of the proposed Cross Valley Link Road scheme with a combined footway/cycleway on the eastern side. This is expected to result in significant benefits to non-motorised users (primarily pedestrians and cyclists), providing a north-south link, which is separated from traffic.

For do something 2 and 3 scenarios impacts are considered Major Beneficial to users travelling in a north-south direction.

The do something scenarios will involve landtake of 9.43 ha. However, this is in keeping with the Northampton Local Plan (1997) which includes a safeguarded route for the Proposed Scheme, through the area designated as ‘greenspace’. Moreover, the area of landtake, although designated as a ‘Special Landscape Area’,
‘Areas of Important Local Gaps’ and ‘greenspace’, is not used by the community as it is under agricultural use. Thus, taking into account the benefits associated with employment and Country Park provision, over the impacts of the Proposed Scheme on Land Used by the Community the impacts are considered to be Major Beneficial for all 3 do something scenarios.

Consideration of regeneration impacts is included under the effects on Development Land, which follows.

**Development Land**

Impacts under the do minimum scenario are considered to be Neutral.

The Proposed Scheme north of the point where KP16 and LB1 intersect the Proposed Scheme is land designated as ‘Special Landscape Area’ and ‘Important Areas of Local Gaps’ in the South Northamptonshire Local Plan (1997). To the south of this point is where land is specifically safeguarded for new road infrastructure to support the development designated within the Northampton Local Plan (1997).

The largest use for the 57.7 ha site is residential, with an average density of between 35 and 45 dwellings per hectare (dph). The proposed Upton Lodge development will make significant contributions to the South West District development proposals for Northampton. An employment area together with park and ride facilities is proposed at the southern parts of this development. Furthermore, a primary school and community facility forms part of this development. Access to these areas will be primarily provided by the Proposed Scheme.

In the context of the South West District as a whole, the Proposed Scheme, the Upton Lodge development, the Cross Valley Link Road scheme to the south of A4500 Weedon Road and the Sandy Lane Improvement Road to the north of Berrywood Road will provide significant regeneration benefits, by providing improved access to the proposed development areas in the South West District. The direct link to the south of A4500 Weedon Road will provide communities to the west side of Northampton with direct access to employment opportunities around the Swan Valley and Pinetum area. Road access to the Country Park will be enhanced. An estimated 6,000 new households in the South West District will benefit from the implementation of the Proposed Scheme. The impact for do
something 1 scenario is considered to be Moderate Beneficial. The impacts for do
something 2 and 3 scenarios are thus considered to be Major Beneficial.

Agricultural Land and Farm Viability
Agricultural land use will continue under the do minimum scenario. Overall, the
impacts under the do minimum scenario are considered to be Neutral.

Under the do something 1 scenario, estimated permanent agricultural landtake as a
direct result of the Proposed Scheme is 9.43 ha. This will result in a 9.43 ha loss of
Grade 3 agricultural land. Impacts under the do something 1 scenario are
considered to be Minor Adverse.

Although the established footpaths and bridleways are to be maintained and
enhanced, the do something 2 and 3 scenarios will result in the permanent loss of
agricultural farm access to the fields and permanent loss to agricultural land to the
east of the Proposed Scheme and Upton Lodge development currently facilitated
by LB1 and LB8. Given that a Country Park is proposed to the west of the
Proposed Scheme as part of the Upton Lodge development, open space will be
provided thus changing the image and character of the area from that of farmland
to park. The impacts overall on agricultural land are considered to be Minor
Adverse.

9.5 Mitigation Measures
Limited information has been provided as to mitigation approaches during
construction and operational phases. The worst case scenario has therefore been
assumed. Where appropriate, additional mitigation measures are proposed.

Replacement farm access is not proposed. Secondary access is proposed to the
Park and Ride site to the west and to the Employment site to the east, which
supports the Upton Lodge development proposals.

9.5.1 Construction Phase
Where legal agreements between agricultural leaseholders and landowners require
temporary farm access to the agricultural land to the east of the Proposed Scheme,
this will be provided, using the construction proposed haul road (see Drawing ES
15.1). Details of this access will be agreed in advance with the farmers affected.
A temporary footpath will be put in place to mitigate the closure of the Bridleway KP16. Diversion notices will be strategically placed informing users of the closure. Bridleway KP16 will be reopened, wherever possible, such as weekends and bank holidays.

9.5.2 Operational Phase

No exchange land for land used by the community is required as mitigation for the Proposed Scheme. Nevertheless, under the do something 2 and 3 scenarios a new Country Park is proposed to the west of the Proposed Scheme.

PROWs are to be maintained and enhanced as part of the Upton Lodge development and community access to the proposed Country Park is to be provided by an at-grade, traffic light controlled, pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian crossing (Pegasus crossing) at the junction where KP16 crosses and joins LB1.

9.6 Residual Impacts

9.6.1 Construction Phase

During construction, the stopping up of Bridleway KP16 for the duration of construction activity, although alternatives will be provided, will result in Minor Adverse impact, although this will be temporary.

9.6.2 Operational Phase

No residual impacts for will be evident for the Proposed Scheme. The Proposed Scheme will provide a direct north-south link to support the wider development proposals in the South West District area. It will link up to the Cross Valley Link Road, Sandy Lane Improvement North and associated development in the area, thus contributing significantly in achieving the policy aims and objectives within the local and wider Northampton area. The Proposed Scheme will also provide the basis for new public transport services, and a new footpath/cycleway network, which will connect to the proposed Park & Ride site and existing Public Rights of Way. The Proposed Scheme will provide access to the proposals at Upton Lodge and thus expected to bring about long term benefits to the South West District area of Northampton and the wider community which should last well beyond the date that the development is completed.
9.7 Summary

9.7.1 Demolition of Private Property
No demolition is anticipated. Temporary and permanent effects under all 4 scenarios are considered to be Neutral.

9.7.2 Land Used by the Community
Under the do minimum scenario, impacts are considered to be Neutral. Under the do something 1 scenario, permanent impacts are considered to be to be Minor Beneficial. Furthermore, under the do something 2 and 3 scenarios, permanent impacts are considered to be Major Beneficial. The temporary impacts are considered to be Minor Adverse during the 12 month construction period.

9.7.3 Development Land
The impacts under the do minimum scenario are considered to be Neutral. The impact for do something 1 is considered to be Moderate Beneficial. The impacts for do something 2 and 3 are considered to be Major Beneficial. Temporary effects are considered to be Minor Adverse.

9.7.4 Agricultural Land
The impacts under the do minimum scenario are considered to be Neutral. Permanent effects of all 3 do something scenarios are considered to be Minor Adverse. Temporary effects are considered to be Minor Adverse.

9.8 References

Northampton Borough Council (1997) Northampton Local Plan
South Northamptonshire Council (1997) South Northamptonshire Local Plan
Count-on-Us Public Right of Ways surveys (2006)
Responses from Consultation, (August 2006)