



GA2, Land north of Great Ashby Environmental Statement

Chapter 13: Socio Economics and Health

Iceni Projects Limited on
behalf of Picture Estates
Limited

November 2025

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13. SOCIO ECONOMICS AND HUMAN HEALTH

Introduction

- 13.1 This Chapter has been prepared by Icen Projects and presents an assessment of the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development with respect to socio-economics and human health. This Chapter provides a description of the methods used in the assessment, followed by a description of the relevant baseline conditions of the Site and surrounding area, together with an assessment of the likely potential effects from the construction and operation of the Proposed Development. Mitigation measures are identified, where appropriate, to avoid, reduce or offset any significant adverse effects identified and/or enhance likely beneficial effects. Taking into account the mitigation measures, the nature and significance of the likely residual effects are reported.
- 13.2 This chapter is supported by the following technical appendices:
- **Appendix 13.1:** Policy Review
 - **Appendix 13.2:** Health Impact Assessment

Competence

- 13.3 For a summary of the competencies of the authors of this chapter, please refer to **Appendix 1.6**.

Legislation and Policy Context

Legislation Context

- 13.4 There is no legislation which is directly applicable to the assessment of socio-economic effects.

National Planning Policy

- 13.5 The following national planning policy document is relevant to the Proposed Development:
- National Planning Policy Framework (2024)ⁱ.

Regional Planning Policy

- 13.6 The following regional planning and economic policy documents are relevant to the Proposed Development:
- Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Funding Prospectus 2018 – 2031ⁱⁱ;
 - Hertfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan 2017-2030 (2017)ⁱⁱⁱ; and
 - Unlocking Hertfordshire, Hertfordshire's Economic Recovery Plan (2020)^{iv}.

Local Planning Policy

13.7 The following local planning policy documents are relevant to the Proposed Development:

- North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (2022)^v; and
- Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (2019)^{vi}.

Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria

13.8 This section presents the methodology used to assess the potential effects of the Proposed Development in relation to socio-economics.

Consultation

13.9 **Table 13.1** presents a summary of the comments raised in the Council's EIA Scoping Opinion and other discussions with relevant consultees with respect to socio-economics.

Table 13.1 Summary of Comments Raised in the Scoping Opinion

Consultee	Comment	Response
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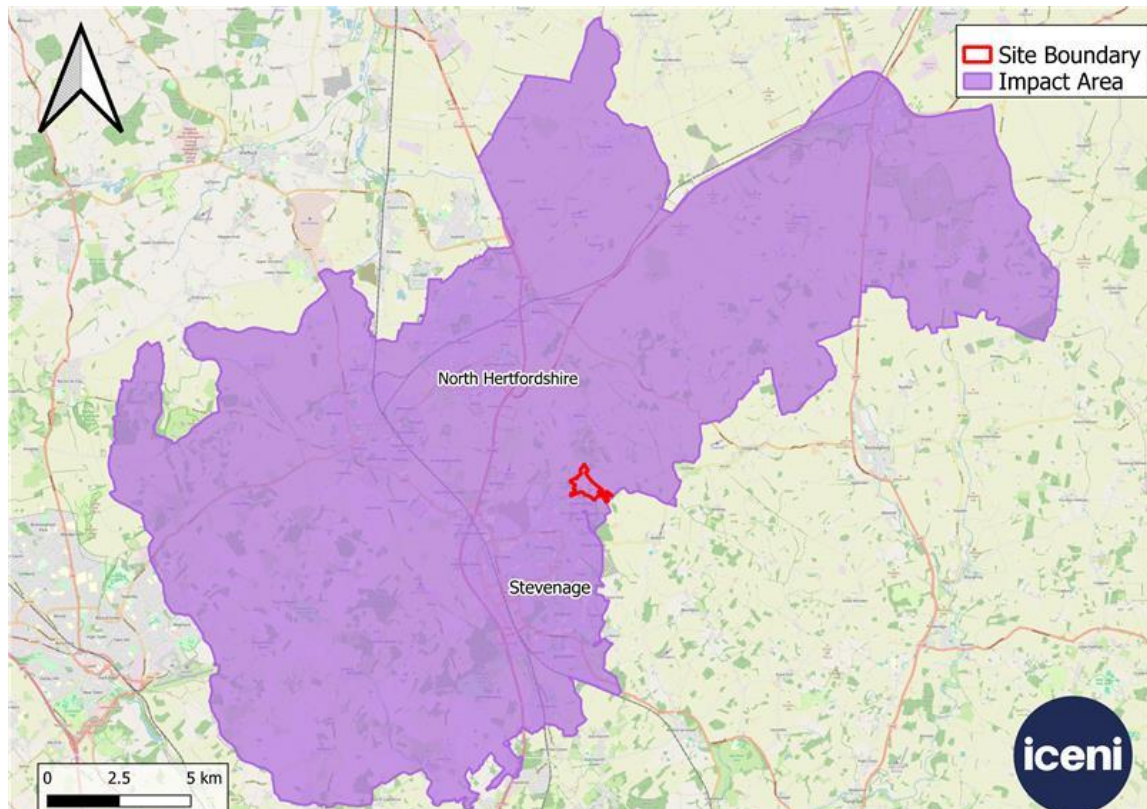
North Hertfordshire District Council	The following information/data and following matters will need to be assessed as part of the Environmental Statement: Population - a quantitative estimate of the resulting population of the development. Education - A detailed assessment of the capacity of the relevant schools (to be agreed with the LEA) and the ability of the schools to accommodate pupils from the proposed development. This assessment must include the likely child yield and impact on nursery and pre-school provision, childcare (outside school hours for 0-14 year olds) primary and secondary education. This needs to include adequate quantitative baseline information. The temporary measures to be put in place in advance of the opening of the schools and a demonstration of how this could be achieved. The size of the new schools and when they will be open needs to be justified in relation to a justified projected pupil yield. Health – A detailed quantitative analysis of the baseline health provision and the impact of the development is required in relation to location of facilities and patient list sizes. Open Space – It is noted that the Environmental Statement will consider the effect of the proposed development on the provision of social infrastructure including open space. Please see the comments from the Council’s Service Manager, Greenspace, regarding impact on existing greenspace and play areas and the comments from Sport England. Other social infrastructure – It is noted that the Environmental Statement will consider the effect of the proposed development on the social infrastructure in Great Ashby including places of worship, sports facilities and community centre and this will need to include an assessment of the impact on the existing Great Ashby Community Centre. It will also be necessary to consider the impact on neighbouring parishes and wards in the Stevenage area, given the close relationship that the development may have with regards to services for residents in these areas. It is noted that socio-economic study area in Figure 13.1 does not include	Data on population, education, health, open space, and social infrastructure has been included in the baseline and an assessment of availability/capacity included within this Chapter. The Site falls wholly within the North Hertfordshire boundary. Given the proximity of the urban area of Stevenage to the Site, the local authority of Stevenage has been included in the impact area. The nearest settlement in East Hertfordshire to the Site is Walkern. However, this is located over 1.6km from the Site which is above the recommended 20-minute walking distance to social infrastructure.
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	any of East Hertfordshire. Given the site is very close to the boundary with East Herts it may be advisable to expand the socio-economic study area to include some of the East Herts area, particularly nearby settlements / parishes (e.g. Aston & Walkern).	
Hertfordshire Public Health	Although, it is positive to see the developer has proposed to prepare a standalone Health Impact Assessment (HIA), it is not clear why the topic of Human Health was scoped out while the reasons given to justify it cited future residents' habits and the way the development's buildings and spaces are used (rather than constructed). This gives certain degree of inconsistency to the developer's approach to this topic. Urban and housing design has intimate connections to health. Poor design choices can worsen health, with underlying issues of inequality a driving factor. Where we live, and the design of our living spaces have a significant impact on health. The built environment exerts one of the strongest directly measurable effects on physical and mental health.	Consideration has been made to the impact on human health during both the construction stage and once operational, within this chapter. The HIA is included in Appendix 13.2 .

Study Area and Scope

- 13.10 When assessing the socio-economic effects of the Proposed Development, the geographical scope of the assessment must be clearly defined. The Proposed Development Site is located north-east of the parish of Great Ashby within the administrative boundary of North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) but close to the boundary of Stevenage Borough Council (SBC). An impact area has been identified which includes the local authority boundaries of North Hertfordshire and Stevenage to provide an understanding of the characteristics of the area surrounding the Site.
- 13.11 Given the rural nature of much of North Hertfordshire District and the proximity to the urban area of Stevenage to the Site, it is a reasonable to expect that there will be a functional relationship between the two local authority areas. The extent of this impact area may vary for some receptors following best practices or the availability of data. Where this is the case, this will be highlighted within the ES chapter. A map of the proposed Impact Area is shown in the figure below.

Figure 13.1 Impact Area



Source: Icen Analysis, 2025

- 13.12 In some instances, a distance of 1.6km has been used to determine access to social infrastructure such as childcare and sport and recreation facilities. 1.6km equates to an approximate walking time of 20 minutes for an able bodied person.

Assessment Methodology

Impact Areas

- 13.13 Identification and assessment of likely significant socio-economic effects of the Proposed Development use best practice methods and professional judgement to inform the scoping opinion. The Scoping Opinion (22nd June 2023) agreed that for the parameters of this socio-economic assessment, the following receptors will be assessed:

- Temporary employment associated with the construction works on Site;
- Creation of both direct and indirect employment associated with the non-residential floorspace;
- Additional local spend from the new residential population;
- Provision of new residential housing (including affordable housing);
- Demand for state provided school places (including pre-school, primary school, and secondary school);

- Demand for NHS primary healthcare from the new residents of the Proposed Development;
- Demand for open space (including play space);
- Demand for community facilities from the increased population;
- Deprivation changes because of the Proposed Development; and
- Temporary impacts on the health of the population living close to the application site related to the demolition and construction stage, and permanent health impacts arising once complete and occupied.

13.14 Each identified receptor has applied a different assessment methodology to be able to assess the significance of the Proposed Development.

Table 13.2 Summary of Assessment Methodology

Receptor	Parameters for the Assessment
Employment	The net direct, indirect and induced jobs created will inform the significance of the employment impact from the existing Site and the impact of employment in the impact area.
Residential Expenditure	The household spend per annum based off the net increase of dwellings proposed.
Housing	Comparison of the volume of new housing proposed against the planned housing requirements for the area, as established by the NHDC Local Plan.
Education	Local school capacity is established through the baseline assessment. The child yield of the Proposed Development will be estimated using demographic data and Department of Education Pupil yield from housing developments. Therefore, the extent to which the education demand generated from the Proposed Development will be calculated.
Health and Healthcare	The assessment uses the HIA findings to understand how the Proposed Development will change the baseline health position of the future and existing residents. NHS data sources provide information which includes a GP to Patient Ratio. The number of number of residents accommodated within the Proposed Development will inform analysis of whether GP capacity goes above or below the recommended benchmark capacity of 1 GP per 2,000 patients as set out in the Hertfordshire Infrastructure Delivery Funding Prospectus
Open Space (including Play Space and Sport Facilities)	The open space and the extent to which new and existing residents of the impact area have the ability to access provision, both in terms of new-on Site provision and existing surrounding open space.
Community Facilities	The community facilities and the extent to which new and existing residents of the impact area have the ability to access provision, both in terms of new-on Site provision and existing community facilities.

Significance Criteria

- 13.15 There is no statutory definition or Government guidance relating to the assessment of socio-economic effects. The assessment of socio-economic effects is assessed based on the scale of the increase or decrease compared to the baseline position, as well as the nature and context of the effects, considering of the sensitivity of the identified receptor. The location of the effects and their likely duration are considered where possible. Professional judgement, experience and guidance, where available, have been drawn upon to assess the significance of the effect.

Receptors and Receptor Sensitivity

- 13.16 The sensitivity of affected receptors has been considered on a scale of high, medium, low or negligible, based on a review of the baseline position of each receptor and its performance against benchmark areas. The receptors and the definition of sensitivity of a receptor (high, medium, low) is based on a scale set out in **Table 13.3**.

Table 13.3 Receptor Sensitivity Description

Value (Sensitivity)	Description
High	The economic or social infrastructure receptors are operating at full capacity with no surplus capacity for additional demand arising from additional residents.
Medium	The economic and social infrastructure receptors are operating at near capacity levels with limited surplus capacity for additional demand arising from additional residents.
Low	The economic and social infrastructure receptors are operating below capacity with excess surplus capacity.
Negligible	Receptors of limited or no importance

Determining the Duration of Effect

- 13.17 The duration of the socio-economic effects is considered against whether it is temporary or permanent. Due to their nature, all operational effects are permanent unless otherwise stated. In terms of temporary effects, the duration is determined in **Table 13.4**.

Table 13.4 The Duration of Temporary Effects

Impact Magnitude	Descriptor
Short Term	Less than 5 years
Medium Term	5 to 10 years
Long Term	11 to 20 years

Magnitude of Impact

- 13.18 The magnitude of change has been considered as the change experienced from the baseline conditions at the sensitive receptor and has been considered on a scale of major, moderate, minor and negligible. Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of change for all effects and has been considered contextually in terms of the existing baseline and other socio-economic factors¹.

Table 13.5 Magnitude of Impact Description

Impact Magnitude	Description
High	The Proposed Development could be expected to have substantial effects (by extent, duration, or magnitude) of more than local significance on the key elements/ features of the baseline conditions, including the population profile, levels of employment, levels of deprivation, facility provision.
Medium	Where the Proposed Development could be expected to have notable effects on the key elements/ features of the baseline conditions, including the population profile, levels of employment, levels of deprivation, facility provision.
Low	Where the Proposed Development could be expected to have slight, short or localised effects on the key elements/ features of the baseline conditions, including the population profile, levels of employment, levels of deprivation, facility provision.
Negligible	Where the Proposed Development could be expected to result in very little/ no distinguishable change from the baseline conditions including the population profile, levels of employment, levels of deprivation, facility provision.

- 13.19 Where the magnitude of change is greater than negligible, the effect will then be identified as being either 'beneficial' or 'adverse' and defined as follows:

- Beneficial - A positive and/or advantageous effect to a minor, moderate or major magnitude.
- Adverse - A negative and/or disadvantageous/ detrimental effect to a minor, moderate or major magnitude.

Assessing Significance

- 13.20 **Table 13.6** provide a matrix for determining the significance of an effect based on the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of impact.

¹ The magnitude of change can be different where different geographic extents of the potential effect apply.

Table 13.6 Significance of Effect Matrix

Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact			
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
High	Major Beneficial / Adverse	Major Beneficial / Adverse	Moderate Beneficial / Adverse	Minor Beneficial / Adverse
Medium	Major Beneficial / Adverse	Moderate Beneficial / Adverse	Minor Beneficial / Adverse	Negligible
Low	Moderate Beneficial / Adverse	Minor Beneficial / Adverse	Negligible	Negligible
Negligible	Minor Beneficial / Adverse	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

- 13.21 Effects classified as major or moderate in magnitude are considered 'significant'. Effects classified as minor or negligible in scale are considered 'not significant' in environmental impact terms.

Limitations and Assumptions

- 13.22 Both assumptions and limitations are highlighted where relevant throughout this assessment. The assessment is based on the plans as set out in **Appendix 3.1**.
- 13.23 The sources used are referenced throughout. Furthermore, while the latest available data has been used, it should be noted that many data sources are frequently updated and could be subject to change from the time of drafting or during the planning application process.
- 13.24 In the social infrastructure baseline, distances have been provided from the Development Site to the location of the social infrastructure. This has been reported as a walking distance. Where possible a consistent central point from the Site to a central point of the social infrastructure has been used, but the distance may vary.

Baseline Conditions

Baseline Conditions

- 13.25 This section establishes the existing site activities, demographic profile, economic context and local labour market characteristics, housing market, socio-economic features, and social infrastructure provision in the Impact Area. Where appropriate, comparisons are made to the East of England and England.

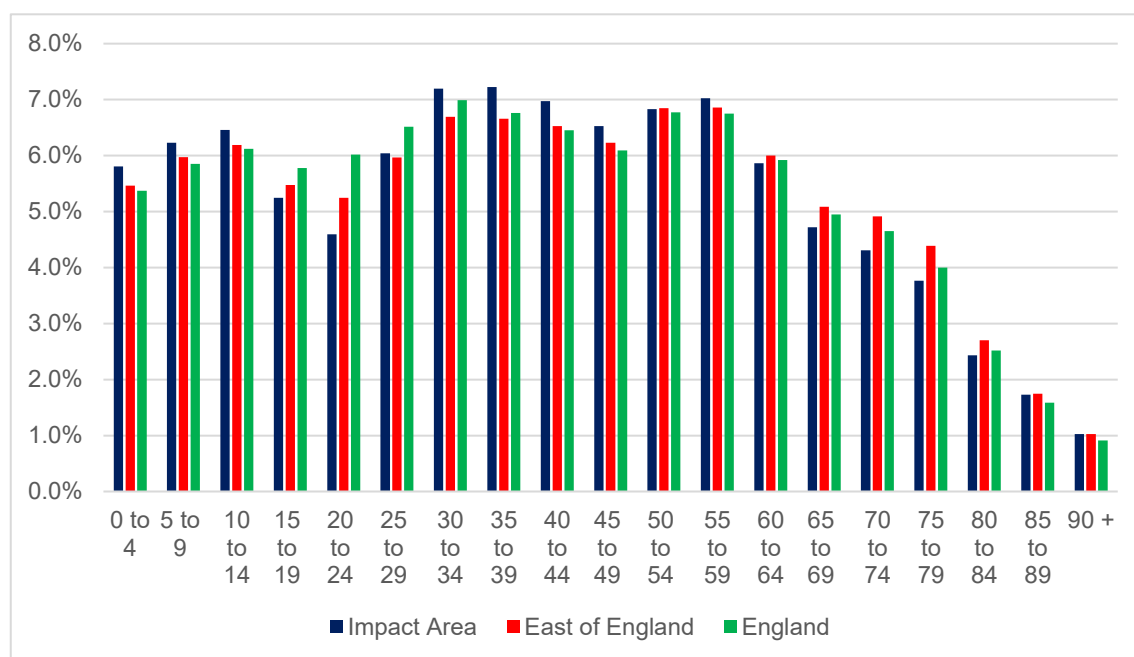
13.26 The Site lies immediately northeast of the parish of Great Ashby wholly within the administrative boundary of NHDC situated to the north of the town of Stevenage. It comprises 62.9ha of land in agricultural use including arable fields and areas of woodland. The Site has a number of footpaths and bridleways running through and adjacent.

Demographic Profile

13.27 Based on the ONS mid-year population estimates (2022), the population within the Impact Area amounted to 223,896 people, which was equivalent to approximately 3.5% of the total population of the East of England. The population has grown by 5.1% since 2012^{vii}, an increase of 10,770 people.

13.28 **Figure 13.2** provides a comparison of the population age structure within the Impact Area, East of England and England. Overall, there is a slightly higher proportion of younger people aged 0-14 (18.5%) in the Impact Area compared to the East of England (17.6%), and England (17.3%). There is also a slightly higher proportion of people aged 30-49 in the Impact Area (27.9%) compared to regionally (26.1%) and nationally (26.3%). There is a smaller proportion of older people (aged 60 and over) within the Impact Area (23.8%) than the East of England (25.9%), and England (24.5%).

Figure 13.2 Population of the Impact Areas based on 5-year age bands



Source: ONS (2022) Mid-Year Population Estimates, Iceni Projects Analysis

Deprivation Profile

- 13.29 In terms of deprivation, the 2025 English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)² provides a ranking of local authorities to compare levels of deprivation across the country. North Hertfordshire is ranked 256th out of 317 authorities, which means it was in the 20% of least deprived local authorities in the country in 2025.
- 13.30 The IMD measures relative deprivation using a series of data to rank every neighbourhood (LSOA³) in England. The IMD combines information from nine domains - income, employment, education, health, crime, barriers to housing, living environment, income deprivation affecting children and income deprivation affecting older people - to produce an overall relative measure of deprivation.
- 13.31 Table 13.7 below breaks down the nine domains that make up the IMD for the Proposed Development's Site LSOA (North Hertfordshire 016E) according to the overall rank and decile. Overall, the area performs well for most indicators apart from barriers to housing and services, and living environment where it is extremely deprived, being in the 10% of most deprived areas in England. This indicates that the Site experiences deprivation in relation to the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services, the quality of housing available. The Site is within the least deprived areas in terms of health, employment, education, skills and training.

Table 13.7 Index of Multiple Deprivation for LSOA North Hertfordshire 016E

Domain of Deprivation	Decile (where a score of 1 is the most deprived and 10 is the least deprived LSOAs)
Income	9
Employment	8
Education, Skills and Training	9
Health	10
Crime	8
Barriers to Housing and Services	1
Living Environment	1
Income deprivation affecting children	9
Income deprivation affecting older people	8
Overall IMD	6

² Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2025), Indices of Multiple Deprivation

³ Lower Super Output Area

Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2015

Socio-economic Classification

- 13.32 Based on the Area Classification for Output Areas data, the population of the Site and surroundings are classified as comprising primarily ‘Ethnically Diverse Suburban Professionals’ and ‘Baseline UK’.
- 13.33 ‘Ethnically Diverse Suburban Professionals’ typically have the following characteristics:
- Those working within the managerial, professional and administrative occupations;
 - Typically reflect a wide range of ethnic groups, and reside in detached or semi-detached housing.
 - Their residential locations at the edges of cities and conurbations and car-based lifestyles are more characteristic of Supergroup membership than birthplace or participation in child-rearing.
 - Houses are typically owner-occupied and marriage rates are lower than the national average. This Supergroup is found throughout suburban UK.
- 13.34 Baseline UK residents typically display the following characteristics:
- Overall, terraced houses and flats are the most prevalent;
 - Employment in intermediate or low-skilled occupations; and
 - Above average levels of unemployment and lower levels of use of English as the main language

Economic and Labour Market Profile

- 13.35 Based on the ONS midyear- 2022 population estimates, 62.3% of the Impact Area population were of working age (aged 16-64 years) in comparison to 61.5% in North Hertfordshire, 61.3% in the East of England and 62.9% England
- 13.36 Between July 2024 and June 2025, there were 116,200 economically active people in the Impact Area which represents 82.5% of the population, slightly higher than the rate in the East of England (81.6%) and England (79.1%).
- 13.37 Unemployment levels in the Impact Area (2.2%) are lower than regionally (3.6%) and nationally (4.2%). **Table 13.8** below illustrates the economic activity profile in Impact Area compared against the East of England and England.

Table 13.8 Economic Activity

	Impact Area	East of England	England
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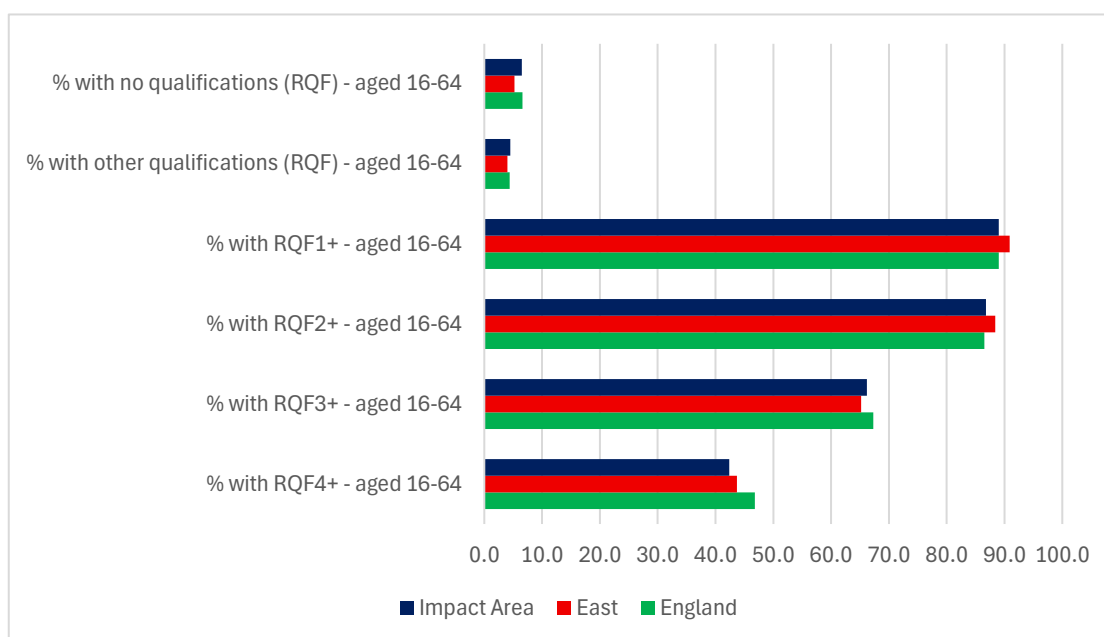
Economically Active	82.5%	81.6%	79.1%
In Employment	80.7%	78.7%	75.8%
<i>Employees</i>	74.1%	68.7%	65.8%
<i>Self Employed</i>	6.6%	9.7%	9.8%
Unemployed	2.2%	3.6%	4.2%

Source: Annual Population Survey, July 2024 to June 2025

Qualifications

- 13.38 Over half of the resident population of the Impact Area have a Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)4 qualification (equivalent to Certificate of Higher Education/ first year of a bachelor's degree) or above (54.8%) which is higher than across the East of England (42.8%) and England (46.7%). There are fewer residents in the Impact Area that do not have any qualifications (2.3%) when compared with the East of England (5.7%), and England (6.6%).

Figure 13.3 Qualifications



Source: Annual Population Survey 2024

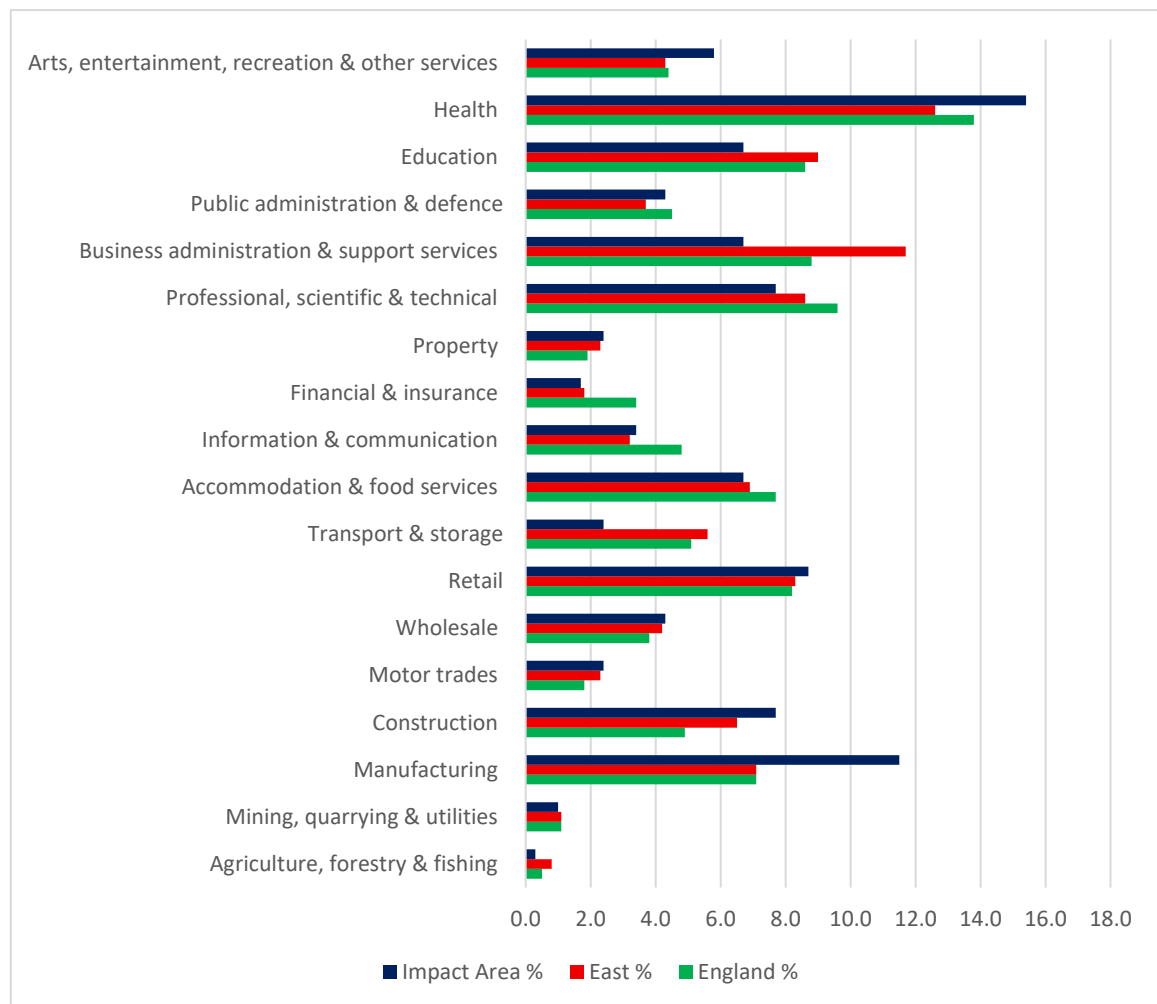
Median Wages

- 13.39 Residents' weekly earnings in NHDC were £983.40 per week in 2025 and in SBC they were £894.30, both higher than the regional average of £804.90 per week. In comparison, workplace earnings in NHDC were lower at £839.40 per week but higher in SBC at £966.20. This is higher than both the regional and national averages (£766.60 in the East of England and £770.70 across England). The higher residents' earnings in NHDC indicates that residents may travel out of the District they reside in to access higher paid employment elsewhere, whereas the higher workplace earnings in SBC suggests that people travel into the Borough they to seek higher paid employment.

Industries

- 13.40 The Business Register Employment Survey (BRES)^{viii}, provides data on the proportion of an area's Industry Employment Sectors. As shown in **Figure 13.4** below in the Impact Area, the highest proportion of people work in Health (15.2%) followed by Manufacturing (12.4%).
- 13.41 As shown in **Figure 13.4** below, the East of England and England, have proportionally fewer people employed in the sectors of Manufacturing, Health, and Construction when compared to the Impact Area. Whereas the sectors of Business administration & support services, Education, Transport & Storage, and Public Administration & defence employ proportionally more people.

Figure 13.4 Industry Employment Sectors, 2024



Source: BRES, 2024

- 13.42 There are 8,000 people employed in the construction industry out of 103,100 (7.7%) in the Impact Area. Across the East of England, the proportion of people working in the construction industry is 6.5%, which is notably higher than the average across England (4.9%).

Housing Profile⁴

- 13.43 The North Hertfordshire Local Plan (November 2022)^{ix} outlines a need for 11,600 new homes during the plan period 2011-2031 (580 homes per annum). IPolicy SP8: Housing of the NHDC Local Plan indicates that at least 33% of all homes over the plan period should be Affordable Housing with targets to deliver up to 40% Affordable Housing where viable.
- 13.44 The latest Authority Monitoring Report for NHDC^x showed that in 2023-2024, 435 dwellings were delivered. This is below the housing target. 19% of new homes fell under the category of affordable housing which is below the Local Plan target of 33%. The 2023 Housing Delivery Test Results^{xi} show that NHDC delivered 1,400 new homes out of a target of 1,333 homes (67 above the target) between 2020-2023.
- 13.45 Based on ONS data (September 2024), the average median house price within NHDC was £405,000 which is higher than the East of England median (£330,000), and the England median (£285,000).
- 13.46 ONS data on the housing market and house prices^{xii} indicates that the ratio of median house price to median earnings was 8.79 in NHDC, meaning that on average working people in NHDC could expect to pay over 8 times their annual earnings on purchasing a home⁵⁶. The NHDC average is higher than the average across the East of England (8.45) and England (8.10), meaning that housing in NHDC is generally less affordable than regionally and nationally.
- 13.47 Based on 2021 Census data^{xiii}, the average household size in NHDC was 2.4 persons per household, which is the same as both the East of England (2.4) and England (2.4). The DCLG⁷ 2018 based household projections indicates that average household size in NHDC is likely to fall to 2.2 in 2043.
- 13.48 Based on Census 2021 data, within NHDC, 81.3% of the 56,729 properties are in the private sector (owner occupied or private rented) which is lower than the East of England (84.5%). NHDC has a higher number of dwellings that are owned outright (33.4%) in comparison to the national average (32.5%) but lower than the East of England as a whole (34.6%). A higher proportion of properties are

⁴ The housing profile focuses on North Hertfordshire data due to the Site being wholly located within the NHDC boundary.

⁵ Ratios are calculated by dividing median house prices by the median annual earnings. Lower ratios tend to suggest greater affordability with higher ratios indicating lower affordability.

⁶ It should be noted that the house price data and affordability ratio data is based on different average house price data. Median affordability ratios are quoted to be consistent with the Government's proposed methodology for assessing housing need however, lower quartile ratio in NHDC is 9.42 compared with 8.24 across the East of England and 6.77 nationally.

⁷ At the time of writing the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government has been re-named the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MCHLG).

social rented in NHDC (18.7%) than the East of England (15.5%) and England more widely (17.1%). In terms of private rented properties or living rent free, NHDC has lower levels (15.4%) when compared to the East of England (18.3%) and England (20.6%).

Health Profile

13.49 A high-level review of key health related indicators is provided in the HIA (**Appendix 13.2**). In summary, the health profile of NHDC and Stevenage is generally considered to be above the national average for the majority of health indicators. The key related indicators are:

- The life expectancy in the MSOA is 88.7 for women and 83.5 for men. This is above the England average of 83.0 for women and the average of 79.1 for men.
- The proportion of reception students in the MSOA who are consisted obese is 10.3% which is higher than across North Hertfordshire (7.1%) and England (9.8%). In year 6 this drops to 9.5% in the MSOA which is lower than across North Hertfordshire (15.6%) but lower than England (22.3%).
- When standardised against England (100) deaths from cardiovascular disease (71.9), coronary heart disease (75.6), stroke (62.9), and respiratory disease (64.3) were all lower in the MSOA.
- The General Fertility Rate (women aged 15 to 44) is lower in the MSOA (51.4) when compared to North Hertfordshire (58.3) and England (54.6).

Social Infrastructure Audit

13.50 As acknowledged within the NPPF, access to social infrastructure including education, health provision, community facilities, open space, play space and sports and recreational facilities can have a significant impact on health and wellbeing of the population. Distances have been provided from the Development Site to the location of the social infrastructure. This has been reported as a walking distance. Where possible a consistent central point from the Site to a central point of the social infrastructure has been used, but the distance may vary.

Education Infrastructure⁸

Early Years

13.51 There are six Ofsted-registered early years facilities providing childcare within 1.6km⁹ of the Site. The closest facilities are Bunnies Pre School Great Ashby (0.6km), Busy Bees at Stevenage Great Ashby (0.6km), and Round Diamond Nursery School (0.6km).

Primary Schools

13.52 In Hertfordshire, primary school places are allocated based on preference, of which a parent or guardian can choose four schools. Schools have their own admissions criteria. For the purposes of this assessment, the Stevenage North East A Primary Planning Area (PPA) has been considered as this is the area of geography Hertfordshire County Council uses to assess future primary school demand.

13.53 Within the PPA, there are five primary schools with a combined capacity of 2,281 places. For the academic year 2024/25, there was a total of 2,010 pupils registered at these five primary schools according to the Department of Education database, Get Information About Schools. Therefore, overall primary schools in the Impact Area are operating at 88.1% capacity and have a surplus of approximately 271 primary places.

Table 13.9 Primary School Capacity within Stevenage North East A PPA

	Total Number of Places	Enrolled Students	Surplus / Deficit Places
Round Diamond Primary School	420	453	-33
The Leys Primary and Nursery School	480	407	73
Martins Wood Primary School	780	587	193
Trotts Hill Primary and Nursery School	241	236	5
The Giles Infant and Nursery School	360	327	33
Total	2,281	2,010	271

13.54 It should be noted that the Department of Education's pupil numbers of children attending primary school includes children attending nursery school. Whereas the pupil numbers provided by

⁸ Post-16 non secondary school places, SEN Schools and Private Schools have not been considered in this assessment.

⁹ 1,6km (1,600m) represents a c. 20 minute walking distance and is considered as most accessible to the site

Hertfordshire County Council is for Reception places only. All five primary schools within the PPA include a nursery school and therefore actual pupil numbers are likely to be inflated to include the nursery school students.

Primary School Forecast

- 13.55 Hertfordshire County Council produces data to indicate how the pupil admissions numbers are estimated to change over time to 2028/29. All five primary schools within the PPA are anticipated to be under capacity with more places than pupils in Reception in the next few years.

Table 13.10 Forecasted Primary School Demand in Stevenage North East A PPA

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Total Year Reception Pupil Demand	427	426	407	377	361
Total Places Available in Reception	480	480	480	480	480
Surplus or Shortage of Reception Places (No.)	53	54	73	103	119

Source: Hertfordshire County Council Summer 23-24 Primary School forecast

- 13.56 Policy SP18: Site GA2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan includes a requirement to reserve land for education use to accommodate 2 forms of entry of primary-age provision.

Secondary Schools

- 13.57 Hertfordshire also uses Planning Areas (PA) to forecast secondary school places. The Proposed Development is located within the 'Stevenage' PA which contains six secondary schools with a combined capacity of 8,512 places. For the academic year 2024 to 2025, there was a total of 8,302 pupils registered at these six secondary schools according to the Department of Education database, Get Information About Schools. Therefore, secondary schools within the Sites catchment area are operating at 93.9% capacity with a surplus of approximately 504 secondary school places.

Table 13.11 Secondary School Capacity within Stevenage PA

	Total Number of Places	Enrolled Students	Surplus / Deficit Places
The Nobel School	1,526	1,490	36
Barclay Academy	1,181	992	189
The Thomas Alleyne Academy	1,100	986	114

Barnwell School	1,590	1,315	275
Marriots School	1,500	1,410	90
The Saint John Henry Newman Catholic School	1,405	1,605	-200
Total	8,302	7,798	504

Secondary School Forecast

- 13.58 Hertfordshire County Council produces data which indicates how the pupil admissions numbers in Year 7 are estimated to change over time to 2030/31. While it is forecast that in 2029/30 there will be a shortage of approximately 20 Year 7 places, by 2030/31, there will be a surplus of around 50 Year 7 places.

Table 13.12 Forecasted Secondary School Demand in Stevenage PA

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/2029	2029/30	2030/31
Total Year 7 Pupil Demand	1,350	1,314	1,339	1,358	1,297	1,356	1,286
Total Places Available in Year 7	1,370	1,366	1,366	1,366	1,366	1,366	1,366
Surplus or Shortage of Year 7 Places (No.)	20	22	-3	-22	39	-20	50
Surplus or Shortage of Year 7 Places (%)	0.7	0.7	-0.1	-0.7	1.3	-0.7	1.7

Source: Hertfordshire County Council Secondary School Forecast (2024)

- 13.59 Policy SP18: Site GA2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan includes a requirement to reserve land for education use to accommodate 4 forms of entry of secondary-age provision.

Healthcare Provision

GP Surgeries

- 13.60 Healthcare services closest to the Site fall within the Stevenage North Primary Care Network (PCN) which brings together all local health and care services in the local area to deliver more joined up

care to the local population. There are two GP Services within the Stevenage North PCN boundary – Stanmore Medical Group (made up of 5 surgeries), and The Symonds Green Health Centre.

- 13.61 The closest GP practice to the Site is the Canterbury Way Surgery (1.5km walk to the south west) which is which is part of the Stanmore Medical Group which has 49,011 registered patients and 20 FTE practicing GPs, resulting in a GP to patient ratio of 1: 2,451, which is above the recommended benchmark. However, the practice is accepting new patients.

Dental Practices

- 13.62 The closest NHS dental practice to the Site is the Exeter Close Dental Practice located approximately 1.2km away. However, the practice is not currently accepting new patients. The Village Dental Practice located approximately 4.2km away from the Site is accepting NHS patients under 18 years.

Hospitals

- 13.63 The closest hospital to the Site is Lister Hospital (3.2km west of the Site), a general and acute bed district general hospital. The Hospital provides various services including Accident & Emergency, intensive care, HDU, women's services, children's services, coronary care units, cancer services as well as pathology, radiology and other diagnostic services.

Open Space, Sports, Recreation

Open Space and Play Space

- 13.64 The North Hertfordshire Open Space Review (2016)^{xiv} provides an overview of open space provision in the district. There are 585 open spaces providing different types of open space and covering an area of approximately 2,343ha. The largest proportion of the District's open spaces are classified as Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace (1,195ha). Provision for Children and Young People includes 12.8ha space.
- 13.65 The study highlights that there are 11 Parks and Gardens within North Hertfordshire providing around, 59.49ha of open space. The Site is located within Rural Area East within the Open Space Review. Rural Area East has the highest number of open space sites in the district. It also has the largest provision of open spaces (62.64ha/1000 persons). The nearest park to the Site is Great Ashby District Park located 0.4km to the south of the Site. The park provides a play area and picnic area.
- 13.66 The Stevenage Open Space Strategy Review (2015) indicates that there are around 8.9ha of open space within Stevenage including 0.73ha of parks and gardens. This includes St Nicholas Park, a 11ha park located 0.72km to the south west of the Site. Facilities at the park include play areas, a BMX track, football pitches and fitness area. The larger Fairlands Valley Park (48ha) is located 3.4km away and provides play areas, water play facilities, sailing club and café.

- 13.67 There are a number of play areas located within walking distance of the Site. These include the Mendip Way and Cromdale Walk play area adjacent to the west of the Site, Cleveland Way play area (0.3km away) and the Snowdonia Way play area (0.4km away).

Sport and Recreation Facilities

- 13.68 A review of the Active Places Power website¹⁰ supplied by data from Sport England identifies a wide range of commercial sport and recreation facilities within 1.6km of the Site:

- 3 Sports Halls;
- 2 Health and Fitness Suites;
- 2 Artificial Grass Pitches; and
- 17 Grass Pitches.

- 13.69 The closest artificial grass pitch is located at Round Diamond Primary School approximately 0.6km from the Site. The nearest sports hall is situated at Marriotts Sports Centre around 2.9km away.

Community Facilities

- 13.70 Several facilities for local community use are available within proximity to the Site. There are two facilities within 800m from the Site, including the Great Ashby Community Centre 500m to the west of the Site. However, the NHDC Community Halls Strategy (2011) indicates that if new neighbourhoods are to be created on the edge of Stevenage in North Hertfordshire, completely new facilities will be required, and residents should live within 800m of the new facility.

Libraries

- 13.71 The closest library is Stevenage Old Town Library, located 3.7km from the Site. The library is open five days a week and has IT and printing facilities. Stevenage Central Library is located approximately 4.4km from the Site and includes study facilities and room hire.

Places of Worship

- 13.72 There are places of worship within proximity of the Site. The nearest are the Great Ashby Community Church located 500m to the west of the Site, and St Nicholas Community Centre located 1.5km to the south-west.

¹⁰ Active Places Power by Sports England, <https://www.activeplacespower.com/>

Emergency Services

- 13.73 The closest police station is Stevenage Police Station, located 4.5km from the Site. Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service is located 3.5km away from the Site. The closest Accident and Emergency (A&E) is at Lister Hospital, approximately 3.2km from the Site.

Retail Provision

- 13.74 A number of convenience stores are situated within Great Ashby, the nearest being Budgens Great Ashby (within Whitehorse Lane parade of shops, which also includes a pharmacy, hairdressers, post office and hot food takeaway) approximately 0.5km from the Site, Budgens Pin Green approximately 1.2km from the Site and Morrisons Daily (approximately 1.6km away). The closest large supermarkets and high street shops are located within Stevenage Town Centre around 4.2km from the Site.

Receptors

- 13.75 **Table 13.13** sets out the existing and introduced receptors and their sensitivity. This has been informed by the baseline information and professional judgement, and is explained in the justification column of the table below:

Table 13.13 Existing and Future Sensitive Receptors

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description
Existing Receptors		
Local Labour Market and Local Economy	Medium	The unemployment rate is currently 4.1% in the Impact Area which is higher than the regional and national rate. The local labour force and local economy may be sensitive to changes in employment opportunities locally.
The local housing market and people requiring housing	High	The ratio of median house price to median earnings is 9.22 in NHDC which is higher than the English ratio. This shows that housing is unaffordable for residents in the district. This is clear from the IMD levels of deprivation also. In addition, the Council must deliver 580 homes per annum to meet Local Plan targets, a requirement which it has not met in the most recent monitoring years.
The health of the existing and future residents	Medium	The baseline of health indicators showed that the health of the general population performs above the England average.
Education Facilities in the school catchment area	Medium	Education facilities that may be susceptible to changes in population. There is currently sufficient primary and secondary school provision to meet the needs of the existing population.
Primary Healthcare Facilities	High	GP facilities within the Stevenage North PCN are currently operating above recommended capacity. A change in population would be sensitive to supply of primary healthcare.

Open Space, Play Space and Sports Facilities	Low	There are a range of areas of open space of varying sizes within an accessible distance to the Site. Most of these offer play space facilities. Open space act as places for social interaction and community cohesion. There is a range of sports facilities in the Impact Area. Sport facilities will become sensitive to change as the local population increases.
Community Facilities	Low	There is a range of community centres/ halls within walking distance of the Site. Community facilities will become sensitive to changes as the local population increases.
Future Receptors		
Future Residents	Medium	New residents in the area will increase local spending on businesses and enhance the local community. They will increase demand for social infrastructure in the area.
Future Employees	Medium	The impact area has 112,300 economically active residents. The new school and community hub will create some demand for new employees.
Future School Age Children	Medium	The new dwellings will lead to an increase in pre-school and school aged children in the local area. It is important that there is sufficient school capacity and choice to ensure that children do not have to travel far to go to school.

Future Baseline

- 13.76 The future baseline conditions help to identify any changes anticipated in the baseline conditions in the absence of the Proposed Development.
- 13.77 Population growth in the Impact Area is expected to be positive overall up to 2043^{xv}. Growth is driven by the 65+ age bracket with an average growth rate of 1.35% per annum (**Table 13.14**). The working age population is expected to register a slight decline (-0.04%) while the 0-15 age group is expected to see a bigger decline in population growth (-0.39%).
- 13.78 The higher population growth in the 65+ age bracket suggests pressure in the future upon public services, particularly health services, and potential issues in filling vacancies and replacing capabilities and skill levels, as well as volume levels, within the current workforce.

Table 13.14 Population Projections for the Impact Area

Projected Year	Total	Aged 0 to 15	Aged 16 to 64	Aged 65+
2023	224,001	44,458	138,189	41,356
2028	225,853	42,295	138,267	45,289
2033	227,357	40,568	137,235	49,557
2038	229,498	40,287	136,805	52,413

Projected Year	Total	Aged 0 to 15	Aged 16 to 64	Aged 65+
2043	232,238	41,116	137,074	54,054
CAGR (%) 2023 - 2043	0.18%	-0.39%	-0.04%	1.35%

Source: ONS, *Population projections for local authorities (2018)*

- 13.79 Although the 0-15 year age group is expected to decline within the Impact Area over the next ten years, the Proposed Development will generate an increase in the school age population. The scheme includes a site for a 2FE Primary which would support this demand if required and provide capacity for the wider area.

Assessment of Effects

Effects During Construction

Direct Employment

- 13.80 Employment effects have been calculated using the estimated capital construction costs known at this time. This represents a significant injection of private sector investment within the Impact Area in the short term. It is expected that the development of the Site will span approximately five years with the final dwellings completed by 2032.
- 13.81 The Proposed Development will support construction employment. To estimate the number of construction jobs supported during the construction period, a turnover-to-employment ratio for the construction sector has been used. This draws on the ONS and Oxford Economics^{xvi} data for the East of England resulting in a ratio of one job per £85,791 of construction output.
- 13.82 Applying this ratio to the construction cost results in **1,498 construction jobs on-site**, equivalent to **300 construction jobs** supported per annum. The number of construction workers on-site at any one time will vary as the development phases progress.
- 13.83 Construction involves a wide range of trades and sub-sectors which will be involved with the Proposed Development as it develops. Although construction labour is typically mobile, it can be expected that the Proposed Development will help support existing local trades and contractors. There is a potential that the Proposed Development will provide opportunities for new employment, apprenticeships, and training.

Indirect Employment

- 13.84 Several additional effects need to be considered when calculating the economic benefits of the construction phase, in line with the HCA Additionality Guide (2014).
- 13.85 In terms of construction employment, the level of displacement is the number of the 1,498 direct jobs that would be supported elsewhere in the East of England if the Proposed Development did not take

place. Labour resources are finite and therefore labour requirements can lead to a reduction in economic activity elsewhere.

- 13.86 The level of leakage is the proportion of jobs which are taken by those not resident in the East of England. Based on the HCA Additionality Guide, a low-level leakage has been applied at 10%. This implies that a reasonably high proportion of the benefits will be retained within the East of England with a proportion also being retained within the Impact Area.
- 13.87 Construction labour tends to be highly mobile and flexible meaning levels of displacement tend to be lower than for employment in general. Displacement in construction tends to mean a delay in alternate economic activity rather than it not taking place at all. On this basis, it is considered appropriate to apply a medium discount for displacement (25%) for the East of England.
- 13.88 Multiplier effects relate to the further economic activity (such as jobs, expenditure or income) associated with additional income, local supplier purchases and longer-term development effects. In terms of housing development, the scale of the multiplier effects will depend on the extent to which local sub-contractors (with their own local labour) and local suppliers (for materials and services) are used in construction.
- 13.89 To deduce the indirect employment effect a multiplier of 1.5 for the construction sector has been applied. This suggests that for every direct construction job, a further 0.5 jobs are supported in the supply chain and through additional income expenditure.
- 13.90 Applying the additionality assumptions to the gross direct construction jobs, the Proposed Development could support a further **506** indirect jobs (101 jobs per annum) for residents across the East of England during the construction phase.
- 13.91 Overall, the direct and indirect construction employment generated as a result of the Proposed Development is assessed as having a **short-term, temporary, and minor beneficial effect** across the East of England.

Economic Output

- 13.92 The contribution of the construction sector to the economy can be measured by Gross Value Added (GVA). GVA only considers the added value of the industry and excludes costs incurred in the construction process. The average GVA in the East of England's construction industry is £60,205 per worker. Applying this to the direct employment impact of the Proposed Development results in a GVA output of **£90.2m** over the construction period.
- 13.93 In terms of the indirect GVA, the 2014 HCA Additionality Guide suggests a composite output multiplier of 2.7 is appropriate for the construction sector. This indicates that the Proposed Development could generate around £153.3m in indirect gross GVA over the construction period in the East of England.

- 13.94 Overall, the scheme is estimated to deliver a total of £243.5m in gross GVA from the direct construction and indirect GVA. The scheme is assessed as having a **temporary and minor beneficial effect** across the East of England in terms of Economic Value Added during the construction phase.

Health and Wellbeing

- 13.95 Construction activities have the potential to impact the health and wellbeing of existing residents and construction workers in the local area in terms of access, noise impacts and air quality. The Air Quality Assessment and Noise Impact Assessment identifies mitigation measures in relation to air quality and noise. In addition, a Construction Environmental Management Plan will set out best practice measures of environmental control during construction.
- 13.96 Overall, the impact on health and wellbeing during the construction phase is assessed as having a **temporary minor adverse effect (not significant)** in the Impact Area.

Effects Once the Proposed Development is Operational

- 13.97 It is estimated that the build period of the Proposed Development will be up to five years with the first residents occupying the Site in 2032. Once fully occupied, there will be 640 dwellings along with a community hub, and land suitable for a 2FE primary school and other educational uses.

Direct Employment

- 13.98 The Proposed Development will deliver non-residential floorspace comprising a community hub. Employment supported by the community hub is anticipated to generate approximately three FTE jobs, to manage/clean the space, although there is the potential to support greater employment opportunities depending on the specific uses of the community hub.
- 13.99 ONS Statistics suggest that 49% of local jobs are taken by local residents in NHDC therefore leakage is 51%. This means that approximately one job is expected to be filled by residents within the District and two from outside the District.

Indirect Employment

- 13.100 In addition to the direct jobs estimated above, indirect employment would also be created by additional spending on goods and services by the new employment-generating occupiers of the Site. The wage expenditure for workers employed directly at the Site, as well as those employed in the local businesses supplying these employment uses, would also support jobs in shops, services, and other businesses within the local economy¹¹.
- 13.101 The HCA Additionality Guide recommends a range of composite multiplier effects by recreational-related activity. It is considered that a local multiplier of 1.3 is reasonable for this type of development

¹¹ The same additionality assumption applies in the operational phase as they did in the construction phase.

to calculate the indirect employment generated in NHDC and 1.5 has been used to calculate the indirect impact in the East of England.

13.102 In this context, it is estimated that there would be an additional 3 workers in the East of England.

Table 13.15 Indirect Employment Calculations

	NHDC	East of England
Gross Direct Jobs	3	3
<i>Displacement (assumption)</i>	25%	25%
<i>Leakage (ONS, 2021)</i>	49%	10%
<i>Multiplier (assumption)</i>	1.3	1.5
Total net employment	1	3

13.103 The direct and indirect employment associated with the Proposed Development is considered to deliver a **permanent, negligible** impact on employment in the Impact Area.

Economic Output

13.104 The operational phase will also generate significant levels of GVA which can be measured based on the amount of employment generated and the average levels of GVA per worker. The average GVA for the Accommodation and Food Services sector in the East of England (£23,281) is applied to the estimated employment generated by the residential accommodation (three total jobs). This results in around £69,843 in gross direct GVA.

13.105 In terms of indirect GVA, the 2014 Additionality Guide suggests a composite output multiplier of 2.2 is appropriate to use as this is a regional 'economy average'. This indicates that the Proposed Development could generate over £83,800 in indirect GVA. It should be noted that the indirect GVA impacts are likely to be extended across a wider spatial area.

13.106 Overall, the direct and indirect GVA combined is estimated to be around £153,655. The effect of the estimated generation of GVA is assessed to have a **permanent, negligible effect in the Impact area**.

Income Generation

13.107 For the community hub an average annual workplace salary of £29,134 in the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation sector in the East of England, and based on the direct employment of the FTE jobs, it is estimated that workplace salaries will amount to approximately £87,400 per annum.

- 13.108 Overall, the effect of the estimated increase in income generation is assessed to have a **permanent, negligible effect in the Impact area.**

Housing Supply

- 13.109 Within the Site boundary, there are currently no residential dwellings. Once operational, the Proposed Development would provide an uplift of up to 640 new residential dwellings in North Hertfordshire, which represents 110% of the Local Plan annual housing target for North Hertfordshire District Council.
- 13.110 Applying an average household size of 2.4 residents per household, it is estimated that the residential units would accommodate approximately 1,536 residents.
- 13.111 The Proposed Development would contribute to providing a mix of dwellings sizes (providing 1-bed, 2-bed, 3-bed, and 4-bed dwellings) as well as 40% affordable which exceeds the North Hertfordshire Local Plan requirement for affordable dwellings. This will enhance the quality and quantity of housing choice within the East of England housing market. Providing an increased mix of housing will also allow residents a better choice in obtaining their desired dwelling to best meet their needs.
- 13.112 The Proposed Development is assessed as having a **permanent, moderate beneficial (Significant) effect across the Wider Impact Area.**

Residential Expenditure

- 13.113 The ONS Family Spending Survey provides data on household spending by region. Average expenditure in the East of England is £465.70 per week per household (excluding housing, fuel and power costs). This includes spending on convenience (food and drink) and comparison goods (clothing and footwear and household goods) as well as recreation and eating out. It is estimated that the 640 residential households within the Proposed Development could therefore generate total gross spending of £15.5 million each year which could support local centres, businesses and services.
- 13.114 Research by the HBF has shown that homeowners are spending £7,000 per home on furnishing their homes for the first time. The level of spending would be determined by the level of disposable income available to residents and the profile of the house buyer (for example those downsizing). Using the lower end of the range would indicate that the new residents of the market housing elements of the proposal could spend in the region of £4.5 million on comparison goods such as furniture and appliances in local centres.
- 13.115 The effects of the estimated increase in residential expenditure (both first occupation and continued spending) are assessed to have a **permanent, minor beneficial effect in the Impact area.**

Labour Market

- 13.116 Based on the proportion of people in the Impact Area who are of working age (62.3%), it is expected that the Proposed Development will have approximately 957 working-age residents. This represents

an uplift of 0.7% of working age residents in the Impact Area. An increase in the working-age population could bring several economic benefits to an area including greater economic output and higher productivity, as well as increased tax revenues.

- 13.117 In reality, the impact on the labour market is likely to be lower due to a proportion of residents already living in or working in the area. Nevertheless, the additional labour force would help to support activity in NHDC and SBC. Therefore, generating a **permanent, minor beneficial** effect to the labour market across the Impact Area.

Education Facilities

- 13.118 To examine the impact of the Proposed Development on early years and education services, the likely child yield has been calculated using the Department of Education Pupil yield from housing developments. This is based on multipliers applied to the proposed numbers of units adjusted according to the unit type (flat/house), size (number of beds) and tenure (market/ intermediate and social rented/ affordable).
- 13.119 **Table 13.16** sets out the anticipated child yield for the Proposed Development based on the dwelling mix. This demonstrates that the Proposed Development is expected to provide accommodation for 333 children.

Table 13.16 Child Yield

Phase	Number of Residents
Early Years	41
Primary School	177
Secondary School	64
Post-16 Education	51
Total	333

Source: Department for Education Pupil Yield Dashboard 2021/22

Early Years

- 13.120 The baseline indicates that there is a wide range of services of Early Years and Childcare facilities within the Impact Area, including six Ofsted-registered early years facilities within 1.6km of the Site. The Proposed Development is estimated to generate approximately 41 early years aged children.
- 13.121 In addition, the masterplan for the Proposed Development outlines the potential for the proposed community building to accommodate childcare facilities. In addition, early years provision could be delivered as part of the primary school for new children to attend. As such, there would be a

permanent, long-term negligible (not significant) effect on early years education facilities in the Impact Area.

Primary Schools

13.122 As described in the baseline there are, there are five primary schools within the Stevenage North East A PPA operating at 88.1% capacity with a surplus of approximately 271 places. The Proposed Development is estimated to generate around 177 primary aged children.

13.123 Policy SP18: Site GA2 includes a requirement to reserve land for education use to accommodate two forms of entry of primary-age provision. Land suitable for new a new 2FE primary school would be delivered as part of the Proposed Development, which will bring additional capacity to the area. In addition, an area of land of 1.9ha would be reserved for further potential future educational uses. As such, there would be a **negligible (not significant) effect** on primary education facilities in the Impact Area.

Secondary Education

13.124 As identified in the baseline, Secondary schools within the catchment area of the Site are operating at 93.9% capacity with a surplus of approximately 504 secondary school places.

13.125 The Proposed Development is estimated to generate 64 secondary school aged children. The baseline suggests that there is a surplus of 504 places at secondary schools within the 'Stevenage' PA. Therefore, there is likely to be sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional secondary school aged population.

13.126 A proportion of secondary school-age children post 16 years may also choose a different route of education such as apprenticeship courses. The population estimates assume that there will be approximately 51 children aged 17 to 18. At this age there are more education options available.

13.127 Overall, the assessment of secondary education capacity shows that the Proposed Development will deliver a **permanent, minor adverse impact** across the **Impact Area**.

Primary Healthcare Facilities

13.128 Going forward, the Proposed Development is anticipated to have a population of 1,536 residents. If all 1,536 residents choose to join a local GP service, this would increase the GP-to-patient ratio in the Stevenage North PCN to 1 GP serving 2,419 patients (currently 1 GP:2,355 patients). The Proposed Development includes space for a community facility. Part of this site and building could be used for healthcare provision purposes, should the NHS deem it a suitable location.

13.129 Overall, the assessment of healthcare capacity shows that the Proposed Development will deliver a **permanent, minor adverse impact** across the Impact Area.

Community Facilities

- 13.130 Several facilities for local community use are available within proximity to the Site including Great Ashby Community Centre 500m to the west of the Site. However, the NHDC Community Halls Strategy (2011) indicates that if new neighbourhoods are to be created on the edge of Stevenage in North Hertfordshire, completely new facilities will be required and residents should live within 800m of the facility.
- 13.131 A multi-use community building and site is to be included within the Proposed Development, which would complement existing facilities at the Great Ashby Neighbourhood Centre. This would take the form of a multi-use community facility, which could allow for community activities, meetings, or events.
- 13.132 Overall, the magnitude of the impact is considered to be medium compared to the baseline position and the sensitivity of this receptor is medium. As such, there would be a **permanent, moderate (significant) beneficial effect** on community facilities in the Impact Area.

Open Space, Play Space and Sports Facilities

- 13.133 The addition of new residents will generate demand for open space, sports, and recreation facilities. For sports facilities, the baseline analysis has shown that there is a good provision within 1.6km of the Site including sports halls, health and fitness suites, and grass pitches. The proposed community hub building could also be adapted to provide for formal sports use as well as community use.
- 13.134 The Proposed Development includes 33.27ha of green infrastructure, including retained woodland, hedgerows, trees and Dell Spring, as well as large new areas of open space and planting. This includes new active and recreational travel routes, and areas for informal recreation and play. Two Local Equipped Areas of Play ('LEAP's) are proposed: one within the open space in the far east of the development, and one within the far south of the proposed parkland at Dell Spring. The play areas would be designed to offer play opportunities for children of all abilities.
- 13.135 Considering the current baseline of open space within the vicinity of the Site and the quantum provided by the Proposed Development, the impact on open space, play space and sports facilities is **permanent, minor beneficial impact** in the **Impact Area**.

Deprivation

- 13.136 As described in the baseline conditions, the location of the Site displays an above average level of deprivation performing in the 6th domains (with the 10th domain being the least deprived). Overall, the area performs well for most indicators apart from Barriers to Housing and Services, and Living Environment where it is extremely deprived, being in the 10% of most deprived areas in England.
- 13.137 The Proposed Development will act as a catalyst to improve the on-site and surrounding socio-economic conditions and potentially reduce levels of deprivation within the existing community.

- 13.138 The delivery of 640 residential units, including provision of a variety of tenures and affordable housing, could reduce the barriers to access and housing domain of deprivation by providing a mix of market and affordable across a range of different housing mixes to meet the different housing requirements.
- 13.139 The delivery of, non-residential and community uses could reduce barriers to access to services by providing new social infrastructure for existing residents. The provision of open, recreation and play spaces throughout the Site would also help to improve access to different types of green and blue infrastructure, as well as local resident health and well-being.
- 13.140 Overall, the impact on deprivation is assessed as having a **permanent, minor beneficial impact** across the **Impact Area**.

Health and Wellbeing

- 13.141 A Health Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the Proposed Development and is attached at **Appendix 13.2**. It finds that many health indicators in the local area are better than national averages.
- 13.142 The Health Impact Assessment considers six wider determinants of health and wellbeing, and it identifies beneficial effects in terms of (i) lifestyles and (ii) economic conditions. Temporary adverse effects have been identified in terms of (i) social and community influences, (ii) living / environmental conditions, (iii) access and quality of services and (iv) macro-economic, environmental and sustainability factors.
- 13.143 The Proposed Development is expected to contribute to a number of health wellbeing benefits including: increased provision and access to open spaces (benefits for the physical and mental health of residents and the local community) **and** improved landscaping (increased opportunities for enjoyment of green space and social interaction, which **can** maintain or improve mental health).
- 13.144 The Proposed Development **will** also promote active travel and will maximise accessibility for people with mobility problems or disabilities.
- 13.145 As such, the Proposed Development is anticipated to have a **minor beneficial (not significant) impact** on health and wellbeing in the Impact Area.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation During Construction

- 13.146 The construction employment opportunities to be created by the Proposed Development are expected to lead to long-term, temporary moderate beneficial effects. However, several measures or initiatives could be considered to maximise the local benefits of the Proposed Development.

Examples of such measures may include providing full and fair employment opportunities, training, and educational opportunity for residents; encouraging procurement opportunities for local businesses to source products and services locally where possible and practical; and, establishing links with local businesses to offer training and employment opportunities via work experience and apprenticeship schemes. These measures would be subject to discussions with NHDC and other relevant bodies and could be explored as part of the planning conditions for the application.

Mitigation Once the Proposed Development is Operational

- 13.147 The operational phase is anticipated to deliver planning contributions to the relevant social infrastructure to accommodate the future residents on Site. The final planning contributions will be calculated as part of the determination phase. In addition, the Proposed Development has the potential to facilitate accommodate childcare facilities and/or healthcare facilities within the community hub building, should the NHS trust deem it a suitable location.

Residual Effects and Monitoring

- 13.148 The residual effects arising from the Proposed Development are summarised in **Table 13.17** below.

Table 13.17 Summary of Residual Effects

Effect	Receptor (Sensitivity)	Nature of Effect and Geographic Scale	Magnitude of Impact*	Classification of Effect (Statement of Significance BEFORE mitigation)	Mitigation and Monitoring	Residual Effect
Construction Effects						
Construction employment (direct and indirect)	Existing construction employment/labour market (Medium)	Short term (temporary) effect in the East of England	Minor	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)	Provision of local apprenticeship schemes, use of local supply chain and businesses	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)
Economic Output	Existing economic output (Medium)	Short term (temporary) effect in the East of England	Minor	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)	None Required	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)
Health	Health of existing population (Medium)	Short term (temporary) effect in the Impact Area	Minor	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)	Implementation of Construction Environmental Management Plan	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)
Operational Effects						
Employment (direct and indirect)	Local labour market (Medium)	Permanent effect in the Impact Area	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	None Required	Negligible (Not Significant)
Economic Output	Existing economic output (Medium)	Permanent effect in the Impact Area	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	None Required	Negligible (Not Significant)

Labour Market	Local labour market (Medium)	Permanent effect in the Impact Area	Minor	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)	None Required	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)
Residential Expenditure	Local economy (Medium)	Permanent effect in the Impact Area	Minor	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)	None Required	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)
Income Generation	Local economy (Medium)	Permanent effect in the Impact Area	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	None Required	Negligible (Not Significant)
Provision of housing to Increase supply - 640 new homes	Local housing market (High)	Permanent effect in the Impact Area	Moderate	Moderate Beneficial (Significant)	None Required	Moderate Beneficial (Significant)
Increased demand for early years provision	Existing early years provision (Medium)	Permanent effect in the Impact Area	Minor	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)	Potential to include childcare facilities in the community hub building	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)
Increased demand for primary education provision	Existing primary school provision (Medium)	Permanent effect in the Impact Area	Minor	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)	Land suitable for a 2FE primary school	Negligible (Not Significant)
Increased demand for secondary education provision	Existing secondary school provision (Medium)	Permanent effect in the Impact Area	Minor	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)	Planning Contributions	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)
Increase demand for healthcare provision	Existing GP provision (Medium)	Permanent effect in the Impact Area	Minor	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)	Potential to use part of site for healthcare facilities	Negligible (Not Significant)

Increased demand for open space, play space and sport provision	Existing and new open space, play space and sport provision (Medium)	Permanent effect in the Impact Area	Minor	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)	None Required	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)
Deprivation	Existing levels of deprivation (Medium)	Permanent effect in the Impact Area	Minor	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)	None Required	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)
Health	Health of existing population (Medium)	Permanent effect in the Impact Area	Minor	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)	None Required	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)

Notes: * incorporating environmental design and management, ** incorporating mitigation and monitoring measures

Likely Significant Environmental Effects

13.149 No significant adverse socio-economic effects have been identified.

13.150 The provision of housing to increase supply has been identified as a moderate beneficial (significant) effect. The Proposed Development of 640 new homes represents 110% of the Local Plan annual housing target for North Hertfordshire District Council.

References

- ⁱ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2025).
- ⁱⁱ Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Funding Prospectus 2018 – 2031
- ⁱⁱⁱ Hertfordshire LEP (2017) Strategic Economic Plan 2017-2030
- ^{iv} Hertfordshire LEP (2020) Unlocking Hertfordshire, Hertfordshire's Economic Recovery Plan
- ^v North Hertfordshire District Council (2022) North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031
- ^{vi} Stevenage Borough Council (2019) Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031
- ^{vii} ONS 2022 Mid-Year Population Estimates
- ^{viii} ONS (2023) Business Register and Employment Survey
- ^{ix} North Hertfordshire District Council (2022) Local Plan 2011 – 2031
- ^x North Hertfordshire District Council Authority Monitoring Report 2023-2024
- ^{xi} Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2023) Housing Delivery Test: 2022 Measurement
- ^{xii} ONS (2025) Housing affordability in England and Wales: 1997 to 2024
- ^{xiii} ONS Census 2021
- ^{xiv} North Hertfordshire District Council (2016) Open Space Review
- ^{xv} ONS (2018) Population projections for local authorities
- ^{xvi} Oxford Economics (2023) Workforce Jobs Dataset; and ONS (2023) Output in the construction industry: sub-national and sub-sector reference tables