SCREENING OPINION

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017

Screening Opinion reference: N/23a

Applicant: Southern Water

Contact: John Nicklin (Principal Environmental Advisor – Southern Water)

Date Received: 30 May 2023

Site: Mannings Heath WTW to Horsham (3.6km)

Proposal: Wastewater Pipeline and associated infrastructure at Mannings Heath Wastewater Treatment Works (WTW).

Classification of the Proposed Development

The proposed development is for the installation of a 3.6km wastewater pipeline from Mannings Heath WTW to the wider Horsham sewerage network at the junction of Queensway and Chesworth Lane. It would comprise the conversion of an existing structure at Mannings Heath WTW into a new pumping station and the construction of a 3.6km pipeline heading westwards to join the existing sewer network (that directs to Horsham WTW for treatment and discharge).

Within Mannings Heath WTW the proposals consist of the installation of standby generator, washwater pumping station and potable water connection, motor control kiosk, telemetry outstation and other ancillary infrastructure.

The pipeline would consist of an underground 3.6km, 16cm diameter pipe with valves and washout chambers, and a 15m section of above ground pipeline. The pipeline would be largely 'open cut', with the use of trenchless construction techniques (Horizontal directional drilling and/or pipe pushing) to cross some sensitive features.

The proposal does not comprise Schedule 1 development, as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ('the EIA Regulations').

The installation of sewer pipelines is not specifically identified within Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations, however, noting caselaw suggests interpretation of Schedule 2 developments are given 'wide scope and broad purpose' (as confirmed by National Planning Practice Guidance), the proposed development is considered to fall within Part 10(l) of Schedule 2 of the EIA regulations as an 'Infrastructure Project - *Installations of long-distance aqueducts*'.

Whilst the site area of the proposed development has not been specified (and upon completion would predominantly relate to a narrow underground pipeline), based on the stated working construction corridor of 20m (7.2 Ha), temporary compounds (some 0.4Ha) the area of the existing WTW to be the subject to upgrades (some 0.3ha) the site is likely to comprise a total area of approximately 7.9 Ha. This exceeds the relevant 1Ha threshold criteria as set out in Column 2 of Schedule 2. Further, part of the proposed development would fall within the High

Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a 'Sensitive Area' as defined within the regulations, wherein all Schedule 2 development must be screened.

Accordingly, consideration needs to be given, with reference to Schedule 3 to the EIA Regulations, as to whether the development would have the potential to result in 'significant environmental effects' which require an EIA.

Characteristics of Development	
Development Area	Site area – approximately 8ha.
Development Nature / Scale	3.6km, 16cm diameter wastewater pipeline from Mannings Heath WTW and conversions/ancillary infrastructure within the WTW. Predominantly underground installations, albeit with the exception of a 15m section of overground (suspended) pipeline and small ancillary kiosks/plant within the WTW. Proposal seeks for provide for the pumping and transfer of wastewater flows to Horsham WTW (rather than upgrading Mannings Heath WTW) to meet latest environmental standards for discharges.

Screening Criteria	**Applicable (and explanation of reasons)?**	**Is a significant effect likely (and explanation of reasons)?**
Natural Resources		
1. Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the topography of the area?	No. Works are primarily below ground with land above reinstated. Some decommissioning of existing plant within WTW, however, not proposed to be removed (instead isolated and made safe). No significant changes in levels proposed.	No.
2. Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes. Non-renewable fuels/energy likely to be required to facilitate construction. Some energy use associated with operational pumping.	No significant effects are anticipated. Any construction related fuel/energy use would be temporary and relatively limited in scale/duration. Any operational energy use likely to be limited in the context of the existing WTW.
3. Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be	Yes. Approximately 450m of the pipeline would cross an area with potential for Brick Clay.	No significant effects are anticipated. A limited area with potential to contain Brick Clay (a safeguarded mineral resource)

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affected by the project, e.g. forestry, agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?	Pipeline would cross agricultural land. The site is situated in an area of serious water stress, as identified by the Environment Agency Water Stressed Areas Classification. A position statement from Natural England (Oct 2021), sets out it cannot be concluded that water sourced from within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone is not having an impact on the Arun Valley Habitat Sites which include a Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation, and Ramsar site. Development proposals that would lead to a material increase in water demand will need to demonstrate 'water neutrality' (i.e. no increase in water consumption) in order to satisfy 'The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017'.	to be affected. Proposals would not sterilise agricultural land upon completion. Once operational, the proposed development would not result in any mains water demand, and if necessary Habitats Regulations Assessments require that neutrality would be demonstrated.
Waste		
4. Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes. Construction excavations would generate approximately 2800m3 of soils. Some waste may be produced as part of decommissioning of existing WTW plant/structures. However, it is not intended to remove any large concrete structures from the site. Operational proposals are for the management of wastewater, and to improve the treatment process. No additional wastewater would be produced, rather it would be transferred to an	No significant effects are anticipated. Relatively limited volume of waste likely to be produced during construction and decommissioning. Excavated soils to be re-used as part of re-instatement works where possible. Proposals are for the improved treatment of wastewater flows, with limited potential for future waste production given the scale/nature of the proposals.

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	alternative site for treatment.	
Pollution and Nuisances		
5. Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Temporary emissions may occur during construction (approx. 12 months). Notably dust resulting from earthmoving operations. Proposals involve the management and transfer of odorous wastewater.	No significant effects are anticipated. Any construction related emissions to air would be temporary in nature and mitigated through adoption of typical dust management measures etc. (to form part of a Construction Environmental Management Plan - CEMP). During operation, limited potential for additional odour given the context of the existing WTW and nature of proposals. Air valves and washout chambers (within pipeline) have some potential for odour, however, this is limited, irregular and limited sensitive receptors proximate.

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6. Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Temporary emissions may occur during construction (approx. 12 months). Notably dust resulting from earthmoving operations. Proposals involve the management and transfer of odorous wastewater.	No significant effects are anticipated. Any construction related emissions to air would be temporary in nature and mitigated through adoption of typical dust management measures etc. (to form part of a Construction Environmental Management Plan - CEMP). During operation, limited potential for additional odour given the context of the existing WTW and nature of proposals. Air valves and washout chambers (within pipeline) have some potential for odour,

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		however, this is limited, irregular and limited sensitive receptors proximate.
7. Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes. Potential for noise during the construction period (estimated period of 12 months). This includes both traditional excavation and directional drilling activities, and the requirement for three contractor compounds and associated vehicular/plant movements. Construction proposed during daylight hours and thus limited potential need for lighting. Once operational, pumping plant would be underground. An emergency generator would be required for possible power outages. In terms of lighting, the WTW would remain unmanned with only periodic attendance for inspection and maintenance. It is not expected any lighting will be required.	No significant effects are anticipated. The proposed development area is generally rural limiting potential receptors affected. However, residential receptors near western connection and eastern WTW. Any construction related noise would be temporary in nature, works are primarily targeted within typical working hours, and would be mitigated through adoption of good working practices in accordance with BS5228:2009 (Code of Practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites). Further, the applicant proposes direct liaison with any nearby receptors. Any temporary lighting would be orientated to minimise light trespass. During operation, limited noise impacts expected given the nature of the proposals, and only infrequent emergency use of a proposed backup generator.
8. Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Yes. During construction, use of plant, horizontal directional drills and temporary discharge of water from excavations. During operation, the proposals involve the management of wastewater.	No significant effects are anticipated. During construction, any dewatering activities would be undertaken in accordance with Environment Agency regulation/guidance. Construction measures would be adopted to prevent contamination including re-fuelling in a designated bunded areas away from watercourses/surface drains and use of inert drilling fluids. The proposals are for the redirection of wastewater to an alternative WTW facility to reduce pollutant concentrations

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		of final treated discharges. The proposals are therefore likely to result in a reduced risk of releases of pollutants. The final treatment facility would also require an Environmental Permit (regulated by the Environment Agency) that would require appropriate measures to minimise any pollutant releases to acceptable levels.
9. Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	No. None identified. Although the River Arun (into which the existing WTW flows eventually join) had a Poor status in 2016, the proposals are unlikely to result in any direct impacts thereto (noting the proposals are to cease direct discharges from the existing WTW).	No.
Population and Human Health		
10. Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?	No. No change to the potential for major accidents envisaged given the nature of development proposed.	No.
11. Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)	Yes. Proposed development would involve vehicular movements and use of construction plant. During operation no significant change to potential risk to the population given the nature of development proposed.	No significant effect anticipated. The site is either a generally isolated rural location or within an existing operational WTW. Limited potential for risk during construction subject to typical Health and safety procedures/requirements. The final treatment facility would also require an Environmental Permit (regulated by the Environment Agency) that would ensure appropriate measures to minimise and safeguard against potential for any major accidents associated with pollutant releases.

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Water Resources		
12. Are there any water resources including surface waters, e.g. rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?	Yes. The proposals will cross four small watercourses/ditches and the River Arun (a Main River). The proposals would result in the cessation of discharges from the existing WTW into the adjacent watercourse. The majority of the works fall within Flood Zone 1 (low risk of flooding), however, at river/watercourse crossings the pipeline would fall within Flood Zone 3 (high risk of flooding).	No significant effect anticipated. The nature of the development is such that it is not vulnerable to flooding. For watercourse crossings is proposed to utilise directional drilling or connection to an existing bridge deck to avoid/minimise any potential impacts. Further, any open cut crossing would require ordinary water consent from the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) that would regulate potential for impacts thereon and minimise risk of flooding. Any final discharge of treated wastewater would be via the Horsham WTW that is subject to an Environmental Permit that regulates outward flows to suitable levels. Given the very limited flow of the predominantly spring fed watercourse into which the WTW currently discharges, cessation of flows would represent an estimated 87% reduction in its flow. However, submitted studies show that this would return the stream to a more natural state, reduce the nutrient input (an ecological benefit), and only represent a very small proportion (0.3%) of flow into the River Arun into which it feeds. Any variations to the current discharges from the WTW will require approval from the Environment Agency under the environmental permitting regime minimising any potential for significant impacts. See Q7 also.
Biodiversity (Species and Habitats)		
13. Are there any protected areas which are designated or classified	Yes. Internationally designated sites proximate are Erbernoe	No significant effect anticipated. Distance from internationally and nationally designated sites

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for their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, or any non-designated / non-classified areas which are important or sensitive for reasons of their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, located on or around the location and which could be affected by the project? (e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water-bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, undesignated nature reserves or parks. (Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local))).	Common Special Area of Conservation (SAC) approx. 19km west, and the Mens SAC approx. 14km south-west. Nationally designated sites proximate are St. Leonards Ponds Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) approx. 1km north-east, and St. Leonards Forest SSSI approx. 1.5km north. Locally designated sites are Chesworth Farm Local Wildlife Site (LWS) that approx. 1km of the pipeline will cross. This site contains important habitat including semi-improved neutral grassland, species rich hedgerows, wetland habitats, and is known to support a wide range of bird species. Denne Road Cemetery LWS approx. 250m north west, and St. Leonards Forest LWS approx. 775m north. The WTW is also surrounded by Ancient Woodland and works/clearance required within this to facilitate the suspended above ground 15m section of pipeline (three trees removed and two tree groups partially removed). Other areas of ancient woodland proximate to the proposed pipeline include a narrow stirp alongside the River Arun and to the east of Kerves Farm. The site will also contain some habitats of principal importance including woodland, hedgerows	and links/pathways to relevant (and qualifying) features is such that they are unlikely to be affected. Potential for impacts upon Chesworth Farm LWS as a result of construction works, however, it is proposed that trenchless techniques will be used where possible to avoid key habitat features and all such features would be fully reinstated upon completion of works, with enhancement where possible (in consultation with the LPA who manage the area). Other locally designated sites unlikely to be affected. Routing of the pipeline seeks to avoid ancient woodland, with the exception the section of suspended pipeline to the east of the WTW. As a result, the loss of trees and impacts upon ancient woodland are inevitable. However, it is proposed to restrict works to a 10m easement in this area, routing avoids higher quality trees, and submitted arboricultural assessments set out proposed methodologies to minimise any root damage, protect retained trees and enhance the existing woodland that would reduce potential impacts and seek to offset them. Further, this section of the proposed pipeline would require planning permission, which provides a means to secure suitable mitigation and compensation, and thus certainty of control to reduce the probability and extent of impacts. Whilst there is potential for impacts upon a range of habitats, those of principal importance and important hedgerows, it is proposed that existing gaps and/or trenchless

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	(approx. 13 hedgerow crossings with the majority likely to be classed as 'important hedgerows'), and rivers.	crossings would be used where possible, the working corridor would be reduced to 6m, and any sections of hedgerow removed would be reinstated/replaced upon completion. Further, any removal of sections of 'important hedgerow' would require consent from the LPA and suitable mitigation/compensation measures. This would reduce the probability of impacts. Upon completion the development would improve the quality of wastewater treatment and discharges and thus downstream ecological status of the receiving watercourse (river Arun) in accordance with required Environment Agency standards.
14. Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?	Yes. See Q12 also. Appraisals identify some potential for protected species to be present in and around the site (including bats, Great Crested Newts, breeding/nesting birds, dormice, reptiles, water voles, and otters.	No significant effect anticipated. Some construction related impacts possible, however, subject to proposed mitigation measures any such impacts would be limited and likely to be below thresholds for which protected species licenses would be required. Proposed mitigation includes use of directional drilling to avoid hedgerows and watercourses where possible, preliminary checks by an ecologist, arboricultural supervision, and precautionary methods of working for key protected species.
Landscape and Visual		
15. Are there any areas or features on or around the location which are protected for their landscape and scenic value, and/or any non-designated / non-classified areas or features of high landscape or scenic value	Yes. Part of the site (approx. 500m of the eastern extent of the pipeline) is located within the Nationally designated High Weald AONB. The High Weald AONB, which for the area impacted is characterised by a mixture of fields, small woodlands and farmsteads	No significant effect anticipated. Any construction related impacts would be temporary. Upon completion most of the works would be below ground. The only exceptions would be minor changes within the WTW and a 15m section of suspended pipeline (outside of the AONB)

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on or around the location which could be affected by the project? Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	connected by historic routeways, tracks and paths. The site also includes areas of open countryside and would cross the Chesworth Farm LWS which is of scenic value to visitors experiencing the ecological/landscape value of the area. Construction activities associated with a working corridor of 20m, 3 compounds, and works within the existing WTW (estimated at a total of 12 months) could give rise to landscape impacts on these key features.	and flush manhole covers (or low-level concrete collars if required by landowners). Otherwise, all land, paths and hedgerows would be reinstated to their former condition. Above ground works and those within the WTW are generally well screened from view by dense woodland/vegetation.
16. Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people? (If so, from where, what direction, and what distance?)	Yes. Whilst most of the route is generally within a more isolated rural location, at either end of the pipeline there are a greater concentration of residential properties including those within the built-up areas of Horsham and Mannings Heath. The pipeline would cross three roads, one of which is a well trafficked 'A' Road (the A281 – Brighton Road). It would also cross several rural public rights of way.	No significant effect anticipated. Given the existing WTW and location of the proposed section suspended pipeline are densely screened by trees, potential views would be limited. Visual impacts would primarily be limited to temporary construction activities associated with the pipeline and hedgerow crossings that would inevitably be visible from PROW and road crossings and some residential properties. Such impacts would be relatively short in duration (and unlikely for the full 12-month construction period as the pipeline proceeds in sections), and all land would be reinstated upon completion with no substantive above ground structures.
Cultural Heritage/Archaeology		
17. Are there any areas or features which are protected for their cultural heritage or archaeological value, or any non-designated / classified areas and/or features of cultural heritage or archaeological	Yes. At its western extent the proposed pipeline runs approx. 175m to the north of Chesworth House, a Grade II* Listed Building and surrounding Historic Parkscape. Immediately to	No significant effects anticipated. Given separation distances from Listed Buildings and the Scheduled Ancient Monument, intervening trees/vegetation, and temporary nature of any works (land would be

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importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project (including potential impacts on setting, and views to, from and within)? Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	the south of Chesworth House, the 'Moated Site and Fishponds' is also a nationally designated Scheduled Ancient Monument. Land north of Chesworth House (broadly consistent with the area of the LWS) is also locally designated as an Archaeological Notification Area (high archaeological potential) with approx. 1km of the pipeline crossing this area and to be the subject to ground disturbance. More widely there are several Listed Buildings in the Horsham area to the north, and along Pound Lane in Mannings Heath to the south. The open fields/countryside through which the pipeline crosses contain a number of records of archaeological finds. Preliminary archaeological investigation indicates some archaeological potential, particularly in lower lying areas and adjacent to watercourses.	reinstated), no significant impact on the setting of designated heritage assets is likely. Whilst the site clearly is of archaeological potential, and proposed works could impact upon previously undiscovered archaeological remains, a programme of pre-construction archaeological investigation is proposed, with a watching brief, and recording of finds during construction, where required. It is of further note that as Statutory Undertaker the applicant is required to have regard to the protection of archaeology under the Water Industry Act 1991, giving further certainty of mitigation and thus reducing the potential for significant effects.
Transport and Access		
18. Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes. The pipeline would cross three roads, one of which is a well trafficked 'A' Road (the A281 – Brighton Road). Construction access to the site would be required in several locations, including shared accesses with other properties/land. It would also cross several rural public rights of way, and the publicly accessible Chesworth Farm LWS.	No significant effects anticipated. Except for connection works in the highway at the western end of the pipeline, public roads would be crossed by directional drilling. Works in this location would be temporary in nature and subject to further detailed mitigation to minimise any impact to access as part of Highway Licence requirements. Works would be subject to a Traffic Management Plan, require landowner liaison and accesses would be reinstated

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		upon completion of temporary construction activities. A number of PROW may require temporary diversion, albeit it is envisaged that this would be for a short time and that PROW would primarily remain open. Any such impacts would require consent from WSCC as the PROW authority that would ensure any potential impacts are minimised.
19. Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	None identified. Construction would result in increase in vehicular and HGV trips over a temporary 12 month period. Upon completion the proposed development would not result in additional vehicular trips to the WTW.	No significant effects anticipated. Any construction related traffic would be temporary in nature and subject to a Traffic Management Plan to further minimise impacts. See Q17 also.
Land Use		
20. Are there existing land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project? E.g. housing, densely populated areas, industry / commerce, farm/agricultural holdings, forestry, tourism, mining, quarrying, facilities relating to health, education, places of worship, leisure /sports / recreation.	Yes. Whilst most of the route is generally within a more isolated rural location, at either end of the pipeline there are a greater concentration of residential properties including those within the built-up areas of Horsham and Mannings Heath. The pipeline crosses agricultural fields.	No significant effects anticipated. Any construction related impacts would be temporary. See Q3, Q5 and Q6 also.
21. Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	None identified.	No.
Land Stability and Climate		
22. Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or	Yes. Parts of the site boundary are within a Flood Zone 3.	No significant effects anticipated. See Q11 also.

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extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?		
Cumulative Effects		
23. Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulation of impacts together during the construction/operation phase?	No. The development site is predominantly rural, and no specific developments identified with the potential to cause significant cumulative effect.	No.
Transboundary Effects		
24. Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects?	No. Impacts generally localised around development site and proposals seek to improve discharges to the wider water environment.	No.

Conclusion

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on Environmental Impact Assessment (March 2015) sets out 'Indicative screening thresholds' for considering whether EIA is necessary. For part 10(l) indicative thresholds refers to construction of pipelines over 5km in length. The key issues to consider for underground pipelines noted in this annex, are disruption to the surrounding ecosystems during construction. For overground pipelines visual impact is noted as a key consideration.

In this case, at 3.6Km the development would be below the 5km indicative threshold, would involve a relatively limited width of construction corridor at 20m (reduced at hedgerow crossings), and incorporate horizontal drilling for some key sensitive features. It would also involve works to modify an existing WTW into a Pumping Station, however, those would all be within the operational land of an established and well screened WTW site and represent a broadly consistent land use. The pipeline would be underground with all land utilised for construction reinstated upon completion, the exception being a short (15m) section of suspended pipeline.

The proposal, once completed, would not be likely to result in any significant additional emissions, traffic, or noise and vibration. The proposals ultimately seek to provide conveyance of wastewater to an alternative treatment facility to improve discharges to the water environment.

The proposals clearly have the potential for environmental impacts during construction, with several sensitive ecological, landscape, recreational, heritage

and water environment receptors present in the locality and/or directly affected. However, the scale, nature, duration of temporary activities, and mitigation measures proposed is such that this would be moderated. There is limited potential for significant disturbance to nearby residences.

Preliminary assessments (and surveys) have been carried out for several key environmental matters which conclude that subject to suitable mitigation, the potential for significant impacts can be avoided. A wide range of mitigation measures are proposed during construction to minimise the potential impacts on biodiversity, the water environment, archaeology, and people, in accordance with relevant guidance, and typical of a linear project of this kind. It is considered that such measures would reduce the probability of impacts, and/or likely be capable of reducing or offsetting them.

Further, some elements of the proposals are also controlled under other regulatory regimes controlled by other authorities, including the Environment Agency, Natural England and the Highway Authority, which seek to ensure that any impacts are reduced and/or controlled to appropriate standards. It can be assumed that these regimes will operate effectively thus further minimising the probability for significant environmental impacts. The above ground section of the pipeline (falling within ancient woodland) would require planning permission, providing a further means to secure suitable mitigation and compensation, and thus certainty over the probability and extent of impacts.

The proposals do have the potential for environmental impacts, however, the scale, nature and location of the proposed development, and mitigation proposed, is such that it is considered that these are unlikely to be of a magnitude that would lead to significant environmental effects. Many of the key potential impacts would arise from construction activities, which would be temporary in nature.

Considering the findings set out above and having regard to the selection criteria in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations, it is considered that the proposed development does not have the potential for significant effects on the environment within the meaning of the EIA Regulations 2017.

Screening Opinion

In the opinion of the County Planning Authority the development **would not require** an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Approved by: 

Head of Planning Services
Date: 27 June 2023

Case Officer: James Neave (Principal Planner)