Key Issues
The specific issues relating to the proposed development from the EIA process were mainly related to the design of the site. The key design objectives aimed to:

- **Location of the site in the Oxford Green Belt;**
- **Maintain the setting of Scheduled Monuments both on and off-site;**
- **Retain the setting of the Listed Building off-site and the Conservation Area in the village of Wheatley;**
- **The proximity of the A40 running parallel to the site’s southern boundary and the potential effects on noise and air quality;**
- **Management of surface water runoff;**
- **Presence of protected species on site including bats and great crested newts;**
- **Consideration and retention of mature trees on site;**
- **Planting to provide visual and acoustic screening;**
- **Requirement to include sufficient space for sports facilities on-site.**

Purpose of the Project
Ramboll was instructed GVA on behalf of Oxford Brookes University (OBU) to manage the EIA and prepare an Environmental Statement (ES) to be submitted with the outline planning application for the redevelopment of the Wheatley Campus. OBU wishes to relocate the educational services provided at the Wheatley Campus to existing campuses closer to Oxford city centre and to dispose of the application site. It is proposed to redevelop the site predominantly for housing to get the best value for the site.

Description of the project
The application site extends to 21.2 ha and is 7 km east of Oxford city centre. The site is currently occupied by derelict residential properties teaching buildings and halls of residence (including a 35 m tall tower), traditional semi-detached residential properties, allotments, car parking and a range of sports facilities, courts and pitches. Records of protected species on site include great crested newts, badgers and several species of bats. Habitats on site are generally of limited ecological value and include areas of woodland, amenity grassland and ponds.
Description of Project cont.
A Scheduled Monument is also located in the west of the site.
The proposed development includes:
- the demolition of all existing structures on site;
- the development of up to 500 residential dwellings;
- installation and modification of existing services and utilities;
- provision of SUDS including infiltration basins;
- creation of a noise bund parallel to the A40 and tree planting along the boundary;
- acknowledging the design benefits of proving an appropriate standoff distance between properties and the A40 in relation to air quality and noise;
- delivery of a Green Infrastructure Plan which includes: sports facilities, public open space, ecological enhancement area, tree retention of mature trees and areas of new planting to screen views;
- provision of cavity boxes and a lighting strategy for bat mitigation

Lessons Learnt
Lessons learnt during the course of the project include:
- Understanding all key environmental constraints at an early stage allowed the design to be optimised;
- The importance of consideration of alternatives in site layout to minimise potential environmental impact. Technical specialists attended and fed into the site’s design evolution from the outset;
- Early engagement with key stakeholders ensured the evolving design addressed concern – this was particularly important for landscape and visual, cultural heritage and ecology which were key considerations for South Oxfordshire District Council;
- Regular check-ins with the wider EIA team ensured information and design changes were effectively communicated and deadlines met.

Contact Details
Case Study Author: Kate Lyon, Senior Consultant
Project Contact Details: klyon@ramboll.com

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