

The Upper Thames Major  
Resource Development



## **Report on Stage 2 Involvement**

Feedback from the Local Community and Organisations



**November 2008**



## Foreword



This report and the illustrative plans that accompany it provide a full record of our responses to feedback received during the Stage 2 consultation, early in 2007, on the proposed reservoir. An interim report was published in August of that year.

I want to make it entirely clear that the need for the proposed reservoir is still being considered as part of the company's statutory Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP), and that the publication of this document does not interfere in any way with that process, nor does it pre-suppose any particular outcome. We simply want to respond to the feedback we have received relating to the design, conservation and recreation aspects on which we consulted, so that people can see how their comments have directly influenced our plans for the proposed reservoir.

The responses set out in this report will be used to inform any future work on the design of the reservoir and its associated facilities.

Our draft WRMP will be forwarded to Defra for consideration by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The Secretary of State will also receive all the responses to our consultation on the draft. Those responses are being published shortly, together with our comments. It will then be for the Secretary of State to decide whether to instigate a public hearing or inquiry, or to issue any direction on the content of our draft plan.

The draft WRMP consultation raised issues directly related to the Stage 2 consultation, and these, together with other comments received since the close of the original consultation period, have been included in this report for ease of reference.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Aylard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

Richard Aylard  
Director, Thames Water

The Upper Thames Major  
Resource Development

Prepared by Arup

Working in Partnership



ARUP



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# 1 Introduction



## PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

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- 1.1 The Stage 2 Preferred Scheme and Design Options consultation ran from 6 January to 3 March 2007. This was the second stage of consultation for the Upper Thames Major Resource Development.
- 1.2 This Report on Stage 2 Involvement has been prepared to summarise the second stage of the public consultation process, analyse and respond to feedback and, where possible, make recommendations to inform future work and the development of the design, in response to the consultation.
- 1.3 The next section of this report provides a brief summary of our approach to the Stage 2 consultation. Section 3 provides a quantitative analysis of feedback received. Section 4 draws together themes arising from qualitative feedback and sets out our response. Section 5 summarises each of the twelve themes identified.
- 1.4 Appendix A contains the Draft Landscape and Habitat Plan and Draft Recreation Plan. Appendices B-E provide more information on the Stage 2 consultation methodology. Appendix F provides feedback in full and our responses. A glossary of terms used in this report is provided in Appendix G.

## RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER REPORTS AND THE WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN

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- 1.5 This report follows the Report on Stage 1 Involvement (January 2007) and the Interim Report on Stage 2 Involvement (August 2007). The Interim Report provided an overview of the feedback received during the Stage 2 consultation with our provisional responses.
- 1.6 It was decided, in consultation with the Environment Agency, to then concentrate on the preparation of the draft Water Resources Management Plan (dWRMP), which identifies all demand management activity and new water resources over the 25 years from 2010. The dWRMP is currently being considered by the Secretary of State for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The decision by the Secretary of State will determine whether the reservoir does proceed as a submission for planning consent.
- 1.7 Meanwhile, changes have been made to the text published in the Interim Report to take into account additional feedback received after the Stage 2 consultation (including that from the Vale of White Horse District Council and feedback submitted following publication of the dWRMP). The Strategy for Community and Stakeholder Involvement will be revised once it becomes clear what the next steps will be in respect of the dWRMP and Planning Bill. The draft Water Resources Management Plan and the Strategy for Community and Stakeholder Involvement are available to view on our website.
- 1.8 This report will form part of the Report on Community and Stakeholder Involvement that will accompany any submission for consent for the reservoir, should the Secretary of State determine that the reservoir should be included in the final WRMP.



## 2 Approach to the Stage 2 consultation

### INTRODUCTION

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- 2.1 Following on from the Stage 1 Needs and Alternatives consultation, the main aims of the Stage 2 consultation were:
- To set out the preferred scheme and how it would work.
  - To provide an opportunity for the relevant Government departments, agencies, local authorities, parish and town councils, other relevant stakeholders and the local community to influence the development of design options.
  - To demonstrate how community and stakeholder involvement has influenced the design.
- 2.2 The approach to the Stage 2 consultation was in line with policy and best practice guidance, as set out in Thames Water's Strategy for Community and Stakeholder Involvement (September 2006 version), which is available on our website or on request (see Getting in Touch at the end of this report).
- 2.3 The Strategy for Community and Stakeholder Involvement was agreed with the Vale of White Horse District Council, prior to publication.

### CONSULTATION MATERIALS

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#### Stage 2 Preferred Scheme and Design Options Report

- 2.4 The Stage 2 consultation was based on the Stage 2 Preferred Scheme and Design Options Report (the Stage 2 Report), which was divided into two parts:
- Part A described the technical proposals and outlined the construction tasks, their scale and likely timing.
  - Part B described the principles developed and initial proposals for landscape, conservation, recreation and building design, with regard to the potential scale and distribution of facilities.

#### Supporting documentation

- 2.5 In addition to the Stage 2 Report, the following documents were also published as part of the Stage 2 consultation:
- Stage 2 Preferred Scheme and Design Options Report: Summary and Overview.
  - A leaflet containing details of the exhibition.
  - re:Source newsletter: Issue 2.
  - Stage 2 feedback form.
  - Report on Stage 1 Involvement: Feedback from the Local Community.
  - Strategy for Community and Stakeholder Involvement (September 2006 version).

#### Availability of the Stage 2 consultation materials

- 2.6 All of the Stage 2 consultation materials were made available at the public exhibition, local libraries and Vale of White Horse District Council Local Service Points. Leaflets indicating where copies of the Stage 2 consultation materials could be accessed were sent to addresses in the local area.
- 2.7 All of the Stage 2 documents continue to be available on our website and on a free CD ROM, on request.

- 2.8 The Stage 2 Preferred Scheme and Design Options Report was sent to the relevant Government departments and agencies, local authorities, parish and town councils.
- 2.9 A number of supporting technical documents were made available to technical stakeholders in order to assist them in considering the Stage 2 Report. These documents are still available on our website. They did not form part of the Stage 2 consultation and were provided as background information for technical stakeholders.

## MEANS OF CONSULTATION

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- 2.10 A public exhibition was held between 6 January and 30 January 2007 to present the preferred scheme and design options. Based on feedback from the Stage 1 consultation, the number of exhibition venues was increased from four to six, to include Marcham and Drayton, in addition to Abingdon, East Hanney, Steventon and Wantage. Members of the project team staffed the exhibition at each venue. In total, the public exhibition received over 1600 visits, although this figure may include repeat visits by the same individual. A short film was played at the exhibition, showing what the reservoir might look like in the surrounding landscape. This short film can be viewed on our website or on a free DVD. Further details of the public exhibition are provided in Appendix B.
- 2.11 Feedback forms were provided at the public exhibition, local libraries and Vale of White Horse District Council Local Service Points, for comments and suggestions. Forms could be returned at the exhibition or via Freepost. The deadline for the return of feedback forms was 3 March 2007. We received 370 feedback forms in response to the consultation. A copy of the Stage 2 feedback form is provided in Appendix C.
- 2.12 Two one-day workshops were held at Milton Hill, near Abingdon on 3 and 4 February 2007. The workshops were attended by a total of 80 members of the local community, selected from over 150 individuals volunteering via the Stage 1 feedback form or at the Stage 2 exhibition. The selection process ensured that a balanced profile of attendees took part (in terms of age, gender and location), and they represented a range of views and interests. Participants included representatives of organisations and local interest groups as well as individuals from the local community. The workshops focused on proposals for landscape, conservation, recreation, access and building design. The workshops were run by independent facilitators from Dialogue by Design<sup>1</sup>. A record of the workshops was produced by the independent facilitators and sent to all participants for their comments. Further details of the workshops can be found in Appendix D.
- 2.13 As part of our efforts to engage more young people, invitations were sent to local schools, and presentations were made by members of the project team at Didcot Girls' School and St Birinus School (also in Didcot). The presentations were based on the Stage 2 exhibition material, and feedback forms were provided and notes taken to capture the views of the local school children attending.
- 2.14 Statutory consultees and other relevant organisations were invited to comment on the Stage 2 Preferred Scheme and Design Options consultation. Statutory consultees included, amongst others, the Consumer Council for Water, the Environment Agency, Ofwat, Government Office for the South East, Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council. Feedback was received from 50 organisations in total. Further details of correspondence from organisations can be found in Appendix E.

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<sup>1</sup>Dialogue by Design are a firm of specialist consultation practitioners, with more than 15 years' experience in public and stakeholder engagement.



## 3 Quantitative analysis

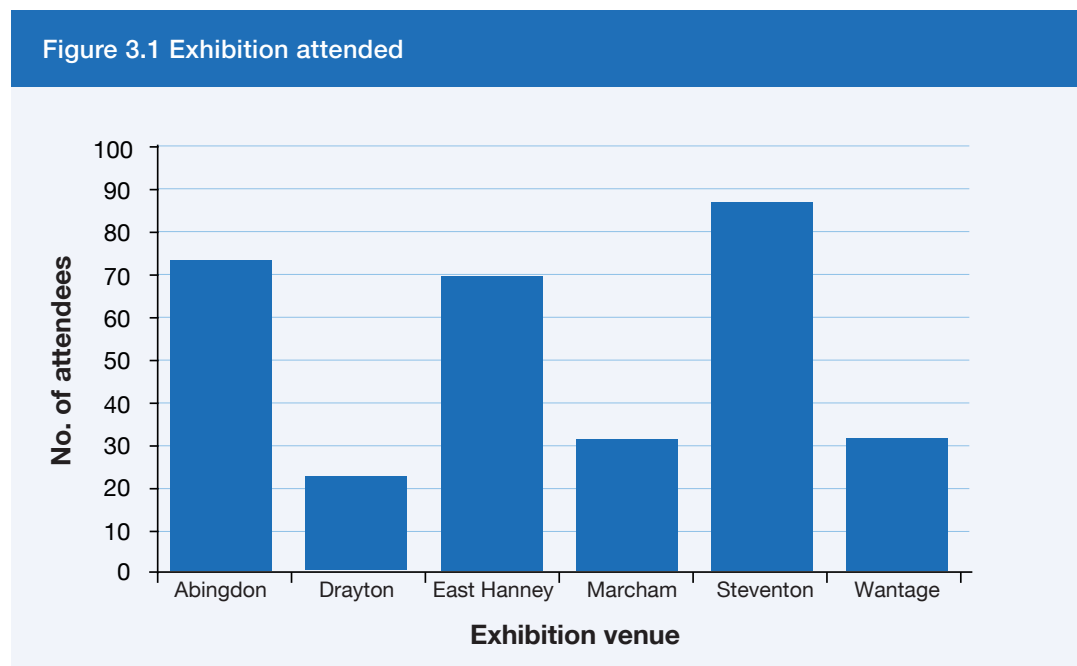
### INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 Our analysis of feedback from the Stage 2 consultation combined a quantitative analysis of numerical data provided in response to questions 2, 4 and 6 on the Stage 2 feedback form (provided in the remainder of this section) and a qualitative analysis of comments and suggestions received via the Stage 2 exhibition, feedback forms, the workshops, feedback from schools and correspondence from individuals and organisations (see Section 4). A copy of the Stage 2 feedback form is provided in Appendix C.
- 3.2 The findings presented in this section are based on the 370 feedback forms received in response to the consultation.

### PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

#### Exhibition attended

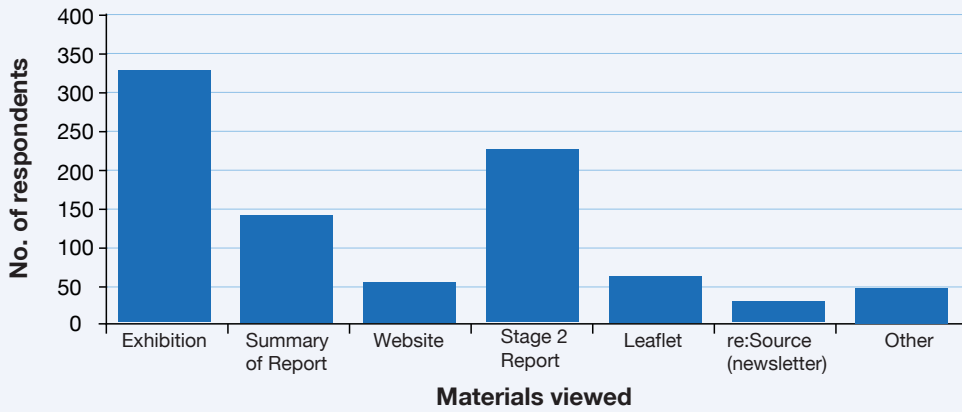
- 3.3 The exhibition was held at six locations local to the preferred reservoir site. Figure 3.1 shows the locations where the respondents attended the exhibition (as reported in the feedback forms).



#### Use of consultation materials

- 3.4 Figure 3.2 shows that the vast majority of respondents had visited the public exhibition. The majority of respondents had also viewed the Stage 2 Preferred Scheme and Design Options Report.
- 3.5 In addition to the material provided, respondents used a number of other sources of information. These included local parish newsletters and television and newspaper coverage.

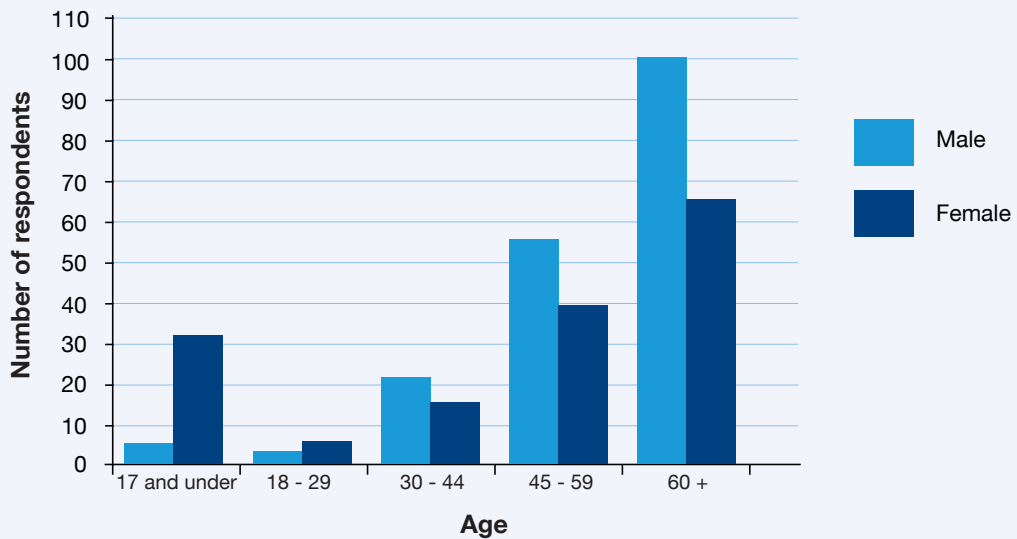
Figure 3.2 Consultation materials viewed



**Population profile**

3.6 Figure 3.3 shows that, in common with the Stage 1 consultation, the largest share of the response was from males aged 60+, followed by females within the same age group. Specific efforts to engage more young people resulted in a significant increase in the number of respondents aged 17 and under, compared to the Stage 1 consultation.

Figure 3.3 Age and gender profile of respondents



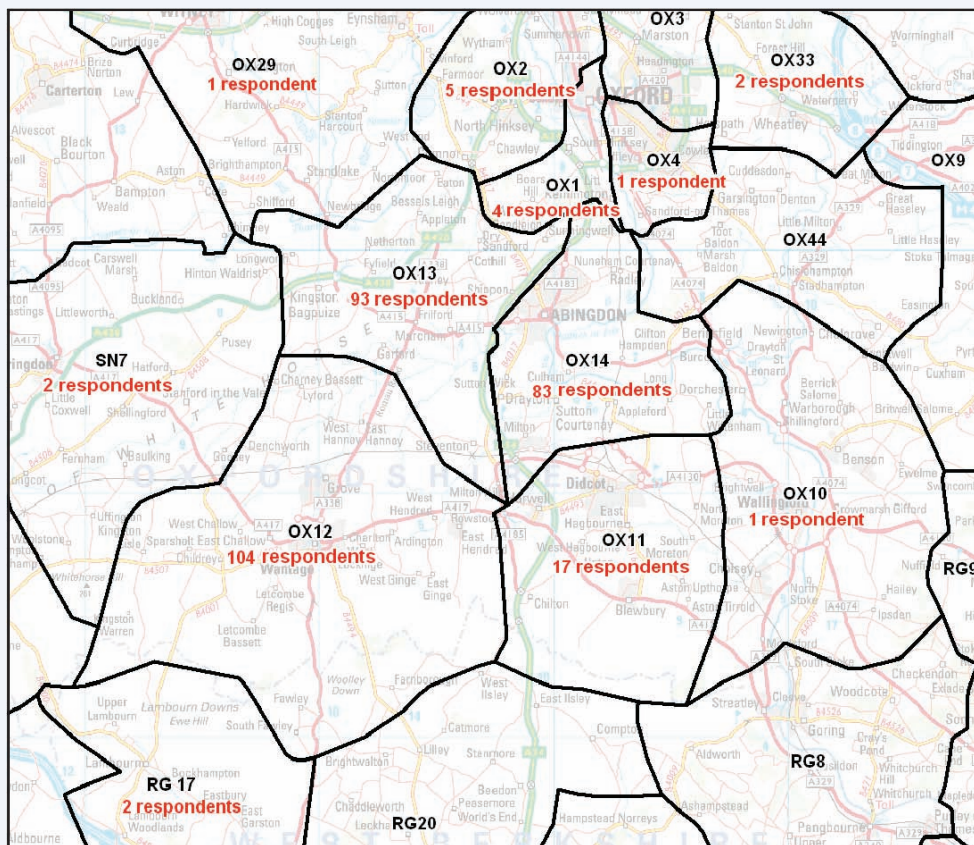
### Categories of respondents

- 3.7 Some 312 respondents identified themselves as local residents, 22 responses were received from representatives of organisations and 9 from local businesses. 23 respondents replied in multiple capacities.

### Location

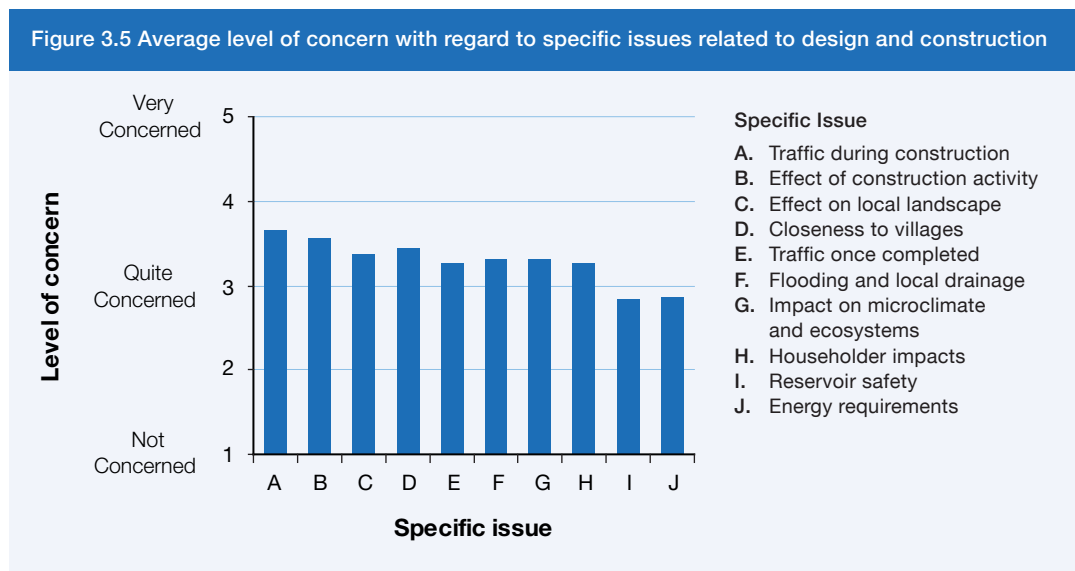
- 3.8 Figure 3.4 identifies the number of respondents by postcode. The majority of responses were from the OX12, OX13 and OX14 postcodes. These postcodes encompass the proposed site and all six exhibition venues. Four respondents came from outside the area shown in Figure 3.4 and 52 respondents did not provide their postcodes.

Figure 3.4 Respondents by postcode



## RESERVOIR DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

- 3.9 Respondents were asked to indicate their level of concern in response to ten specific issues, relating to the design and construction of the reservoir. Figure 3.5 shows the average level of concern, where a score of one indicated that the respondent was not concerned and a score of five indicated that they were very concerned.

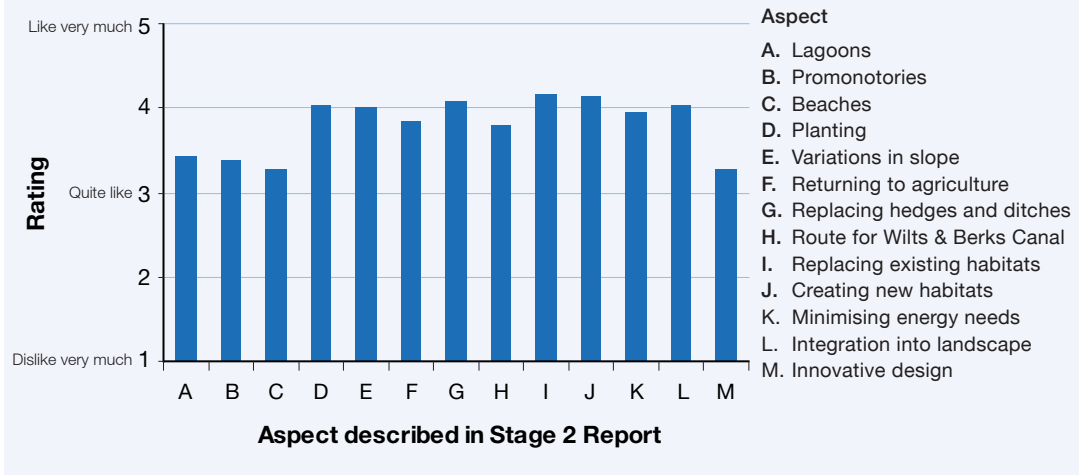


- 3.10 Figure 3.5 shows that with regard to 8 of the 10 specific issues the respondents were at least quite concerned, and with regard to the other two issues they were marginally less than quite concerned. Respondents were most concerned about the impacts of traffic during construction, the effects of construction activity and the closeness of the proposed reservoir to local villages. The average level of concern expressed regarding traffic during construction, the effect of construction activity and the effect on local landscape was lower than it was in response to the Stage 1 consultation. This suggests that people may have felt less concerned, having been provided with more information in Stage 2.

## LANDSCAPE, NATURE CONSERVATION AND BUILDING DESIGN

- 3.11 Respondents were asked to indicate which aspects of the initial proposals for landscape, nature conservation and building design they particularly liked or disliked. Figure 3.6 indicates the average score attributed to each of twelve aspects described in the Stage 2 Report, where a score of one indicated that the respondent disliked the proposals very much and a score of five indicated that they liked the proposals very much.

Figure 3.6 Average level of support for proposals for landscape, nature conservation & building design

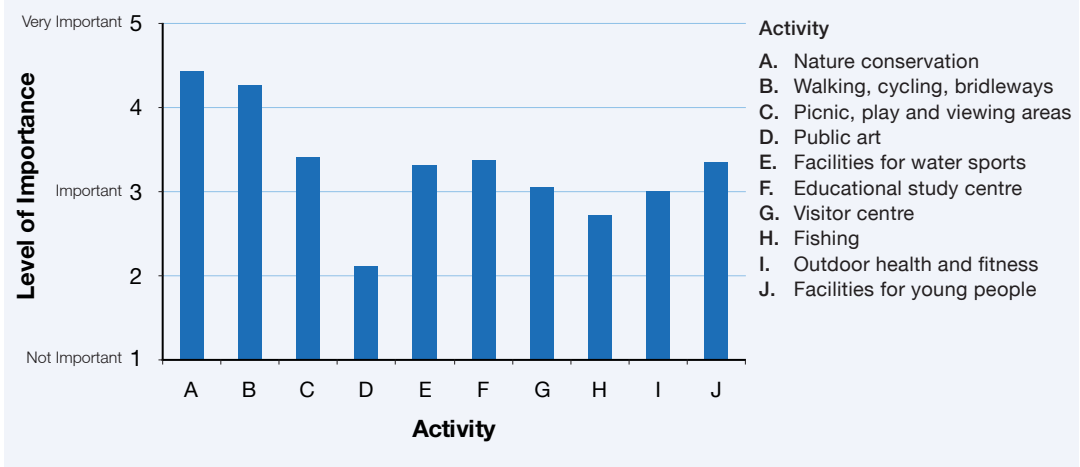


3.12 Figure 3.6 shows that all aspects of the initial proposals for landscape, nature conservation and building design scored better than 3 (out of 5) and were, therefore, at least quite liked. Proposals for planting, variations in slope, replacing hedges and ditches, replacing existing habitats, creating new habitats and integration into the landscape were the most popular.

### RECREATION AND ASSOCIATED USES

3.13 Respondents were asked to indicate how important they thought proposed recreational activities were and at what scale they would like provision to be made. Figure 3.7 indicates the average level of importance placed on ten activities described in the Stage 2 Report, where a score of one indicated that the respondent thought an activity was not important and a score of five indicated that they thought an activity was very important.

Figure 3.7 Average level of support for proposals for recreation and associated uses



3.14 Figure 3.7 shows that respondents considered provision for informal activities, such as nature conservation, and the provision of footpaths, cycling routes and bridleways to be of the greatest importance, followed by the provision of picnic, play and viewing areas, educational facilities, facilities for water sports and facilities for young people. Public art was considered to be the least important activity for inclusion on-site.

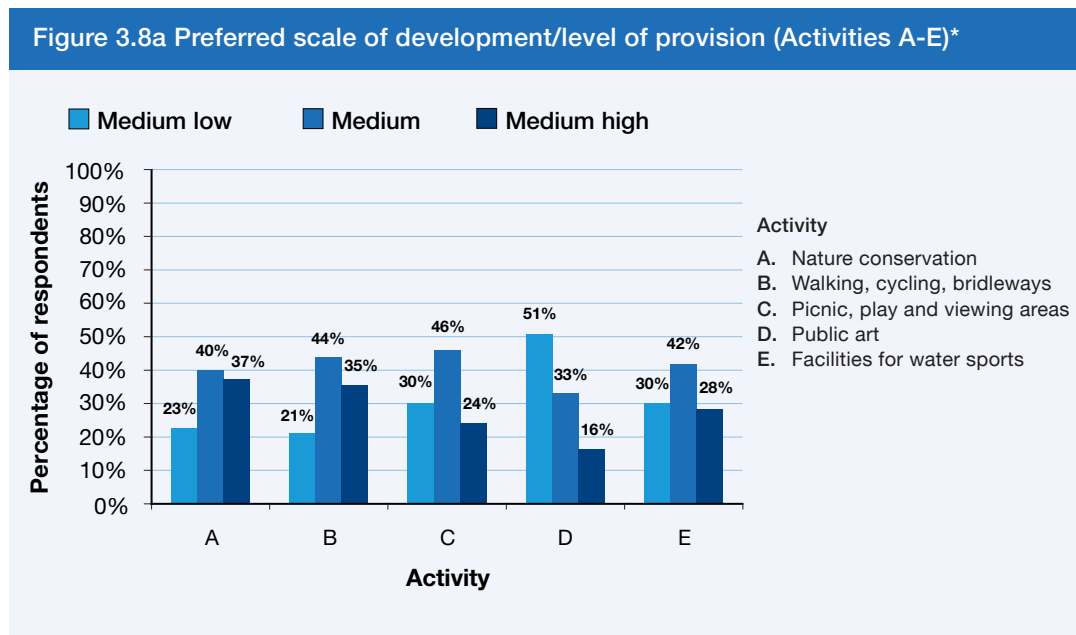
3.15 The Stage 2 Report outlined three possible scenarios (medium low, medium and medium high), illustrating different potential scales of development and levels of recreational use as a starting point for developing ideas:

**Medium low scenario:** Uses at this scale would be spread fairly evenly across the site. This scenario would have the smallest range of uses, with the overriding themes of tranquillity, provision of facilities at the local level, restriction of built development, and low levels of expected traffic generation.

**Medium scenario:** The activities at this scale would be more concentrated within certain areas, although some uses would still be well spaced throughout the site, such as walking and cycling. The main area of built development would be in the north-east quarter.

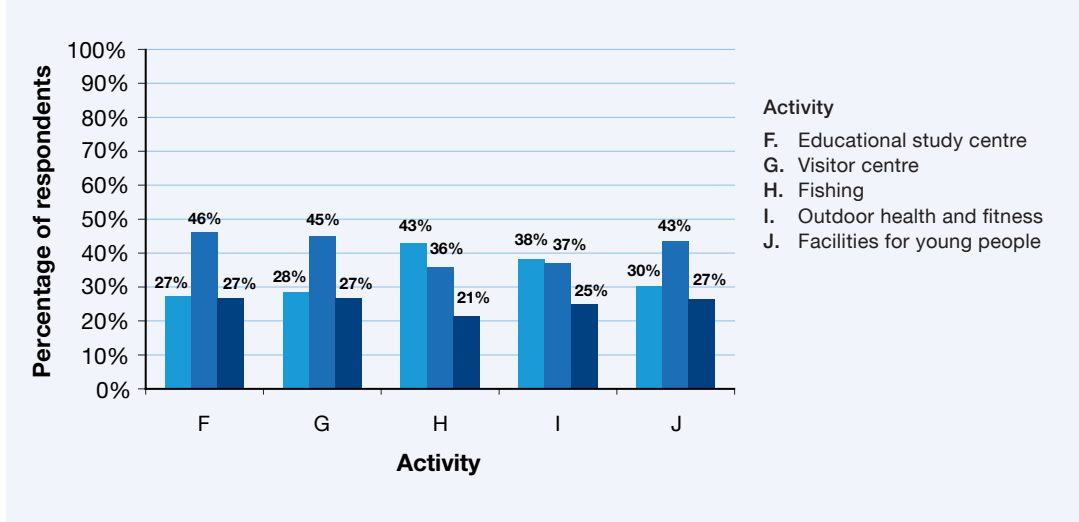
**Medium high scenario:** The range of activities and facilities would not differ greatly from those provided in the medium scenario. It is the scale of the uses that mainly differentiates between the two scenarios.

3.16 The references in this report to the medium low, medium or medium high scale, or level of provision, correspond to these three scenarios. Figures 3.8a and 3.8b indicate the preferred level of provision for each of the activities included in Figure 3.7.



\* Figures represent the percentage of the total respondents selecting each scenario for the particular activity.

Figure 3.8b Preferred scale of development/level of provision (Activities F-J)\*



\* Figures represent the percentage of the total respondents selecting each scenario for the particular activity.

- 3.17 The medium scenario was preferred for provision of: nature conservation; walking, cycling and bridleways; picnic, play and viewing areas; facilities for water sports; an education and study centre; a visitor centre; and facilities for young people. The medium low scenario was preferred for provision of: public art; fishing; and outdoor health and fitness.
- 3.18 Although there was no overall preference for the medium high scenario, over 30% of respondents expressed a preference for a medium high scale of provision for nature conservation and for walking, cycling and bridleways.

## CONCLUSIONS

- 3.19 The quantitative analysis of the Stage 2 feedback forms shows that respondents, when compared with Stage 1 findings, continued to be most concerned about the impacts of traffic during construction, the effects of construction activity and the closeness of the proposed reservoir to local villages.
- 3.20 In relation to the initial proposals for landscape, nature conservation and building design, those proposals focusing on nature conservation and the wider landscape were all very well received. Less support was demonstrated for proposals for the lagoons, promontories and beaches.
- 3.21 Of the recreational activities proposed, the greatest importance was placed on nature conservation and walking, cycling and bridleways, with the least importance placed on public art. With regard to nature conservation and walking, cycling and bridleways, there was significant support for a medium high scale of provision. However, for most activities the preferred scale of development was a combination of the medium and medium low scale scenarios.

## 4 Feedback and responses: key themes



### APPROACH TO ANALYSIS

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- 4.1 All of the comments and suggestions received during the Stage 2 consultation, via the Stage 2 exhibition, feedback forms, the workshops and correspondence from organisations, were logged in one database. Almost 700 separate issues were logged in total, under 40 different topic headings. Each issue was then assigned to the relevant members of the project team, for further consideration.
- 4.2 Those issues suggesting potential changes to the scale, location or character of specific features illustrated in the Stage 2 Report were assessed in terms of technical feasibility, sustainability objectives, potential impact on the local community, and in the context of any other relevant feedback.
- 4.3 This section provides a summary of the feedback received during the Stage 2 consultation with our responses. Appendix F details all of the issues raised during the consultation with our responses in full.
- 4.4 The Draft Landscape and Habitat Plan and Draft Recreation Plan, incorporating design changes in response to the feedback received during the Stage 2 consultation, are provided in Appendix A. The changes illustrated are consistent with the responses set out in this section and in Appendix F.

### IDENTIFYING THEMES

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- 4.5 During the analysis of the feedback it became clear that there were a number of key themes that enabled issues to be grouped together.
- 4.6 The first theme on construction picks up one of the main concerns expressed in both Stage 1 and 2 of the consultation. Themes 2 and 3 consider the focus on the natural environment, with 4 and 5 then examining the potential recreation provision. The local impacts (apart from construction) are considered in Themes 6 and 7. Themes 8, 9 and 10 examine the principles of design quality and the wider context, and also the need to pursue some design issues further. Finally, Themes 11 and 12 cover site management issues and long-term community and stakeholder engagement.
- 4.7 Each theme brings together relevant feedback and our responses. The themes are grouped to reflect those that interact with each other, and are not presented in any order of priority:
  - 1. Further consideration of construction activity
  - 2. Increased landscape simplicity and naturalness
  - 3. Re-examination of internal shoreline
  - 4. Concentration on water-based activities
  - 5. Greater concentration on local needs
  - 6. Greater protection villages
  - 7. Concentration of facilities
  - 8. Maximising design quality of buildings
  - 9. Consideration of wider context
  - 10. Further development of design in response to feedback
  - 11. Consideration of site management
  - 12. Continued community and stakeholder engagement.

## THEME 1 FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY

- 4.8 Respondents expressed concern about the impacts of delivering materials (and workforce) to the site. In relation to transport by road, there were concerns regarding the impacts of construction traffic, and heavy goods vehicles in particular, on the A34 and A415, and the extent to which local villages might be affected by noise, dust and vibration. There were also concerns regarding the cumulative effects of proposed development at Grove and Didcot. Suggestions included alternative access routes, road improvements and control over times of delivery. There was support for the use of rail to deliver materials, in order to minimise road traffic; however, there were concerns about noise (particularly at night) and the impact on the use of the local level crossing. It was also suggested that the River Thames could be used to transport materials.
- 4.9 There were concerns regarding the direct impacts of construction activity at the site itself, including the location of the site compound and accommodation for construction workers, security arrangements and the impacts of noise, dust, vibration and lighting. Energy use during construction was a particular concern. Other issues raised included the provision of existing Rights of Way during construction and the protection of geological and archaeological interest on the site.
- 4.10 There was interest in the potential economic benefits of the scheme and in particular, opportunities for employment and local businesses during construction.

4.11

### In response to your feedback:

- The extent and impact of construction traffic on the local road infrastructure will be assessed through a Transport Assessment to be undertaken prior to any submission for consent. As part of the Transport Assessment, measures will be identified as appropriate to monitor and mitigate those impacts identified. Road safety measures will be designed and implemented in accordance with the latest guidance and best practice.
- A Travel Plan will be prepared and will include restricting movements to specific routes and specific periods.
- The Transport Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment will take into account the cumulative impact of developments scheduled to take place at the same time as construction of the reservoir.
- The main site access road will be off the A415 Marcham Road to the site compound in the north-east quadrant of the site, as the Highways Agency will not permit direct access off the A34. A main access road off the A338, A4130, B4017 or Hanney to Steventon road was discounted because of the likely impact of additional traffic on local villages.
- We will aim to maximise the use of rail transport and continue to work with Network Rail to make this achievable. It is estimated that the use of rail for the import of construction materials would lead to a total of two or three trains into the site per weekday over a four-year period. The impact of additional train movements will be considered as part of the Transport Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment, including the impact of any night use.
- Use of the River Thames for the delivery of construction materials was not considered to be practical, due to the navigational constraints on the River Thames and the likely impact on other river users.
- Noise and air quality impacts will be considered as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment. The Environmental Impact Assessment will consider ways of reducing any potential impacts through appropriate mitigation measures, such as noise bunds and water spraying to suppress dust.
- A Construction Method Statement will be prepared and will include working hours.

- A Community Impact Assessment will be prepared in consultation with Thames Valley Police to cover issues of site security and safety.
- A full study of energy use (including the embodied energy of materials) and opportunities for reduction in energy use will be undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Measures for the recording and protection of archaeological and geological remains found on-site will be set out in the Environmental Management Plan.
- Provision for maintaining and changing footpaths and bridleways will be detailed in the Construction Method Statement.
- An Economic Impact Report will be prepared to consider the economic impacts of the development, and consideration will be given to how far local contractors and workforce might be employed during construction.
- During construction we will continue to liaise regularly with the local community regarding construction impacts, through existing forums such as parish council meetings and the Local Panel. We will continue to produce our regular newsletter (called 're:Source') and publish information on our website.

## THEME 2 INCREASED LANDSCAPE SIMPLICITY AND NATURALNESS

4.12 Landscape simplicity and naturalness were consistently identified as being of fundamental importance for the design, to ensure that the development accords with its rural setting and provides a range of habitats. This theme was suggested as one of the main reasons for restricting the scale of built development and the number of activities on-site. In line with this view, it was, with a few exceptions, stated that the medium or medium low scale of recreational provision would generally be most appropriate.

4.13 In particular, it was suggested that: planting should be used to soften the visual appearance of the outer slopes of the reservoir; native species should be used wherever possible; the provision of woodland and wetland habitats should be maximised; hedgerows should form 'wildlife corridors' and links to the wider landscape; the new landform including embankment slopes should reflect the existing landscape; buildings should be integrated into the landscape through screening and good design; and hard surfaces, fencing (as opposed to hedges) and public art should be kept to a minimum.

4.14 **In response to your feedback, we are considering:**

- Providing additional woodland on the lower slopes of the embankments and bunds, to create additional wildlife habitats and to provide further screening.
- Linking new habitats to existing habitats using extended hedgerows and providing underpasses beneath roads and tracks to enable wildlife to move freely.
- Simplifying the range of habitats in keeping with the existing area and removing the heathland that was suggested in the Stage 2 Report.
- Establishing permanent grassland (grazed and/or cut for hay), in preference to a return to arable land, to provide replacement of existing habitats and maximise bio-diversity.
- Using hedging wherever possible as opposed to fencing, with all hedging consisting of local species and all fencing of natural materials appropriate to its landscape context and use.

### THEME 3 RE-EXAMINATION OF INTERNAL SHORELINE

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- 4.15 There was support for the proposals made in the Stage 2 Report, including suggestions that there should be an increase in provision of lagoons, beaches and promontories to increase visual interest and habitat creation. However, there was also contrasting feedback which suggested that less emphasis should be placed on the internal shoreline of the reservoir, because the main adverse visual impacts of the reservoir were likely to be experienced beyond the embankments.
- 4.16 There were specific concerns about the potential effect of insects and algal growth caused by stagnant water in the lagoons. In addition, there were concerns about the large numbers of people who might want to swim and gain access to the water from the beach, and the associated traffic and safety issues.
- 4.17 It was suggested that planting trees on the reservoir crest could create a more varied and natural-looking skyline; however, there were concerns that planting should not affect the wind conditions for sailing.
- 4.18 **In response to your feedback, we are considering:**
- Providing lagoons as illustrated in the Stage 2 Report, with the addition of rafts for nesting birds within the reservoir itself. Management arrangements, including measures to control algal growth and insect populations, will be outlined in the Environmental Management Plan (see Theme 11 for more details).
  - Replacing the beach with an additional cove made up of larger stone material and with limited public access, to discourage swimming and access to the water's edge. Access arrangements will be outlined in the Environmental Management Plan and implemented through use of wardens. The additional cove, plus the two originally proposed, will maintain visual interest and ecological benefits.
  - Retaining promontories as vantage points and opportunities for planting.
  - Selective planting of taller trees on the lower slopes and screening mounds, where landscape fill could be made available for planting.
- 4.19 The Environmental Impact Assessment may identify a need for further measures to reduce visual impact.

### THEME 4 CONCENTRATION ON WATER-BASED ACTIVITIES

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- 4.20 It was suggested that a water area of this scale could provide a unique opportunity for water-based recreation in the region, for all ages and abilities. A variety of facilities in terms of size and range of activities were proposed. Sailing was particularly popular and there was also support for canoeing, windsurfing and rowing. The opportunity to hold competitions and major events was identified.
- 4.21 The counter-argument was that the reservoir should be kept as tranquil and natural as possible, although it was recognised that the reservoir would be large enough to preserve tranquil areas while still accommodating a variety of water sports.
- 4.22 There were concerns regarding the provision of facilities for land-based sports. In particular, concerns were expressed about potential duplication of existing local facilities and the volume of traffic that would be generated by offering a wider range of recreational facilities. It was felt that local communities would benefit from restricting the provision for land-based recreation and events.

4.23

**In response to your feedback, we are considering:**

- Providing for sailing, windsurfing and canoeing at the medium scale, to include a club house (with boat storage, repair and launching facilities) and opportunities for training and local competitions, with the flexibility for potential expansion to the medium high scale, which could provide opportunities for county level competitions.
- Provision for other water sports, including rowing, which would be subject to issues of demand, safety and compatibility with other uses, and further discussions with interested organisations.
- Limiting land based recreational facilities and, in particular, discounting suggestions for the provision of facilities which may attract high numbers of visitors, such as swimming or a lido, a golf course or facilities for climbing.
- Zoning the water surface and land areas to restrict access where appropriate in order to safeguard wetland bird habitats and other tranquil areas on land surrounding the embankment. Details of areas excluded from public access, and areas with seasonally controlled access, will be included in the Environmental Management Plan.

## **THEME 5 GREATER CONCENTRATION ON LOCAL NEEDS**

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4.24

There was support for the provision of facilities to meet local demand, in preference to facilities for large-scale events, serving a larger catchment area (although there was some support for establishing a regional attraction). Specific suggestions included: provision for local interests in the visitor centre (including an exhibition of local archaeology); educational and study facilities for local schools and interest groups; a replacement for the existing equestrian facilities at the Malthouse Stud; footpaths, cycle routes and riding routes linking local villages to the site; and specific provision for young people.

4.25

There were a number of suggestions for the management of facilities, including the need for continued engagement of local communities, interest groups and schools.

4.26

Some importance was placed on affordable access and access for the general public. It was suggested that access should be made available to all age groups and abilities, and with particular emphasis on opportunities for young people. There were also requests that consideration be given to free access to facilities and priority parking for local people.

4.27

**In response to your feedback, we are considering:**

- Provision of the visitor centre, education and study centre and possible equestrian facilities at the medium scale to concentrate on meeting needs at the local, district and county levels.
- Provision of safe footpaths and jogging routes, cycle routes and riding routes, linked to local villages.
- Provision of facilities for young people in and around local villages, subject to further consultation and discussions with local communities.
- Involvement of local people, organisations and schools at the detailed design stage and in the preparation of management arrangements through existing forums such as local and parish councils and the Local Panel (see Theme 12).

- 4.28 Access arrangements, including facilities for people with disabilities, will be outlined in the Design and Access Statement and in the management arrangements for all recreation facilities. All facilities will be required to be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (1995).
- 4.29 Consideration will be given to whether free access to facilities and priority parking for local people would be appropriate in the context of sustainability objectives, and management arrangements for the site.

## THEME 6 GREATER PROTECTION OF VILLAGES

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- 4.30 Many of the concerns expressed were related specifically to the impact of construction on the villages. These are examined in detail in Theme 1.
- 4.31 In relation to the long-term impact of the development, there were concerns relating to the scale of recreational activity proposed. Specific concerns included the extent to which noise and lighting could impact local villages, the potential impacts of additional traffic on local roads, and the potential for overspill parking in local villages.
- 4.32 There were also concerns regarding the loss of local views, effects on local drainage and microclimate (including higher humidity and greater incidence of mist and fog) and any increase in insect populations. Concerns were raised about the effect the development may have on local property prices and household insurance premiums.

4.33 **In response to your feedback, we are considering:**

- Limiting land-based recreational facilities (see Theme 4) and removing the planned events arena, to reduce concentrations of visitors and potential impacts on local villages.
- Undertaking further studies to gauge the likely visitor numbers, in relation to the level of facilities being proposed.
- Prohibiting use of trail bikes etc to minimise noise and disturbance.
- Providing additional earth bunds to reduce noise impacts in the closest villages, if identified as useful in the Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Including lighting for safety and other purposes and this will be assessed as part of the EIA process.
- Providing a single permanent access road, off the A415 to the north-east corner of the site, clearly signposted from the local road network, to enable visitor traffic to access the reservoir site without travelling through local villages.
- Removing the two small car parks (shown at Stage 2) located close to East Hanney and Steventon and replacing them with a larger single car park located next to the education and study centre on the south side of the reservoir midway along the proposed diverted Hanney to Steventon road. This car park would provide access to the facilities in the immediate locality.
- Providing supplementary access solely for the nature conservation area and possible equestrian centre from the A338.
- Producing a comprehensive signage strategy to direct traffic to the reservoir with the minimum impact on local roads and communities.

- 4.34 The Environmental Impact Assessment will include examination of hydrology, microclimate and potential effects on insect populations. The Environmental Impact Assessment will also include a landscape and visual impact assessment to describe the existing view from a point on the Ridgeway, as well as other viewpoints closer to the site, and predict what they would be like should the reservoir be built.
- 4.35 In respect of the concerns around property prices and insurance premiums, we continue to advise any householder or landowner who believes they are adversely affected by the long-term proposals to contact us directly and also to seek independent professional advice.

## THEME 7 CONCENTRATION OF FACILITIES

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- 4.36 There was concern that concentration of recreational and operational facilities to the north-east of the site might not be appropriate because of the potential conflicts between uses, high visitor numbers in one area, and the potential impacts on Drayton, particularly if there were major events. Specific suggestions included: moving the sailing club to the south-west or south-east corners (partly to improve conditions for sailing); moving the events arena to the south; moving the visitor centre to be co-located with the education and study centre in the south; dispersing picnic and play areas; and using smaller car parks, dispersed around the site.
- 4.37 There was, however, support for the design shown in the Stage 2 Report, illustrating concentration of facilities in the north-east, since this ensured that most of the landscape remained tranquil, and habitats could be more easily protected.

4.38 **In response to your feedback, we are considering:**

- Concentrating recreational facilities in the north-east quadrant, clustered around the main access road, to preserve the tranquillity of the remainder of the site.
- Moving the water sports facilities approximately 200 metres south-west (clockwise), to enable use of a cross-shore prevailing wind and to provide better separation from the planned location of the cove (see Theme 3) and the visitor centre.
- Removing the events arena (see Theme 6).
- Safeguarding habitats and tranquil areas through zoning and careful design, to enable quiet enjoyment and the protection of species (see Theme 4).

## THEME 8 MAXIMISING DESIGN QUALITY OF BUILDINGS

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- 4.39 The importance of high quality design, appropriate to the rural context and the character of local buildings, was highlighted and it was suggested that one or more buildings might be given greater prominence as a focal point of the development.
- 4.40 However, it was emphasised that buildings should be screened from local villages through planting and that building heights should be minimised. Issues of noise, lighting and fencing should also be taken into account. It was suggested that operational facilities, in particular, could be positioned partly underground.
- 4.41 There was support for the principles of sustainable design and construction, to minimise carbon emissions, maximise energy and water efficiency, explore the use of renewable energy sources, use renewable and locally sourced building materials and be responsive to climate change. It was also suggested that exemplary sustainable building design could itself provide an educational resource.

4.42

**In response to your feedback:**

- A decision will be taken during the next stage of design, as to whether each building should be afforded greater screening or greater prominence, taking into account the location and function of each individual building.
- These different approaches could then be reflected in the design briefs for buildings with some, particularly the visitor centre and water sports facilities (as potentially more prominent and with greater public use) being given greater architectural expression.
- Each building or structure will be designed to take into account issues such as noise and lighting, and setting in the landscape, and will be subject to principles of sustainable design and construction, with specific sustainability features identified in the individual design briefs.

## THEME 9 CONSIDERATION OF WIDER CONTEXT

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4.43

It was suggested that more thought needed to be given to issues and developments beyond the proposed reservoir site. In particular, there were concerns about the levels of traffic already on the A34, with forecasts by the Highways Agency for increased congestion, and on the A415 around Marcham. There were also concerns in relation to the planned growth of Grove and Didcot and the potential impacts on the local road network, including the proposed diversion to the Hanney to Steventon road.

4.44

In this context there were suggestions that not only should new road alignments (including a bypass at Marcham) be considered but that more thought should be given to provision of bus services and a new railway station. The need for improved pedestrian and cycle links to the surrounding area was emphasised.

4.45

**In response to your feedback:**

- The extent and impact of traffic generated by the reservoir once completed will be assessed through a Transport Assessment, to be undertaken prior to any submission. The Transport Assessment will take into account the cumulative impact of proposed new developments at Grove and Didcot.
- We will continue to engage in dialogue with Oxfordshire County Council and the Highways Agency, regarding issues relating to the wider transport network, although it is not expected that additional traffic related to the reservoir would be enough to justify the construction of new road infrastructure.
- We will continue to hold discussions with Network Rail, although the decision as to the viability of a permanent railway station is primarily one for Network Rail.
- Further consideration will be given to options for public transport links and reducing car use, for example through encouraging car sharing, or charging by the vehicle rather than by the number of people in it.
- Greater emphasis will be placed on pedestrian and cycle links to the site, including footpaths from existing bus stops in local villages and cycle routes between Grove, Wantage and Abingdon.

## THEME 10 FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF DESIGN IN RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK

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4.46 Respondents suggested that more information was required regarding proposals for on-site renewable energy and the design of any structures associated with the production of renewable energy. There was support for the use of renewable energy, and the provision of wind turbines at an early stage in the development to assist with integration into the landscape. However, there were concerns with regard to their size and visual impact, noise and impacts on birds.

4.47 It was also suggested that more information was needed with regard to operational structures, including the pipeline to Beacon Hill Reservoir, the tunnel from the River Thames at Culham Reach, the intake-outfall structures, the auxiliary drawdown channel and its attendant bridges, the main site access road off the A415 and additional flood compensation areas.

4.48 **In response to your feedback, we are considering:**

- Examining the potential to produce renewable energy on-site, in addition to energy recovery when water is released back into the River Thames.
- Giving further consideration to, and consulting on, the provision of wind turbines, combined heat and power based on bio-fuel crops, solar photovoltaic, solar thermal and ground source heating to produce energy, the impacts of which will be considered in the Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Undertaking further design of all operational structures, the impacts of which (including construction) will be considered as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment.

## THEME 11 CONSIDERATION OF SITE MANAGEMENT

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4.49 Requirements for site management were raised in relation to a wide variety of issues. There were concerns: that habitats should be protected from recreational activities which might have adverse effects in terms of disturbance (for example nesting birds disturbed by sailing or fishing); about access to the water's edge and the compatibility of uses, including walking, cycling and horse riding; and that birds attracted to the reservoir may collide with passing aircraft (birdstrike). It was suggested that provision should be made for camping on-site, although there were concerns regarding access by unauthorised users. There were also more general concerns with regard to visitor numbers and car parking.

4.50 It was suggested that local people and local organisations should be involved in identifying solutions to potential issues - for example, working with local farmers to identify appropriate land management techniques. It was also suggested that schools and local interest groups should be engaged in practical site management, such as the restoration and maintenance of habitats and hedgerows.

4.51 **In response to your feedback, we are considering:**

- Designing solutions to address the concerns in relation to conflicts between different uses and site safety, for example by separating recreational activities from tranquil areas (see Theme 4) and making access to the water less easy by replacing the beach, included in the Stage 2 Report, with a cove of larger stone material (see Theme 3).
- Prepare an Environmental Management Plan, which will specify how access to the site (including car parks and any facilities for camping) would be controlled and how habitats would be protected, including the role of site wardens.
- Preparing a strategy as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment, in consultation with the Ministry of Defence, to address any potential risk of birdstrike.
- Involving local schools, interest groups and organisations in developing ideas at detailed design stage, and taking a role in maintenance of specific areas.

## THEME 12 CONTINUED COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 4.52 We received specific questions relating to the Stage 2 consultation, including the extent to which local residents, businesses and organisations had been consulted, and how the feedback that had been received was going to be analysed and how it would influence future work on the project.
- 4.53 A number of suggestions were made with regard to future community and stakeholder involvement, with regard to the range of exhibition material presented, possible future exhibition venues, use of the Local Panel, independent polling of opinions, mediation prior to any Public Inquiry and provision for site visits during construction.
- 4.54 There was support for continued involvement of local organisations and interest groups in developing specific proposals for site management, including schools, local nature conservation groups and recreational clubs and organisations. There was support for continuing dialogue with regional and national bodies, which are able to provide specialist advice on proposals for landscape design, nature conservation and recreation.

4.55 **In response to your feedback:**

- We have employed the full range of techniques specified in the Strategy for Community and Stakeholder Involvement, including sending a leaflet providing details of the Stage 2 exhibition to local residents and our project newsletter to local businesses and organisations. The number of visitors to the exhibition, the number of feedback forms received and the number of organisations responding to the consultation are provided in Section 2.
- This report provides a summary of our responses to the feedback received and indicates how work in the next stage of design will be influenced by the consultation, if the reservoir is included in the Water Resources Management Plan when it is approved by the Secretary of State (please see Foreword).
- We added two extra exhibition venues at Drayton and Marcham at Stage 2, and specific efforts were made to engage more young people, including presentations at local schools. In response to feedback from the Stage 2 consultation we will consider including a venue at Grove, for any future exhibition.
- We do not consider that use of mediation or independent polling (on whether there should be a reservoir or not) would be appropriate. There has been a consultation in respect of the draft Water Resources Management Plan, and the need for the reservoir will be considered and determined by the Secretary of State as part of the Water Resources Management Plan process.
- Regular meetings with parish councils and the use of the Local Panel will, however, be central to future community and stakeholder involvement. There will also be opportunities for site visits, including access for local schools.
- In developing proposals for the design and management of the landscape, recreation and other facilities, the intention is that the Local Planning Authority, local people and organisations will be involved throughout the process. An Ecology Forum has already been established involving a range of local, regional and national bodies, and consideration will be given to establishing meetings on other topics in the next stage of design work.

## 5 Conclusions



5.1 This report provides a summary of the main issues that respondents identified in the Stage 2 consultation, and outlines our responses to the feedback from statutory consultees, organisations and the local community.

5.2 **We have brought together the relevant feedback and our responses under the twelve identified themes:**

1. **Further consideration of construction activity:** we will seek to address concerns about potential impacts.
2. **Increased landscape simplicity and naturalness:** we will aim to ensure that the proposals fit appropriately into the wider landscape and habitat context.
3. **Re-examination of internal shoreline:** we will consider further the extent of landscape and habitat features within the embankment.
4. **Concentration on water-based activities:** we will propose an emphasis on water-related recreational activities and a reduction of land-based sports facilities and outdoor events.
5. **Greater concentration on local needs:** we will aim to reflect the desire for local people to benefit from the proposals.
6. **Greater protection of the villages:** we will aim to ensure that any potential adverse impacts are addressed.
7. **Concentration of facilities:** we will clarify the extent to which facilities will be concentrated in the north-east of the site.
8. **Maximising design quality of buildings:** we will confirm and implement design principles to enable buildings and structures to be well designed and meet sustainability objectives.
9. **Consideration of wider context:** we will continue to examine wider transport and planning considerations that could be of relevance.
10. **Further development of design in response to feedback:** we will provide more information on aspects of the proposals not yet considered in detail, for example buildings and other structures.
11. **Consideration of site management:** we will set out the broad principles for site maintenance and management issues.
12. **Continued community and stakeholder engagement:** we will continue to ensure wide involvement in developing and implementing the proposals.



# Appendices



**Appendix A** - Illustrative Plans

**Appendix B** - Public exhibition

**Appendix C** - Stage 2 feedback form

**Appendix D** - Workshops

**Appendix E** - Correspondence from organisations

**Appendix F** - Feedback and responses in full

**Appendix G** - Glossary



## Appendix A

### Illustrative Plans



The following illustrative plans reflect the changes made since the Stage 2 consultation and include our proposed amendments in respect of the feedback received and which are detailed in this report. In addition, we have included other changes that have arisen due to technical or policy requirements.





### INTRODUCTION

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A public exhibition was held between 6 January and 30 January 2007, to present the preferred scheme and design options, specifying the technical requirements of the design and illustrating the range of options available relating to landscape, conservation, recreation and building design. The exhibition was held at six locations local to the preferred reservoir site:

Abingdon Guildhall - 6, 25, 26, 29 and 30 January

Steventon Village Hall - 8, 9, 12 and 13 January

Hanney War Memorial Hall - 15, 16 and 18 January

Wantage Civic Hall - 19 and 20 January

Drayton Hall - 23 and 24 January

Marcham Primary School - 27 January

Based on feedback from the Stage 1 public consultation, the number of exhibition venues at Stage 2 was increased from four to six, to also include Marcham and Drayton, in addition to Abingdon, East Hanney, Steventon and Wantage.

In total, the public exhibition received 1,602 visits<sup>2</sup>.

### EXHIBITION FORMAT

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The exhibition boards provided an overview of our preferred scheme and design options, focusing on:

- How views expressed at Stage 1 were considered.
- How the proposed reservoir would work and details of buildings and structures that would be required.
- How the proposals for landscape, conservation, recreation and building design could be influenced.
- The anticipated timetable for construction.
- Artist's impressions of the preferred scheme.

A short film was played at the exhibitions, showing what the reservoir might look like in the surrounding landscape. This short film can be viewed on our website or on a free DVD, available on request.

All of the Stage 2 consultation materials (see Section 2 of this report) were made available at the public exhibition.

The exhibition was staffed at each venue by members of the project team, representing different areas of expertise, including:

- Engineering
- Environment and conservation
- Landscape and design
- Planning and transport
- Communications.

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<sup>2</sup>This figure may include repeat visits by the same individual.

## FEEDBACK FORMS

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Feedback forms were provided at the public exhibition, local libraries and Vale of White Horse District Council Local Service Points, to capture views on Stage 2 of the project. Forms could be returned at the exhibition or via Freepost. The deadline for the return of feedback forms was 3 March 2007. We received 370 feedback forms as part of the public consultation. A copy of the Stage 2 feedback form is provided in Appendix C.

The feedback form, reflecting the structure of the Stage 2 Preferred Scheme and Design Options Report, was divided into two parts:

Part A asked respondents to identify any outstanding concerns about specific issues raised in the Stage 1 consultation and to select up to four priority issues, including any other relevant issues, identifying specific solutions for consideration in the design process. Part A was designed to help Thames Water understand local priorities and consider what might be done to lessen the impacts of construction.

Part B asked respondents to identify how much they liked or disliked the initial proposals for landscape, conservation and building design, described in the Stage 2 Report, and to select up to four aspects, suggesting any possible improvements to the initial proposals. Respondents were then asked to identify which recreational activities they considered most important and which scale of provision, as illustrated in the Stage 2 Report, would be most appropriate for each. Respondents were again asked to select up to four recreational activities, suggesting how these activities should be taken forward in the design proposals.

Part B presented the main opportunity to influence the proposals for landscape, nature conservation, recreation facilities and building design.

The final question on the form gave respondents the opportunity to comment on any issues that they felt had not been covered in either Part A or B. Respondents were also asked to indicate which consultation materials they had considered and to provide information about themselves, to help us analyse the feedback.

Section 3 of this report provides a quantitative analysis of feedback received. Section 4 draws together key themes arising from qualitative feedback and sets out how they would be addressed. Appendix F provides feedback in full and our responses.

Appendix C  
Stage 2 feedback form



# Upper Thames Major Resource Development



## STAGE 2 FEEDBACK FORM

We would like to have your views on Stage 2 of the project. Please return your feedback by 3 March 2007 at the latest. We expect that the form will take no more than 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

The aims of this stage of consultation are to provide the opportunity for the local community and stakeholders to:

**A. Understand the scale and technical requirements of the proposed reservoir, the associated pipelines and treatment works, including their construction, and related issues.**

This is the main stage for the local community and other stakeholders to identify priority issues and potential impacts to be addressed in the design process.

**B. Influence landscape design, nature conservation, recreation facilities and building design.**

This is also the main stage for the local community and other stakeholders to express likes and dislikes about these opportunities and to put forward ideas and suggestions.

You may find it helpful to have a copy of the Stage 2 Report to hand or to be able to look again at the scenarios. If so, please use the website ([www.thameswater.co.uk/utmrtd](http://www.thameswater.co.uk/utmrtd)), or call us on 0800 107 8001 to request a copy of the Report. The exhibitions will run until 30 January.

**Question 1: What consultation material have you been able to consider?**

Please tick all that apply.

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibition   | <input type="checkbox"/> Summary of Report      | <input type="checkbox"/> Website  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stage 2 Preferred Scheme and Design Options Report | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaflet                | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state e.g. media, parish newsletter) _____ |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> re:Source (newsletter) |   |

If you have been to the one of the exhibitions please tell us the location that you visited and the date:

Exhibition location

Date

**Part A: Reservoir design and construction**

**Question 2:** Do you, after you have visited the one of the exhibitions or read other consultation material, still have concerns about specific issues?

We have described in Sections 5 and 6 of the Stage 2 Report the different aspects of the reservoir design. The table below lists the issues that were most often mentioned in the Stage 1 consultation. Let us know where you have outstanding concerns in relation to these issues.

Issues raised in Stage 1 consultation	Let us know how concerned you are now (Please circle the relevant number)				
	Not concerned		Quite concerned		Very concerned
Traffic during construction	1	2	3	4	5
Effect of construction activity e.g. dust and noise	1	2	3	4	5
Effect on local landscape	1	2	3	4	5
Closeness to villages	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic once completed	1	2	3	4	5
Flooding and local drainage	1	2	3	4	5
Impact on microclimate and ecosystems	1	2	3	4	5
Householder impacts e.g. effects on property prices	1	2	3	4	5
Reservoir safety	1	2	3	4	5
Energy requirements	1	2	3	4	5

**Question 3:** Thinking about the issues identified in Question 2, please select up to four where you have most concerns, including any others you think are relevant. Please tell us about the specific solutions you would like Thames Water to explore in the next stage of the design process.

Issue	Additional comments and suggestions
1	
2	

Issue	Additional comments and suggestions
3	
4	

### Part B: Landscape, nature conservation, building design and recreation

**Question 4:** Which aspects of the initial proposals for landscape, nature conservation and building design do you particularly like or dislike?

Topic	Section in Stage 2 Report	Aspects described in the Stage 2 Report	Let us know how much you like or dislike the initial proposals (Please circle the relevant number)				
			Dislike very much		Quite like		Like very much
Landscape: inner face of embankment	7.2	Lagoons	1	2	3	4	5
		Promontories	1	2	3	4	5
		Beaches	1	2	3	4	5
Landscape: outer face of embankment	7.2	Planting	1	2	3	4	5
		Variations in slope	1	2	3	4	5
Wider landscape	7.2	Returning to agriculture	1	2	3	4	5
		Replacing hedges, ditches	1	2	3	4	5
		Route for Wilts & Berks canal	1	2	3	4	5
Nature conservation	7.3	Replacing existing habitats	1	2	3	4	5
		Creating new habitats	1	2	3	4	5
Building design	7.6	Minimising energy needs	1	2	3	4	5
		Integration into the landscape	1	2	3	4	5
		Innovative design	1	2	3	4	5

**Question 5:** Thinking about the aspects identified in Question 4, please select up to four including any others you think are relevant. Please let us know any ideas you have of where Thames Water could make improvements to the initial proposals.

Aspect e.g. lagoons	Additional comments and suggestions
1	
2	
3	
4	

**Question 6:** Which of the recreational activities do you consider most important, and at which scale would you like provision to be made?

We have described three possible scenarios illustrating different intensities of recreational use (see Sections 7.4 and 7.5 of Stage 2 Report, and diagrams in Volume 2). The scenarios are meant to be starting points for developing ideas. Your views on the importance of activities and the different scale of provision will help us in the next stage of the design process.

**Scenario 1:** Medium Low scale, resource for local people, limited access

**Scenario 2:** Medium scale, resource for people in Oxfordshire, greater access

**Scenario 3:** Medium High scale, resource for Oxfordshire and surrounding counties, greatest access

Activity mentioned in Stage 1 consultation	Let us know how important you consider each activity (Please circle the relevant number)					At what scale would you prefer these activities? (please tick all that apply)		
	Not Important		Important		Very Important	Scenario 1 Medium Low	Scenario 2 Medium	Scenario 3 Medium High
Nature conservation areas	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walking, cycling, bridleways	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picnic places, play areas for children, viewing areas	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public art e.g. sculpture trail	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Activity mentioned in Stage 1 consultation	Let us know how important you consider each activity (Please circle the relevant number)					At what scale would you prefer these activities? (please tick all that apply)		
	Not Important		Important		Very Important	Scenario 1 Medium Low	Scenario 2 Medium	Scenario 3 Medium High
Facilities for water sports (non motorised) e.g. sailing	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educational study centre	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitor centre	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor health and fitness e.g. jogging track	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities for young people	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Question 7:** Thinking about the activities identified in Question 6, please select up to four including any others you think are relevant. Please give us suggestions on how you would like these activities to be taken forward in the next stage of work.

These suggestions will help us to develop the reservoir proposals. In particular, they will be used as a basis for discussion in the workshops and the local panel.

Activity	Additional comments and suggestions
1	
2	
3	
4	

**Question 8:** Please use the space below to comment on issues you would like to raise that have not been covered in earlier questions.

Issue	Comments

**Information about you** - Please let us know the capacity in which you are responding

Local resident                       Local business                       Representative of an organisation  
(please state organisation)   
Other (please state)

Please give your contact details if you would like to receive a copy of the Report on Stage 2 Involvement. Even if you do not, please let us have your postcode to help us analyse the feedback.

Name  Telephone number   
Address  Email   
  
 Preferred method of contact/specific needs:  
 Postcode

Information on gender and age will help us with the analysis of the forms (please tick).

**Gender:**  Male  Female      **Age range:**  17 or under;  18-29;  30-44;  45-59;  60+

## Thank you for taking the time to fill in this form

Please return to FREEPOST UTMRD in the envelope provided (no stamp required).





### INTRODUCTION

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In response to demand at Stage 1, two one-day workshops were held at Milton Hill, near Abingdon on 3 and 4 February 2007, to discuss specific issues arising from the Stage 2 consultation.

Participants were selected from over 150 individuals volunteering via the Stage 1 feedback form or at the Stage 2 exhibition, to ensure a balanced profile of attendees (in terms of age, gender and location), and represented a range of views and interests. The workshops were attended by 80 members of the local community. Participants included representatives of organisations and local interest groups.

### WORKSHOP FORMAT

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The workshops were run by independent, experienced, facilitators from Dialogue by Design<sup>3</sup>. On both days participants were divided into four groups for discussion. Participants were asked a series of questions, as the basis for discussion:

#### Recreation

- Which activities would you like to see?
- What intensity of activities would you like to see?
- Which potential impacts should be avoided?

#### Access

- What access to the reservoir could be provided?
- How much should movement around the reservoir site be provided for and encouraged?
- Which potential impacts should be avoided?

#### Conservation

- Which aspects of conservation are most important to you?
- What intensity of human interaction would you like to see?
- What specifically would you like to see in terms of how the outer slopes and inner face are utilised?

#### Landscape and building design

- What general approach to landscaping would you like to see?
- What specifically would you like to see in relation to beaches, coves and other features?
- What type of buildings would you like to see?

Each day concluded with an open forum to discuss any other issues relating to the proposed reservoir.

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<sup>3</sup>Dialogue by Design are a firm of specialist consultation practitioners, with more than 15 years' experience in public and stakeholder engagement.

## REPORTING

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A record of the workshops was produced by the independent facilitators and sent to all participants for their comments and approval. A final report on the findings of the workshops was then issued to Thames Water and all participants and is available on our website.

Section 4 of this report draws together themes arising from the workshops and sets out how they will be addressed. Appendix F provides feedback in full and our responses.

## SCHOOL VISITS

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As part of our efforts to engage more young people, presentations were made by members of the project team at Didcot Girls' School and St Birinus School (also in Didcot).

The presentations were based on the Stage 2 exhibition material and feedback forms were provided to capture the views of the local school children attending.

Section 3 of this report provides a quantitative analysis of feedback received. Section 4 draws together themes arising from qualitative feedback and sets out how they will be addressed. Appendix F provides feedback in full and our responses.

# Appendix E

## Correspondence from organisations



### INTRODUCTION

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All statutory consultees and relevant non-statutory organisations were invited to comment on the Stage 2 Preferred Scheme and Design Options consultation. Correspondence was received via letter and email.

### ORGANISATIONS

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The following organisations responded:

Abingdon Town Council

Amateur Rowing Association

Appleford Parish Council

Ardington & Lockinge Parish Council

Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust

Campaign to Protect Rural England

Cherwell District Council

Consumer Council for Water (Thames Region)

Defence Estates

Didcot Town Council

Drayton Parish Council

English Heritage

Environment Agency

Forestry Commission

Government Office for the South West

Greater London Authority

Grove Liberal Democrats

Grove Parish Council

Highways Agency

Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council

Letcombe Brook Project

Marcham Parish Council

National Trust

Natural England  
National Farmers' Union (South East Region)  
OFWAT  
Oxfordshire Badger Group  
Oxfordshire County Council  
Pond Conservation: The Water Habitat Trust  
Reservoir Affected Parishes  
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds  
Royal Yachting Association  
St. Helen Without Parish Council  
South Oxfordshire District Council  
Sport England  
Steventon Parish Council  
Sunningwell Parish Council  
Sustrans  
Sutton Courtenay Parish Council  
Swindon Borough Council  
Thames Valley Police (Oxfordshire Police Crime Prevention)  
Thames Valley Police (Operations)  
Upper Thames Fisheries Consultative  
Vale of White Horse District Council  
Wantage Town Council  
West Hanney Parish Council  
West Hendred Parish Council  
West Oxfordshire District Council  
Wilts & Berks Canal Trust  
Wiltshire County Council

*Government Office for the South East did not formally respond; however, the scheme was debated at the South East Plan Examination in Public. The Panel's Report was published in August 2007.*

The feedback received is analysed in Section 4 of this report and in Appendix F.

# Appendix F

## Feedback and responses in full



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## F1.1 INTRODUCTION

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All of the comments and suggestions received during the Stage 2 consultation, via the Stage 2 exhibition, feedback forms, the workshops and correspondence from organisations, were logged in one database. Almost 700 separate issues were logged in total, under 40 different topic headings.

This appendix sets out each of the issues raised during the consultation with our responses in full. The issues raised are divided into four sub-sections. The first responds to issues relating to the reservoir design and construction; the second responds to issues relating to landscape, nature conservation and building design; and the third responds to issues relating to provision for recreation and associated uses. The fourth sub-section responds to any other issues raised, including issues relating to costs and the consultation process itself. Each sub-section is further divided into the relevant topic headings.

## F1.2 RESERVOIR DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

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### F1.2.1 Traffic during construction

#### Road traffic

**Your feedback:** Respondents expressed concern regarding the impacts of construction traffic on local roads and, in particular, the impacts of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) and additional traffic on the A34 and A415. The need for a clear strategy to set out how traffic impacts would be minimised was also raised. It was suggested that construction traffic access should be restricted during peak hours, evenings and weekends, to reduce traffic impacts. It was also stated that appropriate road safety measures must be implemented.

There was a particular concern regarding the impact on noise and air quality caused by HGVs. There was also a concern that any possible cumulative impacts of other developments locally (including proposed major housing developments at Grove and Didcot), should be taken into account.

Some respondents requested more information regarding the impacts on the A34 and B4017 during construction of the auxiliary drawdown channel.

There was support for reducing road traffic, by maximising the use of on-site material and rail transport for imported aggregates. It was also suggested that some materials could be transported from the River Thames, via the proposed auxiliary drawdown channel.

**Our response:** The extent and impact of construction traffic on the local road infrastructure will be assessed through a Transport Assessment to be undertaken prior to any submission. As part of the Transport Assessment, measures will be identified as appropriate to monitor and minimise those impacts identified. A Travel Plan will be prepared, setting out how these measures will be implemented. The Travel Plan could include details of routes for construction traffic and any restrictions on access during peak hours, evenings and weekends. Road safety measures would be designed and implemented, in accordance with the latest guidance and best practice. During and after the construction period we will continue to liaise regularly with the local community regarding traffic impacts, through existing forums such as parish councils and the Local Panel.

Noise and air quality impacts, including from HGVs, will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment. The Environmental Impact Assessment will consider ways of reducing any potential impacts through appropriate measures, such as noise bunds and spraying to suppress dust. The Transport Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment will also consider providing such measures in the context of any cumulative

impact related to developments scheduled to take place at the same time as construction of the reservoir.

Construction of the auxiliary drawdown channel would require bridges under the A34 and B4017. During construction, these roads would be temporarily diverted, subject to agreement by the Highways Agency and Oxfordshire County Council. Planned closures would only occur when the temporary diversions were put in place and again when they were removed; typically this would be only for a few hours at night.

Maximising the use of on-site material and the use of rail transport to import aggregates is consistent with the approach set out in the Stage 2 Report. The option of transporting construction materials along the River Thames was not considered to be practical, due to the navigational constraints on the River Thames, i.e. the size of locks would limit the capacity of boats and make the number required impracticable.

### Rail traffic

**Your feedback:** There was strong support for the commitment to the transport of construction materials by rail. There were, however, concerns about noise impacts should trains be operated at night and the greater use of level crossings (adding to already lengthy waiting times at Steventon). It was suggested that Thames Water should consider providing or contributing to a new road from Steventon to connect the A4130 to the streets cut off by the level crossing. Some respondents asked how the provision of rail access would affect the operation of the line.

**Our response:** We will aim to maximise the use of rail transport and will continue to work with Network Rail to make this achievable. Network Rail's Strategic Asset Programme Report predicts that two daytime return train paths would be available from the west and that night-time train paths may be available from the north and east. Although it is expected that most of the material would be sourced from the west, it may be necessary to bring in some material from the north or east; therefore, some limited night-time rail movements cannot be discounted at this stage.

It is estimated that the use of rail for the importation of aggregates would lead to a total increase in train movements of two to three trains into the site per weekday, over a four-year period. The Environmental Impact Assessment will consider the likely impacts of additional train movements and identify measures to minimise these impacts, where possible.

The Transport Assessment will assess the impacts of any increase in use of the level crossings at Steventon and identify appropriate measures to minimise those impacts where possible.

Network Rail would arrange for the connection of sidings at the reservoir site to the railway, to minimise any disruption to the operation of the line. Train deliveries would only be made using routes provided by Network Rail; therefore, train deliveries would have no effect on existing rail services.

### Impact on local villages

**Your feedback:** There was strong support for a dedicated site access road, off the A415 Marcham Road. However, some respondents questioned why road access could not be provided either directly from the A34 or from the south, off the A4130 near Milton.

Despite support for the proposed access route, one of the concerns expressed most often was that construction traffic would travel through local villages and on local roads. It was suggested that routes should be agreed, as a condition of any consent, although, there was a concern that they could not be enforced on car traffic as effectively as HGVs.

**Our response:** One of the first construction activities to be undertaken would be the provision of the main access road off the A415 Marcham Road to the site compound in the north-east quadrant of the site. Direct access from the A34 would not be permitted by the Highways Agency, as only primary roads are permitted to have direct access off the trunk road network. A main access road off the A338, A4130, B4017 or Hanney to Steventon road was discounted because of the likely impact of additional traffic on local villages.

The need to avoid construction traffic passing through local villages was a critical factor in locating the proposed access road to the reservoir off the A415 Marcham Road. This route would allow construction traffic to enter the site from the A34 without passing through any local villages. It should be noted that whilst very limited, some construction traffic might need to pass through local villages during the construction of ancillary structures, for example the tunnel from the River Thames. Appropriate routes for construction traffic would be agreed, in consultation with the local authority and Oxfordshire County Council, and set out in a Travel Plan prepared with the construction contractor or contractors.

Agreed routes are routinely used on major projects and as such contractors are used to operating and enforcing them. We anticipate that such conditions will be included as a condition of any consent.

### F1.2.2 Effects of construction activity

#### Minimising construction impacts

**Your feedback:** There were concerns regarding the effects of noise, vibration and dust on the immediate environment, including noise from the handling and transportation of materials into the site and from pumping to drain water from the site. Respondents were also concerned about the impact of construction on local archaeology and heritage.

Respondents sought reassurance that proposed mitigation measures would be delivered should consent be granted and it was strongly suggested that measures to minimise potential construction impacts should be put in place prior to the commencement of construction.

An additional earth bund between the A34 and Drayton, and also Shippon, additional screening mounds to the north-west of the site, restrictions on construction activity during high winds, and improvements to the road surface of the A34 to mitigate the increased noise and vibrations from construction traffic were all suggested as measures to alleviate the effects of construction activity.

Some respondents wanted to know whether we would consider compensating local residents during construction.

**Our response:** We have already begun measuring air quality and noise levels in various places around the proposed site so that we can assess how these might change as a result of building the proposed reservoir. By doing this we are able to consider ways of revising the design to either remove any potential issues altogether or, where this is not possible, minimise any potential impacts.

In terms of the transportation of materials from the railway sidings to the reservoir site, construction materials would be unloaded using mechanical grabbers and moved from the rail siding to site by dumper truck. The location of this facility has intentionally been proposed to maximise distance from the villages. Pumps used during the construction of the reservoir would be selected, sited and operated in such a manner as to minimise the noise impact on the local villages.

The Environmental Impact Assessment will consider the impacts of noise, vibration and dust in more detail, as well as any potential impacts on local archaeology and heritage.

Measures to minimise construction impacts will be identified in our application for consent and delivered through the proposed design. We are committed to delivering appropriate mitigation measures as part of any consent for development. Where appropriate, some measures would be put in place as soon as work started (such as screening mounds) and some would be implemented during construction (for example, working hours restrictions).

Preliminary calculations show that reflected noise from the reservoir embankments would be unlikely to affect the nearest properties in Drayton; and there is unlikely to be any direct effect on Shippon. Therefore, it is not considered that an additional screening mound between the A34 and Drayton or Shippon would be required. We would be able to check this through detailed noise modelling in future. Additional screening mounds to the north-west of the site to protect Garford are not considered necessary given the distance between Garford and the proposed site.

With regard to compensation, we continue to advise any householder or landowner who believes they are adversely affected by the proposals to contact us directly and also to seek independent professional advice.

#### Other issues

**Your feedback:** More detailed information was requested with regard to the following issues:

- Construction schedule and phasing.
- Working hours and possible night-time operations.
- The use of floodlighting.
- The number of construction workers to be employed on-site and access arrangements.
- Accommodation arrangements for construction workers, in terms of scale and location.
- The management of construction workers off-site and the need for a code of conduct.
- Site safety and security.
- The storage and scale of machinery to be used on-site.
- Maintaining or diverting Rights of Way during construction.
- Opportunities for local businesses to be involved in the development.

**Our response:** The Construction Method Statement will address those issues listed above.

The indicative implementation programme set out in the Stage 2 Report estimated a construction period of approximately seven years from the start of enabling works to completion of the finishing works. This is not an unusual period for a project of this type and magnitude, which includes substantial earth-moving works. As the project progresses the programme will be reviewed and local people kept updated.

More information on construction working hours required will be provided as part of the Construction Method Statement that will form part of any application for consent. Any night/ weekend working and use of floodlighting during construction would need to be agreed with the local authority, as would any changes to agreed working hours.

At the peak of construction the workforce would be approximately 600 workers, of which about half would be housed in temporary accommodation on-site. The location of this accommodation would be finalised at the next stage of design. More information on how those involved in the construction of the reservoir would get to and away from the site would be provided as part of the Construction Method Statement. A code of conduct would be agreed with all contractors.

Proposals to ensure site safety and security and to minimise the impacts of the construction workforce on local villages would be considered as part of the Community Impact Assessment, prepared in consultation with the Thames Valley Police, and included in the Construction Method Statement.

At the peak of construction there could be in the region of 300 items of construction plant on-site, which would be stored overnight and at weekends in secure locations on-site.

Wherever possible, Rights of Way will be diverted or maintained during construction. However, the large scale of the construction works and the nature of the existing path network may make this difficult to achieve in practice. Consideration will be given to phased closure and reopening of some paths, especially in the areas away from the main earth-works. Routes of proposed diversions will be included in the Environmental Statement.

In terms of local labour markets, some local job opportunities would be available in the construction and operation of the reservoir. At this time we cannot confirm their exact nature or numbers. We have not yet established what local materials or services might be available, however, it is likely that there would be opportunities for local contractors to be employed during construction. This will be addressed in the Economic Impact Report.

### Ancillary development

**Your feedback:** It was suggested that more information was needed with regard to the construction of operational structures, including the pipeline to Beacon Hill Reservoir, the tunnel from the River Thames at Culham Reach, the intake-outfall structures, the auxiliary drawdown channel and its attendant bridges, the main site access road off the A415 and additional flood compensation areas.

**Our response:** Proposals for construction of all operational structures will be developed at the next stage of the project. The construction impacts of all operational structures, and appropriate mitigation measures, will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment.

### F1.2.3 Effect on local landscape

#### Minimising impacts on the landscape

**Your feedback:** The landscape proposals presented during the Stage 2 exhibition were well received. However, there was concern that no separate landscape character assessment had been made available. Many respondents remained concerned about the visual impact of the reservoir embankments and the impact on local views, both during and post construction; including any loss of views of the Ridgeway or impact on views of the sunset. Particular concerns were raised with regard to the potential loss of agricultural land, wetland and woodland. It was stated that the introduction of heathland vegetation would not be appropriate in the context of the existing local landscape character and that the appearance of concrete on the inner and outer slopes of the embankment should be avoided.

**Our response:** Careful consideration was given to the design of the future landscape. It is intended that the design would reflect the slope profiles and the vegetation of the surrounding landscape.

The height of the embankments would result in the loss of some views from particular viewpoints. A landscape and visual impact assessment will form part of the Environmental Impact Assessment to indicate which views may be lost or gained. It will describe existing views of the Ridgeway, as well as other viewpoints closer to the site, and predict what they would look like if the reservoir is developed.

The extent of land affected by construction would stretch considerably from the base of the embankment. It is this land that presents the major opportunity for significant landscape enhancement. For example, it would be possible to return some areas to agricultural use, and to reinstate lost hedges, ditches, ponds and copses.

Part of the excavated earth would be used to form mounds detached from the embankment. These mounds could have a number of functions, including:

- Provision of screening for the site compound, haul roads and storage areas.
- Provision of middle ground banks to reduce the visual impact of the embankment.
- Provision for significant tree planting.

Views of the site during construction, and measures which would be implemented to minimise visual impact during construction, would also be considered as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment.

The design illustrated during the Stage 2 consultation indicated where areas of wetland and woodland would be created to ensure that there was no loss of habitat, as a result of development. These proposals will be refined as the design is developed and assessed in more detail as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment.

In response to feedback, it is proposed that heathland is replaced with unimproved neutral grassland, which would be in keeping with local landscape character.

With the exception of a limited number of access roads, paths and the auxiliary drawdown channel we will seek to avoid the appearance of hard surfaces on the outer slopes of the embankments. It is proposed that the inner face of the embankments will be lined with riprap, with exception of a concrete slipway for launching boats at the sailing club and the provision of access to operational structures.

### Ancillary development

**Your feedback:** Concern was expressed that the siting and design of operational structures and recreational facilities should take into consideration their impact on the wider landscape, and in particular minimise their impact on existing habitats, rural character and visual amenity.

It was suggested that the Hanney to Steventon road should be re-routed south of the railway line to allow for a gentler slope, to reduce the visual impact and provide more land for habitat creation.

Some respondents asked what provision would be made for existing electricity lines on-site, and whether overhead cables could be installed underground, to minimise their impact on the landscape. Respondents were concerned that high points on the embankments may be used for the installation of phone masts.

**Our response:** The siting and design of all operational structures will be refined at the next stage of the project, taking into account the possible impacts on nature conservation and landscape, and will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment.

A number of comments and suggestions were received regarding the proposed re-alignment of the Hanney to Steventon road. However, we do not believe that an alternative alignment to the one already proposed would be necessary for the proposed development. This recommendation will be reviewed on completion of the Transport Assessment and in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council.

The current proposals make provision for a length of 132kV overhead cables to be diverted underground in the north-east of the site. Consideration will be given to diverting other lower voltage overhead cables underground as well as diverting them above ground.

We have no intention of facilitating phone masts on-site, except where they are specifically required to maintain the current level of signal coverage or the operation of the reservoir. Phone masts over 15 metres would require a separate planning application, which would be determined by the local planning authority. Phone masts under 15 metres are considered to be permitted development and, as such, a separate planning application would not be required. Any proposed phone mast that formed part of this development would be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment, which will identify appropriate locations and measures to reduce visual impact, where possible.

#### **F1.2.4 Closeness to villages**

Comments and suggestions in relation to closeness to villages referred to a range of issues covered in this section. Therefore, all have been considered under other relevant topic headings.

#### **F1.2.5 Traffic once completed**

##### **Road traffic**

**Your feedback:** Additional traffic on local roads was a concern, particularly traffic during peak periods (in the summer and at weekends). It was suggested that potential formal and informal recreation demands need to be assessed by comparison with similar scale facilities at other reservoirs, and by survey of potential users in the wider area. The medium low scenario, illustrating the lowest intensity of recreational use (Stage 2 Report, Section 7.5), was often favoured, based on concerns regarding traffic and visitor numbers. It was suggested that traffic modelling would have been appropriate to inform the scale of recreational facilities. Some respondents were concerned that access from the A415 could compound congestion on the A415 and adjoining roads, and intensify traffic impacts in Marcham.

It was suggested that traffic impacts should continue to be monitored once the reservoir was operational and that further consultation with local communities should take place, as necessary. There was a particular concern that appropriate road safety measures should be implemented.

**Our response:** Based on responses to the consultation, there would be an emphasis on water-based activities and quiet recreation. Facilities for water sports would be for general club use, with some district to county level events. Provision at the regional or national scale, was considered inappropriate as it may have significant additional traffic impacts. Local communities and stakeholder organisations were consulted to find out what scale of recreational facilities they wanted to see provided on-site. This approach allowed communities and organisations to express particular preferences, which have informed the mix of recreational facilities proposed.

The extent and impact of traffic generated by the reservoir once completed will be assessed through a Transport Assessment to be undertaken prior to any submission, based on comparison with other reservoir sites and local study of potential demand related to the level of facilities proposed. As part of the Transport Assessment, measures will be identified as appropriate to monitor and mitigate those impacts identified. Sustainable travel would be promoted by encouraging car sharing, providing some coach parking and footpaths connecting the site to bus stops in local villages. Links to existing Rights of Way around the site will also be provided.

Preliminary work undertaken on the potential impact of additional traffic movements that would be generated from the scheme forecasts a relatively small impact compared to forecast background traffic volumes on the A415 and A34. In addition, the majority of visitor trips would be generated outside of peak hours. Further assessment of the impact on the highway network is being progressed in conjunction with Oxfordshire County Council and in consultation with the Highways Agency.

When the reservoir is operational, we will continue to liaise regularly with existing forums such as parish councils and the Local Panel. Road safety measures would be designed and implemented, in accordance with the latest guidance and best practice, and in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council and Thames Valley Police.

#### Access arrangements

**Your feedback:** There was some mention of additional access points being provided (total of three for recreational use; or an additional one for nature conservation). However, many respondents were concerned that visitor traffic would travel through local villages and on local roads and that measures to reduce post-construction traffic impacts should be implemented early on. It was suggested that clear and effective signage would play an important role in protecting local villages.

There was support for the provision of a single permanent access road off the A415 to the north-east corner of the site. However, it was suggested that a roundabout, as opposed to a signal-controlled junction, would minimise delays to traffic at the junction of the proposed access road and the A415.

There were concerns regarding the route of the proposed access road. In particular, the proposed route crosses agricultural land, which forms part of Abingdon Common (land owned by Abingdon Town Council, under the Oxfordshire Act 1985), and passes close to (although does not cross) allotments, also located on Abingdon Common.

It was suggested that the north-east access road could be extended to the south to facilitate greater dispersal of facilities, including provision of the sailing facilities on the southern shore.

**Our response:** The proposed permanent access road was positioned to enable visitor traffic using the A34 to access the reservoir site without travelling through local villages. However, we acknowledge that not all visitors to the site will use the A34, and as such the Transport Assessment will, as a minimum, assess the impact of traffic using the A338, A415 and B4017, and identify appropriate mitigation measures. Clear signage will play an important role in traffic/route management. Consideration is being given to supplementary local access for the proposed equestrian facility and nature conservation area from the A338 and for the education and study centre from the Hanney to Steventon road.

In response to feedback from the consultation, the provision of a roundabout at the junction of the proposed access road and the A415 will be considered as part of the Transport Assessment and will be subject to approval by Oxfordshire County Council.

We believe the route proposed for access to the reservoir to be the most suitable and, therefore, we will negotiate with Abingdon Town Council as the owners of Abingdon Common. The land proposed for the access route is currently used for agricultural purposes and has no public access. The only public access to the common is to the nearby allotments.

The relocation of some facilities to the south-east or south-west of the reservoir was considered. However, this option was discounted, as the dispersal of facilities would have negative implications for site security, accessibility, visual impact and the tranquillity of other areas of the site. Operational and recreational facilities would be clustered around the site access road, in the north-east quadrant, as set out in the Stage 2 Report and, therefore, there would be no extension of the public access route to the south of the site.

### Road improvements

**Your feedback:** In response to the consultation it was suggested that Thames Water should consider providing, or contributing to, a bypass around Marcham. It was suggested that we should consider providing or contributing to road improvements on the existing A34 and A415, to manage additional traffic generated by the reservoir.

There was a concern that any possible cumulative impacts of other developments locally (including proposed major housing developments at Grove and Didcot), should be taken into account. It was also suggested that an integrated transport plan should be prepared in consultation with the relevant developers, Oxfordshire County Council and the Highways Agency.

**Our response:** Preliminary work undertaken on the potential impact of additional traffic movements that would be generated from the scheme are expected to have a relatively small impact compared to forecast background traffic volumes on the A415 and A34. In addition, the majority of visitor trips would be generated outside of peak hours.

Therefore, we do not currently believe that the construction of the reservoir would justify significant upgrades to the A34 or A415 or a bypass around Marcham. Other new roads and major road realignments were suggested; however, these were also rejected on the basis of available data. These recommendations will be reviewed on completion of the Transport Assessment and appropriate mitigation measures, which may include some local traffic management schemes, identified.

The Transport Assessment will take into account the cumulative impact of proposed new developments at Grove and Didcot. We will also continue to engage in a constructive dialogue with Oxfordshire County Council and the Highways Agency, regarding highways issues and options.

### Hanney to Steventon road realignment

**Your feedback:** Construction of the reservoir will require diversion of the existing Hanney to Steventon road. A number of comments and suggestions were received regarding the road realignment. The main points are summarised below:

- Thames Water should proceed with the proposed diversion route, illustrated during the Stage 2 consultation (this route is positioned as close as possible to the existing alignment).
- The realigned road should join the A338 south of East Hanney, to reduce traffic through East Hanney and provide better access to Grove and Wantage.
- The realigned road should continue beyond the existing Hanney to Steventon road, to join the B4017 (Abingdon Road), to reduce traffic through Steventon.
- The realigned road should be positioned south of the railway line, joining the A417 or A4130, to serve the planned future expansion of Grove and to reduce traffic through Steventon. It was also suggested that this option could allow for road access to the south of the reservoir site, without traffic travelling through local villages.
- The realigned road should be positioned north of the railway line, to maintain the link between local villages (East Hanney and Steventon). It was also suggested that an alignment south of railway line would have negative implications for local businesses.
- Thames Water should contribute to the costs of widening the existing A417 (between Wantage and Harwell), as opposed to replacing the existing Hanney to Steventon road.
- The realigned road should allow for increased traffic flows, as the existing road is often congested.
- The realigned road should be safer than the existing road.

**Our response:** Preliminary work undertaken on the potential impact of additional traffic movements that would be generated from the scheme are expected to have a relatively small impact on the local road network or the traffic movements between Hanney and Steventon. We consider that any improvements to the road network resulting from the future expansion of Grove are a matter for the promoters of that scheme.

As such, we do not believe that an alternative alignment to the one already proposed would be justified. This recommendation will be reviewed on completion of the Transport Assessment.

The proposed realignment will comprise a single, two-lane carriageway, north of the railway line, with the provision of an off-road cycle route (to replace the current 'on-road' cycle route between East Hanney and Steventon). The realignment has been designed to minimise the impact on existing properties and land holdings. We will continue to consult Oxfordshire County Council and local communities on the proposals as they are developed.

The existing road will not be closed until the realignment is in place. The realigned road would be designed in accordance with the latest safety guidance and best practice and in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council and Thames Valley Police.

## Use of rail

**Your feedback:** It was suggested that Thames Water could either convert the temporary rail sidings used for the delivery of construction materials to site or contribute towards the costs of reopening the railway station at Grove, to provide permanent rail access, reducing the traffic impacts generated by visitor traffic (and by local people commuting from Grove/Wantage to Didcot Parkway railway station).

**Our response:** We believe the viability of any subsequent use of the temporary rail sidings or the reopening of the railway station at Grove is a matter for Network Rail.

## F1.2.6 Flooding and local drainage

### Flood risk and alleviation

**Your feedback:** Respondents were concerned that seepage, from the reservoir and pipelines, would cause already high water tables in the local area and, in particular, in East Hanney and Steventon, to rise. Respondents were also concerned that the re-routing of watercourses may increase the flood risk in the local area and that flood storage would be reduced by construction of the reservoir.

Appropriate flood alleviation measures were identified as a priority by many respondents, to minimise the risk of flooding, during and post construction. It was suggested that the auxiliary drawdown channel be used to divert run-off, and provide flood alleviation for Abingdon from the River Ock. Respondents asked what impact the reservoir and the proposed flood alleviation measures would have on flooding at Mill Brook and Ginge Brook.

**Our response:** Up to date modelling, incorporating all available data from the recent (2007) floods, will inform an assessment of flood risk, which will be submitted as part of any application for consent. A Flood Risk Management Plan will be prepared in consultation with the Environment Agency and the local planning authority, setting out appropriate measures to minimise any impacts identified in the Flood Risk Assessment.

A study of the hydrogeology of the reservoir site and the surrounding area has been undertaken to assess the likely impact of the reservoir on groundwater levels. Preliminary indications are that the potential impact on the water table would be minimal. The reservoir would be built of clay on an impervious clay base and sealed from the existing aquifers. Properly designed drains would channel any seepage of water through the embankment to watercourses in the River Ock catchment, subject to the findings of the Flood Risk Assessment. To ensure that we meet the requirement of Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk, the design of roads and re-routed watercourses would ensure that the rate and volume of water entering the river would not exceed current conditions. During construction settlement ponds would capture run-off from the site.

All transfer pipelines are designed not to leak, and are tested to pressures greater than their operating pressure prior to being put into service. It is also standard practice to completely reinstate watercourses and field drainage systems crossed by the pipeline construction, prior to the operation of the pipeline.

Building the reservoir would result in the loss of some of the existing natural floodplain, which protects against river flooding. A new area of flood storage would therefore be needed to compensate for this. This would be provided before construction began, to ensure that there would be no net loss of flood storage at any time. The capacity of the flood storage would include an allowance for climate change, as required by Planning Policy Statement 25, which provides national policy on Development and Flood Risk.

No decision has been made on the potential use of the auxiliary drawdown channel to divert run-off from the River Ock. This will be considered further as the design is developed, in consultation with the Environment Agency and the local planning authority.

Subject to the findings of the Flood Risk Assessment, we believe that the proposed development would affect run-off in the River Ock catchment only. As Mill Brook and Ginge Brook are not tributaries of the River Ock neither would be affected by the proposed flood compensation measures.

The design of all flood compensation areas will be subject to approval by the Environment Agency, who will also enforce the maintenance of them and any other flood alleviation measures.

#### Effect on existing abstractions

**Your feedback:** The impact of development on groundwater and surface water abstractions, carried out under licence by local farmers, was identified as an issue during the consultation.

**Our response:** The impact of the reservoir on existing groundwater and surface water abstractions, in the River Ock catchment, will be considered as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment. However, from our preliminary work, we believe that any impacts would be minimal. Any abstraction licence issued to Thames Water by the Environment Agency would take into account the impact on existing abstraction licences.

#### F1.2.7 Microclimate and ecology

##### Microclimate

**Your feedback:** Respondents wished to understand the potential impacts on the local microclimate and, in particular, the likely effects on humidity, mist, fog and frost conditions. There were concerns regarding the impact of any changes in microclimate on health, driving conditions, crops and the maintenance of local properties, and thatched roofs in particular.

Some respondents were concerned about the effect of a potential increase in the insect population and how this might be controlled. There were also concerns regarding any potential odour from the reservoir or the water treatment works.

**Our response:** The potential impact on the local microclimate will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment. Ongoing studies will provide information on local mist, fog and frost, for which humidity is a key driver. Initial indications are that evaporation is not likely to be a significant problem and that changes to humidity would be low. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that there would be significant impacts on health, driving conditions, local crops or the maintenance of local properties. Our assessments are, however, still in progress.

The Environmental Impact Assessment will consider any possible changes in microclimate and design options to minimise any potential impacts (including any increase in the local insect population).

The experience from our existing reservoirs is that there would be no unpleasant odours from the reservoir or the water treatment works.

##### Ecology

Comments relating to ecology are covered in the following section on Landscape, Nature Conservation and Building Design under the heading: Replacing existing and creating new habitats.

## Environmental Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment

**Your feedback:** A number of respondents asked how and when the Environmental Impact Assessment process would be undertaken.

**Our response:** Baseline survey work has already been carried out to investigate the existing conditions on the proposed site, including wildlife and archaeological surveys and monitoring of local climate, air quality and noise conditions. The scope of the EIA will be agreed with the local authority in consultation with statutory consultees, to ensure that all relevant environmental issues are assessed. The results of the ongoing baseline surveys and environmental scoping will inform the Environmental Impact Assessment.

An Environmental Impact Assessment will then be undertaken to consider a wide range of environmental issues to predict the likely environmental impacts of the development, and to identify any mitigation measures needed to avoid, reduce or remedy adverse impacts of the development. An Environmental Statement is then prepared to report the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment and will be submitted as part of any application for consent.

### F1.2.8 Householder and business impacts

#### Land acquisition

**Your feedback:** We were asked how landowners and local businesses would be compensated and if Thames Water would apply for compulsory purchase powers, for the acquisition of land.

**Our response:** We already own a proportion of the site and there are a number of other land ownerships within the proposed reservoir site boundary. All landowners have been informed of the proposed development and private negotiations are being undertaken. We plan to acquire as much of the land required as possible through negotiation, without the use of compulsory purchase powers. Compensation for landowners and local businesses will be considered on a case-by-case basis in line with Thames Water's policy.

#### Property values and insurance costs

**Your feedback:** Some respondents expressed concern regarding the effect the development may have on local property prices during the construction phase, and questioned how any decrease in sale prices during construction might be compensated. It was suggested that an independent assessment of the likely impacts on property values should be undertaken and that local estate agents should be kept up-to-date with regard to the proposals.

We were also asked what impact the development might have on household insurance premiums.

**Our response:** We will continue to advise any householder, landowner or business who believes that they are adversely affected by the long-term proposals to contact us directly and to seek independent professional advice.

Local estate agents will continue to be kept well informed of the proposals so that potential buyers may be updated.

With regard to insurance premiums, we can only advise property owners to seek advice from their own insurer if they have specific concerns.

### Opportunities for employment and local businesses

**Your feedback:** Some respondents were interested in the potential economic benefits of the scheme and in particular, opportunities for employment and local businesses, both during and post-construction.

**Our response:** An Economic Impact Report will be prepared to consider the economic impacts of the development, including opportunities for employment and local businesses, and will form part of any application for consent.

However, it must be noted that EU procurement rules require that construction contracts be awarded on the basis of competitive tender.

### F1.2.9 Reservoir safety

#### Site security

**Your feedback:** Respondents were keen to understand measures to ensure site security both during and post construction, and in particular access arrangements, the role of Thames Valley Police, and the use of CCTV and means of funding for site security.

It was suggested that we consult the Thames Valley Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor, counter terrorist and other security advisors, with regard to access arrangements and the design and location of operational structures and recreational facilities.

**Our response:** Site security will need to be assessed at the detailed design stage and as a minimum we will need to meet the criteria set out in our existing policies and procedures.

During construction, in compliance with Construction Design Management procedures, the site would be under the control of the Principal Contractor and, therefore, they would be primarily responsible for site security. However, they would be required to agree with us, in consultation with Thames Valley Police, how they would do this.

Thames Valley Police were involved in the Stage 2 consultation process and we will continue to liaise with them on all aspects of the project.

#### Risk assessment

**Your feedback:** Respondents were concerned that the structural integrity of the reservoir should be assessed, including in the event of a terrorist attack. It was suggested that the impacts of any breach of the embankments, the risk of birdstrike on aircraft and the possibility of earth tremors (triggered by potential increases in hydrostatic pressure) should be assessed. The need for protocols, in the event of any breach of the embankment, was also raised.

**Our response:** Hazards and risk assessments will be detailed in the Reservoir Safety Report, which will form part of any application for consent. Potential risks will be minimised by:

- Strict compliance with the requirements of the Reservoirs Act.
- The appointment of an independent Reservoir Advisory Panel to review the design.
- The adoption of a 'defensive' design strategy e.g. using conservative design assumptions for material strengths and loads.
- Embankment stability will be assured by the following measures.
- A comprehensive ground investigation.
- Use of the latest technology to model embankment strengths, during the design process.

- Allowing for extreme ground movement, up to a 1 in 10,000-year earthquake.
- A flexible approach, allowing for adjustments to the design of the embankment, as construction progresses.

As part of the final design process a full-scale trial embankment would be built before construction began. The reservoir will be inspected by qualified engineers at regular and frequent intervals as required by the Reservoirs Act and enforced by the Environment Agency.

In the very unlikely event that the regular safety monitoring detected a weakness in the embankment, it may be necessary to lower the level of water in the reservoir to address the problem. This would be achieved by releasing water through the transfer tunnels and the auxiliary drawdown system. These releases of water would follow strict procedures, determined in consultation with the Environment Agency.

As with all other UK reservoirs, a strategy will be formulated in consultation with the local authority and the Environment Agency, to minimise the effects of flooding that would result from any breach of the embankment.

Work has already been undertaken by specialist consultants to assess the risk of birdstrike on aircraft by birds attracted to the reservoir. It was identified during the Reservoir Site Selection Study that the risk of birdstrike would be unlikely to prohibit development of the proposed site. A strategy would be prepared as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment, in consultation with the Ministry of Defence, to address any potential risk of birdstrike. Measures to disperse gulls harmlessly have recently been trialled successfully at Farmoor Reservoir.

The UK Building Research Establishment has concluded that significant reservoir induced earthquakes are extremely unlikely in the UK.

### F1.2.10 Energy requirements

#### Reducing need

**Your feedback:** Questions were raised about the energy requirements and CO2 production during construction (including energy embodied in materials) and operation (including the running of the recreational facilities). Reference was made to principles of sustainable construction and the use of energy efficiency measures in buildings and structures. There were suggestions that during operation, particularly related to abstraction from the river in the winter, there could be shortfalls in energy supply nationally putting more pressure on the need to reduce energy requirements.

**Our response:** The Energy Assessment will be undertaken to establish the reservoir's energy requirements both during construction (including the energy embodied in construction materials) and operation. The majority of energy used in construction would be for earthmoving, which is required for embankment construction. The majority of energy used for operation over the reservoir's lifetime would be for pumping, mixing, and treating the water.

The Stage 2 Report includes proposals to minimise energy consumption during construction (by re-using material excavated on site and importing materials by rail, wherever possible), and maximise the energy efficiency of buildings through detailed design. The Energy Assessment will explore ways of further minimising energy requirements.

### Sources of renewable energy

**Your feedback:** There was support for use of a range of renewable technologies including bio-fuels, solar panels, wave energy and wind turbines. There were concerns expressed in relation to the scale, visual impact and noise associated with turbines and issues related to bird life. Some respondents suggested that if wind turbines were provided on-site they should be small scale and incorporated into the design at an early stage, so that they could be integrated into the landscape.

**Our response:** The South East Plan requires at least 10 percent of the reservoir's operational energy requirements to be met by renewable sources. Turbines would recover energy from moving water as it was released back into the Thames for supply to London.

We are also currently assessing a number of other options to meet and possibly exceed planning policy requirements for renewable energy use; further consideration will be given to the potential use of wind turbines and bio-fuels in the Environmental Impact Assessment, including their likely impacts and appropriate mitigation measures. Water movement in the reservoir, i.e. wave energy, will not be of a scale to make a viable contribution to operational energy requirements.

## F1.3 LANDSCAPE, NATURE CONSERVATION AND BUILDING DESIGN

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### F1.3.1 Lagoons

#### Role and scale

**Your feedback:** There was a suggestion that it would be better to concentrate provision for nature conservation on the outer banks of the reservoir, but otherwise most comments supported greater provision of lagoons to increase landscape variety and habitat creation, with some respondents also suggesting provision for leisure activities (e.g. fishing and model boating).

**Our response:** It is recommended that the scale of lagoon provision illustrated during the Stage 2 consultation be retained, as part of a range of inner bank habitats and landscape diversity. As the role of the lagoons relates primarily to nature conservation and landscape, it is proposed that leisure uses would not be allowed at the lagoons except for birdwatching. Opportunities for fishing would be provided only at the settlement ponds on the outer face and not at the lagoons. Neither motorised nor non-motorised model boating would be allowed at the lagoons; however, non-motorised model boating may be possible at the settlement ponds, where this would not conflict with other uses.

#### Design and management

**Your feedback:** It was suggested that there should be a variety of edging (in addition to riprap), and that bio-engineering treatments such as vegetation and reed beds should be incorporated more widely. There were concerns that the lagoons should not encourage insects and algal growth and it was suggested that a maintenance plan was needed. It was also suggested that lagoons should be allowed to dry out periodically. There was also more general concern regarding algal growth, with suggestions for use of shading (with, for instance, floating reedbeds or solar panels).

**Our response:** It is proposed that a variety of edging and planting is incorporated as the design of the lagoons is developed. The appropriate mix of water plants, reeds and shrubs would help to provide more visual interest and a balanced ecology, and to minimise algal blooms.

However, more general use of bio-engineering would not provide adequate safety against bank erosion from wave action. The riprap would extend down to the bottom water operating level and there would be undulations on the surface to add visual interest to the shoreline. Use of shading to prevent algal growth would require coverage of the majority of the surface, which would not be practical or cost-effective.

The Environmental Impact Assessment will consider different design and management options to control insect populations and appropriate measures and maintenance requirements will be set out in the Environmental Management Plan. For biodiversity and aesthetic reasons we will try to ensure that lagoons are flooded most of the time. However, where parts do dry out in the summer due to falling water levels in the reservoir this may lead to habitat advantages for certain species.

### F1.3.2 Promontories

#### Role and scale

**Your feedback:** There was support for the role of promontories (as well as beaches and lagoons) in increasing visual interest including in the north and west of the reservoir. There were suggestions that the promontories may be used for mooring boats and to provide opportunities for fishing, and that there should be planting in the inner face wave protection (riprap).

**Our response:** The Environmental Impact Assessment may identify a need for further measures to reduce visual impact.

It is recommended that all promontories be retained as the design is developed, to provide viewing areas for visitors and access to the water for rescue boats only. The promontory in the north-east corner (which is shown with a pier attached in the revised Draft Recreation Plan at Appendix A of this report) would be designed to allow greater public access, for views of the reservoir. The promontory to the south of the cove (shown as a beach in the Stage 2 consultation) would be located where the water sports facilities were shown in the Stage 2 Report. It is proposed that the location of the water sports facilities be moved approximately 200 metres south, to increase separation between the water sports facilities and the new cove, while also providing an opportunity for visitors to watch the water sports.

Opportunities for fishing would be provided at the settlement ponds only and not in the reservoir itself. The operating regime would restrict planting within the inner face wave protection (riprap), i.e. any vegetation would be killed either by drowning or drought due to fluctuating water levels.

### F1.3.3 Beaches

#### Role and scale

**Your feedback:** The main issue was to what extent the beach would be used for access to the water. Some respondents suggested that maximum use should be possible for activities such as swimming and windsurfing, while other respondents were concerned about the safety of allowing access to the water and the potential that a beach would attract high numbers of visitors. It was suggested that the beach should be retained to provide habitat value and visual interest, with restricted access. Some respondents questioned whether the likely benefits justified the costs of provision.

**Our response:** Swimming in the reservoir will be prohibited because of operational and safety issues. It was concluded that a beach might encourage access to the water and attract high numbers of visitors. Therefore, it is recommended that the beach illustrated in the Stage 2 Report be replaced by a cove with larger stone material. Access arrangements will be detailed in the Design and Access Statement and could be enforced through use of wardens. The additional cove could provide ecological benefits as well as contributing to the visual interest of the inner face of the reservoir.

### Design and management

**Your feedback:** There was some concern that the beach (which would now be replaced by a cove) would look unnatural, particularly during the summer months, when water levels would be lower. There was also a concern that the beach in the north-east corner would be eroded quickly and would attract foam and dead weed.

**Our response:** The shoreline exposed by gradual drawdown during the summer months would be surfaced with riprap, avoiding the appearance of concrete or clay (with the exception of the water sports facilities, where a concrete slipway would provide access for boats). The beach illustrated in the Stage 2 Report would be replaced by a cove. The larger grained material used to create the cove would be more resistant to wave action, which would reduce the rate of erosion of the cove. A promontory would prevent foam and dead weed from collecting in the cove, thereby reducing maintenance requirements.

#### F1.3.4 Planting Species

**Your feedback:** It was suggested that native species should be used to ensure that planting looks natural, including variety to encourage different bird species. Use of local expertise and establishing local nurseries were both suggested. There was also a proposal for the planting of an arboretum and a water garden.

**Our response:** It will be important to compensate for the loss of hedgerows, wetland and woodland, as illustrated during the Stage 2 consultation. A variety of native species would be used. Consideration will be given to the setting up of local nurseries to provide plants for the site, as part of the Environmental Management Plan. We will continue to engage local, regional and national conservation organisations as the detailed design is developed. An arboretum and water garden would be contrary to the emphasis on naturalness and will not be included in the design.

#### Timing and location

**Your feedback:** There was concern that planting should be established as soon as possible, in particular along access roads and around buildings, to provide visual and noise screening. Early planting, use of fast growing varieties, and provision of mature shrubs and trees were all mentioned in this context. It was suggested that trees should be planted on the embankment crest to provide visual interest and to enhance the landscape, although there was some concern that planting should not affect the wind conditions for sailing.

**Our response:** The proposal is that, where possible, planting would begin on the fringes of the site before construction starts to enable relocation of wildlife and some screening from construction activities. Consideration will be given to providing greater variation in the appearance of the embankment by selective planting of taller trees on the lower slopes and screening mounds. Planting of trees on the crest itself is prohibited for safety reasons. Consideration will be given to the effects of planting on wind conditions, as the design is developed.

#### F1.3.5 Variations in slope Role

**Your feedback:** Respondents referred to the importance of ensuring that the outer slopes of the embankment would be in keeping with the local landscape character, in terms of shape and angle of slope, and would allow appropriate planting, wherever possible.

**Our response:** Both of these suggestions are consistent with the designs, illustrated during the Stage 2 consultation.

### F1.3.6 Returning to agriculture

#### Type of farming

**Your feedback:** There was concern that farming would not be possible on the site because of the gradient of the outer banks of the reservoir. It was suggested that local farmers should be involved in discussions. A preference was expressed for grazing as opposed to arable farming, as this would provide greater opportunities for habitat creation. Although, it was suggested that bio-fuel crops could be grown to provide a source of renewable energy for use on-site.

**Our response:** In response to feedback, it is proposed that the north and east banks of the reservoir could provide opportunities for farming. It is recommended that land suitable for agricultural purposes would take the form of permanent grassland (which could be grazed or cut for hay), to maximise habitat creation and bio-diversity benefits. We will engage in further consultation with local farmers to consider opportunities for integration with the surrounding farmland and effective management.

The viability of growing and using bio-fuel crops on-site will be considered as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment, in the context of requirements to meet renewable energy targets. Principles relating to the use of land for bio-fuel crops will be set out in the Environmental Management Plan.

### F1.3.7 Replacing hedges and ditches

#### Type of hedging

**Your feedback:** It was suggested that there should be a mix of species to attract a variety of wildlife and provide wildlife corridors within the wider landscape. It was also suggested that fast growing varieties should be planted to establish hedgerows. Opportunities to engage local volunteers and employ traditional methods of hedging were also identified.

**Our response:** Previous experience confirms that retention and replacement of hedgerows is important in enabling successful colonisation of new habitats. Fast growing species would be used for screening.

Volunteers would be encouraged to help with management and maintenance activities.

### F1.3.8 Wilts & Berks Canal

#### Role and scale

**Your feedback:** There was much support for inclusion of a route for the Wilts & Berks Canal in the landscaping proposals and, where possible, the restoration of the canal channel around the northern and western edges of the site, as well as to the east of the reservoir. Respondents added that the historic route of the canal should be used as far as possible, with the reinstatement of a canal towpath for use as a footpath and cycle route. It was also suggested that a mooring area should be provided on the canal route.

Questions were asked regarding the scale of embankments either side of the channel, and the materials to be used in construction. There were concerns expressed about how the channel would be drawn down when the Thames is already in full flow, and how it could function as both a drawdown channel and canal. Some respondents asked whether the canal could be used to divert run-off from the River Ock catchment, via the channel, which would run east of the reservoir.

**Our response:** The current preferred option for auxiliary drawdown is to provide a channel, which could also form part of the Wilts & Berks Canal (from the north-eastern corner of the reservoir to the River Thames). The future restoration of the canal around the northern and western edges of the site would be facilitated by the provision of a reserved corridor of land. If the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust were to make additional funds available, prior to or during construction of the reservoir, for the restoration of the canal route around the northern and western edges of the site, consideration would be given to combining the two construction operations.

A towpath would be provided alongside the proposed route of the canal from the north-eastern corner of the reservoir to the River Thames. The towpath would provide a footpath and cycle route, which may also be extended along the reserved route around northern and western edges of the site. The provision of a mooring area, between the reservoir and the River Thames, will be considered in more detail as the design is developed, as moorings are likely to be required for the operation of auxiliary drawdown channel.

The auxiliary drawdown channel is a channel cut into the earth and is not concrete lined. It is envisaged that the maximum depth of the cut would be about 8 metres, and the average angle of the cut slopes would be very gentle – 1 vertical to 7 horizontal, although the slope angles would be varied to give a natural appearance. The channel section (depth, width, side slopes) would be as proposed by the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust for the rest of the canal. At its western and eastern ends, the channel would be at existing ground level and low embankments would be required to contain the flow in times of flood. These embankments would be less than 2 metres high with gentle side slopes.

The probability of having to use the drawdown channel at the same time as a flood in the Thames is extremely low (at less than 1 in 1,500 years). As far as canal users are concerned, an off-channel boat refuge would be provided so boats can be removed from the channel and moored securely in the event that the drawdown channel has to be operated.

No decision has been made on the potential use of the drawdown channel to divert run-off from the River Ock catchment. This will be considered further as the design is developed, in consultation with the Environment Agency.

### Support for the restoration

**Your feedback:** Respondents identified a need for support to identify funding for the restoration and management of the Wilts & Berks Canal. It was suggested that Thames Water should contribute financially or in the form of work-in-kind to the restoration of the canal, as the proposed alternative route is 1.75km longer than the historic line.

**Our response:** We continue to support the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust as a member of the Wilts & Berks Canal Partnership. We believe that the restoration of the Wilts & Berks Canal would make a positive contribute to the wider area and will continue to work with the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust on proposals for the canal's restoration within the proposed reservoir site boundary.

A reserved route for the continued restoration of the canal around the north and west sides of the reservoir is required by local planning policy. An appropriate level of compensation for any additional length of canal required may be considered as part of a planning obligation or equivalent undertaking, which would be agreed with the local authority and accompany any application for consent.

### F1.3.9 Replacing existing and creating new habitats

#### Habitat creation

**Your feedback:** There was strong support for the early provision of habitats, to minimise the disruption to wildlife. It was also suggested that new habitats should be based on existing habitats, with no net loss of species and an assessment of new habitats against UK and Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan targets. It was considered that the greatest opportunities for habitat creation would be on the outer banks of the reservoir and, as such, the proposals should focus on this area. The introduction of heathland on-site was generally considered to be out of keeping with the local landscape character.

**Our response:** Our approach will be to create habitats early wherever possible to minimise wildlife disruption. Any relocation of wildlife would be carried out in consultation with Natural England and Defra. The habitat plan, illustrated during the Stage 2 consultation has and will continue to be developed in consultation with the relevant national, regional and local organisations. A driving principle is, where possible, to create and replace habitats that support agreed UK and Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan targets. The focus of habitat creation would be on the outer banks and surrounding flood compensation areas. In response to feedback, it is recommended that heathland, which was illustrated in proposals for landscape during the Stage 2 consultation, be replaced by unimproved neutral grassland, in keeping with the existing local landscape character.

#### Wetlands

**Your feedback:** Particular importance was placed on the need to enhance and create new wetland habitats for the conservation of aquatic species, to include ponds, reed beds and marshes. There was a concern that planting hedgerows and trees close to wetland habitats, to the west of the reservoir, would attract birds that would deter wetland species and undermine the value of the wetland habitats. It was suggested that nesting rafts for breeding birds should be provided in the reservoir. It was stated that all proposals should assess the ecological impact on existing wetland habitats, both on-site and in the wider area. Specific reference was made to the possible impacts of the proposed intake-outfall at Culham Reach on water voles and other waterside species.

It was also suggested that a number of existing abstraction licences along the River Thames, including the licence for Farmoor Reservoir, are environmentally damaging and should be reviewed and possibly removed, if an abstraction licence is granted for the proposed reservoir.

**Our response:** The importance of enhancing existing and creating new wetland habitats for aquatic species, including ponds, reedbeds and marshes is reflected in the design presented during the Stage 2 consultation.

Hedgerows and trees close to wetland habitats, to the west of the reservoir, will be omitted from the landscape design, in response to concerns that they would deter wetland species. A small number of bird nesting rafts will be provided in the north-west corner of the reservoir. Impacts on existing wetlands will be considered as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment, including impacts of the proposed intake-outfall at Culham Reach on water voles and other waterside species. Measures to minimise any adverse impacts would then be identified. Proposed abstractions would take only place under licence from the Environment Agency.

Existing abstraction licences are granted by the Environment Agency on a case-by-case basis, including consideration of any environmental impacts. The abstraction licence for Farmoor Reservoir is the subject of ongoing negotiations with Environment Agency.

## Woodland

**Your feedback:** Respondents identified the opportunity to create woodland habitats exceeding the scale of woodland habitat lost. However, there was a concern that imported trees and plant species could have a detrimental effect on existing habitats.

**Our response:** Creating woodland habitats to exceed the scale of woodland habitat lost is consistent with the design illustrated during the Stage 2 consultation. We would use native species from local sources, wherever possible.

## Wildlife

**Your feedback:** It was suggested that a nature reserve should be incorporated into the reservoir design, including specific provision for protected species such as bats, as well as nesting sites for house martins, swallows and swifts to control insect populations. It was suggested that links should be provided between new and existing habitats and to enable wildlife to move around freely around the site.

**Our response:** The inclusion of a nature reserve is consistent with the design illustrated during the Stage 2 consultation. Access arrangements, including areas excluded from public access and areas with seasonally controlled access, would be outlined as part of the Environmental Management Plan. Extended hedgerows would link new and existing habitats and underpasses beneath roads and tracks would be provided to enable wildlife to move freely around the site.

## Management and stakeholder involvement

**Your feedback:** Respondents identified a need for a long-term management plan, including proposals for integration into the landscape and maintenance. Some respondents were concerned that conflicts may arise between nature conservation objectives and proposed recreational activities.

The consultation responses highlighted the importance of continuing to involve relevant local, regional and national organisations in the design of the scheme and the opportunity to engage these groups and local volunteers in the creation and maintenance of habitats.

**Our response:** Our proposals for the creation and management of habitats will be set out in the Environmental Statement and the Environmental Management Plan, which will be submitted as part of any application for consent.

We have already established an Ecology Forum, including local, regional and national organisations, to develop ideas with regard to nature conservation. Local interest groups and volunteers would be encouraged to help with the creation and maintenance of habitats.

### F1.3.10 Integration into landscape

#### The natural environment

**Your feedback:** Many people seemed reassured by the landscape proposals and in particular the gentle slope of the embankments illustrated in the Stage 2 Report. However, local people remain concerned that the reservoir should not look like the Thames Water reservoirs located to the west of London and that the landscape proposals should be appropriate to the rural setting. The consultation emphasised the need to provide a variety of landscape features, to create interesting views around the reservoir, and the importance of good design, to maintain a rural appearance and feel. There was a suggestion that the reservoir might be constructed deeper to reduce embankment height. Requests were made for a clearer illustration of how embankment height and angle of slope would vary around the site.

There was praise for provision of screening mounds, to reduce the effect of construction activities on the local area, and planting early in the construction phase, to ensure that some areas of planting would mature prior to completion of the reservoir. Respondents were concerned that the crest of the reservoir would appear flat and unnatural. It was suggested that planting and undulations in the crest line could be used to create a more varied and natural-looking skyline and that buildings and operational structures should not be visible on the skyline.

A general preference was expressed for hedging rather than fencing. It was suggested that where fences would be required planting should be used to minimise their visual impact and that barbed species, e.g. blackthorn, may be used, as an alternative to fencing, to limit access to the reservoir from local roads.

Respondents were also keen to understand how the landscape proposals would take into account and respond to climate change.

**Our response:** The proposed reservoir will look very different from Thames Water's existing bunded reservoirs west of London. These older reservoirs were designed to meet purely operational requirements. There is sufficient depth of clay to enable the reservoir to be dug deeper however this would upset the fine balance between the clay removed and that required to construct the type of embankments shown at the Stage 2 consultation. The consequence of such a decision would be to generate excess material, which would have to be transported off the site causing additional traffic movements, noise and disruption.

The objective of the landscape design for the proposed reservoir would be to ensure that the proposed new landscape is as natural as possible, with species and habitats appropriate to this part of Oxfordshire. The embankment would slope gently and feature landscape and conservation proposals as part of the design. In the north, the embankment would reach a height of 25 metres and have an average slope of approximately 1 (vertical) in 10 (horizontal). In the south the embankment would be 15 metres high, with a slope of approximately 1 in 6. These slopes would be comparable to the gradient of the northern slope of Steventon Hill (1 in 7.5) and gentler than those at Farmoor Reservoir.

The provision of screening mounds and planting early in the construction phase is consistent with proposals outlined in the Stage 2 Report. The design shown in the Stage 2 Report also illustrates some degree of skyline variation. Selective planting of taller trees on the lower slopes and screening mounds could achieve additional variations.

Hedging and fencing would be used to enclose habitats, manage grazing, control access and designate property boundaries. It would be appropriate to its landscape context and use, and would consist of natural materials, wherever possible. The exact type of hedging and fencing used would be determined in the more detailed stages of design.

The Environmental Impact Assessment will take into account current trends in climate (including rainfall and temperature) and recommend appropriate species for planting.

### The built environment

**Your feedback:** There was a concern that the proposed number and scale of recreational facilities proposed may conflict with the integration of the scheme into its rural setting. It was also suggested that it might be useful to compare the scale of facilities proposed to those already existing at Farmoor Reservoir.

There was support for both concentrating operational and recreational facilities in the north-east quadrant of the site and for increased dispersal of facilities around the site.

It was suggested that woodland could be used to screen operational facilities and that planting more generally should be used to screen recreational facilities and car parking from local villages. It was also suggested the planting should be used to provide windbreaks for picnic and play areas.

**Our response:** The Stage 2 Report set out three scenarios to illustrate the levels of use that might be possible on the proposed site. The consultation conveyed a general preference for the lowest level of use illustrated (the medium low scenario), with a focus on provision for informal recreation. However, this preference was not exclusive. Based on responses to the consultation, we would provide facilities for water sports at the medium scale. A comparison between the scale of facilities proposed and those already existing at Farmoor Reservoir could be provided as part of future communications.

Concentrating facilities in the north-east quadrant of the site is consistent with the proposals set out during the Stage 2 consultation. Operational and recreational facilities would be clustered around the site access road, minimising the need for access to vehicles to the rest of the site. Increased dispersal of facilities was considered but, with the exception of the education and study centre, rejected on the basis that this would have negative implications for site security, accessibility, visual impact and the tranquillity of other areas of the site.

The use of planting for screening, and to provide windbreaks, will be developed as the design progresses. Through the adoption of sound design principles we will ensure that building designs are integrated into the landscape and respond to the local context.

### F1.3.11 Innovative design

#### Architecture and design

**Your feedback:** It was widely considered that buildings and, in particular, operational facilities should be hidden from view by landscaping and screening, including building some structures underground. Similarly, there was a concern that building heights should be minimised to reduce visual impact and that the facilities should not appear cluttered. Some respondents recognised that there may be an opportunity to provide at least one exemplar building design.

The consultation responses stressed the importance of high quality design for all operational and recreational buildings. There was a consensus that the overall approach to building design should take account of local character and the rural context and that modern architecture would not be appropriate. However, it was suggested that elements of innovative design might be appropriate for some facilities. This view is supported by the popularity of the wave-topped design for the water treatment works and the sample design showing the visitor centre built into the landscape. With regard to operational facilities, in particular, it was noted that noise and the need for lighting and fencing should be taken into account in the design.

**Our response:** We believe that not all buildings need be hidden from view to achieve integration into the landscape and we will ensure that all buildings respond to the local context through good design and consultation with local communities. Depending on the location and function of each individual building, a decision will be taken as to whether a building should be afforded greater screening or greater prominence, with landform and planting designed accordingly. Design principles will be further developed to determine how each building could be integrated into the landscape.

While all buildings should demonstrate high quality design, by acknowledging that some would be more prominent and with greater public use than others, such buildings can be designed with greater architectural expression, to complement and contribute positively to the landscape.

Minimising noise will be taken into account in the design and siting of operational buildings.

## Sustainability

**Your feedback:** Respondents emphasised the importance of implementing principles of sustainable building design, to minimise carbon emissions, maximising energy and water efficiency, explore the use of renewable energy sources, use renewable and locally sourced building materials and be responsive to climate change.

It was also suggested that exemplary sustainable building design could itself provide an educational resource.

**Our response:** We are committed to sustainable building design, including the principles identified in the feedback received. As the detailed design of each building is taken forward these principles will be considered and specific sustainability features built into the design.

### F1.3.12 Archaeology and geology

**Your feedback:** It was suggested that during construction the site would present a significant geological and archaeological resource, worthy of detailed study.

**Our response:** Detailed archaeological assessments will be carried out as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment. Further detailed geological assessments will be carried out during construction. Archaeological remains would be preserved in situ, wherever possible. A display of artefacts and geological materials found on-site may be provided in the visitor centre.

### F1.3.13 Site management

**Your feedback:** Respondents identified the need for effective management structures to be in place from the outset, to monitor and control visitor numbers and to ensure local participation. In addition, the need to produce an Environmental Management Plan, to take into account site safety and security, access arrangements, maintenance requirements, nature conservation objectives and the management of recreational facilities was identified. It was suggested that Thames Water should finance site maintenance and security, while fee-generating activities could contribute towards the costs of providing recreational facilities.

**Our response:** Decisions on management responsibilities have not yet been made, but will be based on sound estate management principles. Arrangements for site management will need to be discussed with those members of the local communities most affected by the proposals. We will continue to talk to the local people via established forums such as the parish councils, and the Local Panel.

Principles for the effective management of the site facilities and their use will be outlined in an Environmental Management Plan. Implementation will be monitored and any non-compliance with the plan addressed through control measures. It is likely that site wardens will be required. While it is not our intention to manage facilities to make a profit, it may be necessary to apply charges that cover operating and management costs, to ensure viability.

## F1.4 RECREATION AND ASSOCIATED USES

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### F1.4.1 Nature conservation

#### Role and scale

**Your feedback:** Responses to the consultation stressed the importance of enhancing biodiversity and exceeding the existing nature conservation potential of the site. It was clear that the majority of respondents felt that nature conservation should take precedence over a return to agriculture and provision of facilities for recreation.

**Our response:** The proposals outlined in the Stage 2 Report placed a strong emphasis on nature conservation. These proposals will be taken forward as part of any application for consent.

#### Access

**Your feedback:** While respondents recognised the need to provide access to nature conservation areas, the need to control access to tranquil areas and wildlife habitats was identified during the consultation. It was recommended that careful design and management should limit access to these areas. The role of nature trails and information boards, for education and site management, was noted and it was suggested that hides should be provided for bird and nature watching.

**Our response:** The Environmental Management Plan will set out the principles for appropriate access arrangements and measures to ensure that habitats reach their full biodiversity potential and provide for carefully managed public use, including quiet activities such as birdwatching. Areas with no public access or seasonally controlled access would be determined by the Environmental Impact Assessment and outlined in the Environmental Management Plan. Water sports would be limited to certain areas to safeguard wetland habitats. Opportunities for fishing would be provided at the settlement ponds only. Hides, nature trails and information boards would be provided on-site.

#### Stakeholder involvement

**Your feedback:** It was suggested that the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) should be engaged in an advisory role and as voluntary stewards.

**Our response:** BBOWT are members of an Ecology Forum set up by Thames Water to advise on ecological studies for the Environmental Impact Assessment and the habitats that would be created around the reservoir.

We have not yet decided how the site would be managed in the future, but the potential role of local and regional wildlife organisations in the management of habitats would be included in the consideration of future management options.

### F1.4.2 Walking, cycling and bridleways

#### Role and scale

**Your feedback:** It was suggested that the reservoir be used as a hub to link nearby towns and villages, with new footpaths, cycling routes and riding routes linking with existing footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways. Respondents emphasised the importance of maintaining the rural character and provision for quiet countryside walks, away from other recreational activities. It was suggested that some walking routes should be linked to nature areas. Respondents also asked what provision would be made for the maintenance of existing Rights of Way during construction.

It was suggested that a riding school, including arena and stabling facilities, would be required to replace the existing equestrian centre at the Malthouse Stud. It was also suggested that dedicated mountain bike trails should be provided (including along the embankments). Access for motorised scramble bikes was strongly opposed.

**Our response:** Provision for walking, cycling and riding routes is consistent with the design illustrated during the Stage 2 consultation. New footpaths, cycle routes and riding routes would provide links to local towns and villages and to existing Rights of Way, and national and local cycle routes. A comprehensive new network would provide opportunities for recreational walks, cycle rides and horse rides, as well as connecting local towns and villages. We will also consider how we could provide new paths off-site to maximise the potential for connectivity.

An Environmental Management Plan will specify access arrangements, including appropriate routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders to ensure that everyone can enjoy the full countryside potential of the site. Walking routes would provide access to nature areas; however, access to some areas would need to be restricted either permanently or seasonally.

Wherever possible, Rights of Way would be diverted or maintained during construction. However, the large scale of the construction works and the nature of the existing path network may make this difficult to achieve in practice. Consideration will be given to phased closure and re-opening of some paths, especially in the areas away from the main earth-works. Proposals to divert or stop-up existing Rights of Way will be included in any application for consent.

Consideration will be given to the provision of an equestrian centre in the north-west corner of the site, to the south of the existing bridleway, with space for stabling and grazing. It is considered that special provision for mountain biking would be contrary to the objective of providing opportunities for quiet recreation on-site. All motorised sports would be prohibited on the proposed site.

### Management and access

**Your feedback:** Respondents stressed the need for a management plan. Respondents identified a need for separate footpaths, cycle routes and riding routes and the provision of appropriate surfaces for each, giving consideration to the needs of disabled users and pushchair access. We were asked for details of arrangements for access to the reservoir crest and smaller coves located around the site.

It was suggested, for reasons of safety and amenity that a cycle route should not run alongside the realigned Hanney to Steventon road, and that safe access to the reservoir from the local villages should be provided. Continuing with the theme of safety, the need to ensure visibility and the illumination of footpaths and cycle routes was identified.

**Our response:** The Environmental Management Plan will specify access arrangements, including appropriate path surfaces and gradients to suit all users and ensure that there is no conflict between users and that provision is in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act (1995). The provision of separate routes for different users will be considered as the design is developed. A code of use and on-site management presence would provide a positive visitor experience.

Footpaths and cycle routes would provide access to the crest of the reservoir and the facilities for water sports. Access to smaller coves located close to local villages would only be provided by walking, cycling and riding routes. It is recommended that the maintenance track at the bottom of the embankment would provide a segregated cycle route with connections to East Hanney and Steventon, as an alternative to a route alongside the realigned Hanney to Steventon road.

It is our intention to provide safe access for all. The illumination of footpaths and cycle routes will be reviewed in the Environmental Impact Assessment, taking into account the desire to minimise light pollution and energy use and maintain the rural character of the site.

#### F1.4.3 Picnic, play and viewing areas

##### Role and scale

**Your feedback:** It was suggested that picnic and play areas should be located near to car parks and recreational facilities and on walking and cycling routes, while ensuring that a safe environment be created for children. It was also suggested that picnic, play and viewing areas could be provided on the proposed Wilts & Berks Canal route. Respondents stressed the need for high quality design.

It was suggested that play areas should be located in the north-east and southwest of the site, to be accessible from Abingdon and Wantage. It was also suggested that picnic, play and viewing areas should be separated from habitats in order to minimise disruption to wildlife and that provision be made to enable recycling at these locations to minimise litter and waste. Some respondents argued that the provision of picnic, play and viewing areas across the site would reduce the tranquillity of the site.

**Our response:** It is proposed that picnic and play areas be located around the main visitor area in the north-east and that viewing areas be located at promontories on the reservoir. Benches would be provided at picnic areas, viewing areas and other suitable resting places. Consideration will be given to providing picnic and play areas on the proposed Wilts & Berks Canal route as the design is developed. All picnic, play and viewing areas would incorporate principles of high quality design. Picnic and play areas would not be provided in more tranquil areas of the site or in areas for nature conservation. The Environmental Management Plan will seek to minimise waste and litter and maximise opportunities for recycling.

#### F1.4.4 Public art

##### Role and scale

**Your feedback:** There was little support for the provision of public art and it was widely considered that it would not form an essential feature of any scheme. Where provision of public art was favoured, it was suggested that a sculpture trail, making use of natural materials, could be located along the woodland walking routes and that the provision of floating art, on the reservoir surface, should be considered. It was also suggested that public art could be incorporated into utilitarian structures, such as road and footbridges over the Wilts & Berks Canal.

**Our response:** The provision of public art may be required by Vale of White Horse District Council planning policy. However, in response to feedback, provision would be limited. There could be scope to incorporate art into utilitarian structures and to work with local artists. Proposals for the provision of public art would be prepared in consultation with local communities and the Vale of White Horse District Council.

#### F1.4.5 Facilities for water sports

##### Activities

**Your feedback:** There was widespread support for the provision of facilities for water sports, including sailing, windsurfing and canoeing. Facilities for other sports were also suggested, including white-water canoeing, rowing, and kite surfing. There was agreement that motorised boats should be prohibited (with the exception of safety boats) and that a passenger ferry, for transportation or recreational use, would not be appropriate.

**Our response:** Based on the balance of consultation responses, we would provide facilities for sailing, windsurfing and canoeing at the medium scale. The medium scale would provide facilities for general club use, with some district to county level events. Facilities for sailing could be expanded to the medium high scale in the future, to provide facilities sufficient to act as a resource for Oxfordshire and surrounding counties. Any future changes to the scale of facilities provided would require a separate planning permission at that time.

Consideration will be given to other water sports, such as rowing and kite surfing; however, provision of facilities would be subject to issues of demand, safety and compatibility with other uses. The operation of the proposed reservoir would not generate white water, with the exception of the auxiliary drawdown channel, which we would expect to be used very infrequently and which would not be safe for use for white water sports.

Motorised activities would not be permitted on the reservoir, to preserve tranquillity and to ensure that the reservoir would be safer and more accessible for all other users. The water would be zoned to safeguard quieter areas for wildlife.

##### Level of use

**Your feedback:** Respondents offered a range of views on what might be the most appropriate level of provision for water sports. It was suggested that the reservoir should provide a resource of regional or even national significance, including facilities for major competitions and a centre of excellence for sailing. However, it was also considered that any provision for water sports should be limited to surrounding counties or local levels, to control traffic and visitor impacts. Some contended that water sports provision would not be appropriate to the rural setting.

It was suggested that the scale and type of water sports provision should take account of existing facilities for water sports locally and, in particular, the likely impact on facilities at Farmoor Reservoir and the River Thames.

**Our response:** Based on responses to the consultation, facilities for water sports would be provided at the medium scale, with the potential to expand facilities for sailing to the medium high scale in the future. Provision of facilities beyond the medium high scale, to provide facilities sufficient to act as a resource at the regional or national scale, was considered inappropriate. Provision at the regional or national scale would have significant additional traffic impacts and would be contrary to established land use planning policy, which seeks to protect the amenity and tranquil character of the area.

As the scheme is developed, the impact of provision for water sports at the proposed reservoir, on existing local facilities, will be considered and suitable measures identified to address any adverse impacts and to maximise any potential benefits.

### Location

**Your feedback:** With regard to the location of the sailing facilities, it was suggested that the position of the facilities proposed in the Stage 2 Report, facing into the prevailing winds, would result in the risk of grounding boats during high winds.

In addition, it was suggested that an alternative location for the water sports facilities should be considered. It was proposed that a location on either the south-east or south-west shore would ensure easier launching. It was also suggested that relocating the water sports facilities should contribute to the increased dispersal of facilities around the site and that a location on the southern edge of the reservoir would offer easier access from the nearby Didcot Parkway railway station.

Some people asked whether pipelines within the reservoir would restrict the anchoring of boats, off the north-east shore.

**Our response:** It is recommended that, as the design is developed, the proposed location of the water sports facilities would be moved approximately 200 metres south-west (clockwise), as this is a better location for water sports due to the prevailing south-westerly wind. This relocation also provides better separation between the water sports facilities and the proposed cove and visitor centre.

The relocation of some facilities to the south-east or south-west corners of the reservoir was considered, however, this option was discounted, as the dispersal of facilities would have negative implications for site security, accessibility, visual impact and the tranquillity of other areas of the site. Operational and recreational facilities would be clustered around the site access road, in the north-east quadrant, as shown in the Stage 2 Report.

There would be pipelines within the reservoir, which would restrict where boats could be anchored. This will be considered in more detail as the design is developed.

### Access and management arrangements

**Your feedback:** Respondents were concerned that the proposed facilities for water sports should include provision for all ages and abilities, for disabled people and for groups such as the Sea Scouts.

There was a concern that any boat club should be for water sports use only and should not be used as an entertainment venue. It was suggested that limited commercial activities, such as boat-hire and teaching, would be appropriate to ensure viability. It was stressed that facilities should not be used to generate profits for Thames Water. It was advised that affordable access to facilities and opportunities for boat hire should be ensured, to encourage wider participation. Some suggested that local residents should receive free access to the facilities.

The opportunity to co-ordinate facilities at the proposed reservoir with already existing facilities at Farmoor Reservoir was also suggested; for example, providing opportunities for beginners at Farmoor and access for more advanced users at the proposed reservoir. It was suggested that a management plan for any new water sports facilities, should be prepared in consultation with local sailing clubs and relevant regional and national organisations.

The need to control access to water sports facilities and launching areas for safety reasons and to avoid conflicts between different users was noted. It was also asked to what extent summer drawdown (when the water level is lower) might restrict access for water sports.

**Our response:** Access arrangements and opportunities for all potential users, including facilities for disabled people, will be outlined in the Design and Access Statement, which will be submitted as part of any application for consent, and in the specification for water sports provision, offered either through a lessee or directly by Thames Water. All facilities will be required to be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (1995).

While it is not our intention to manage facilities to make a profit, it may be necessary to apply charges to cover operating and maintenance costs, to ensure viability. The cost of membership and access to facilities and boat hire has not been determined at this stage. This would depend on who would operate the facilities and the terms of the lease with any third party operator.

Opportunities to co-ordinate facilities at the proposed reservoir with already existing facilities at Farmoor Reservoir have not been considered at this stage. This and other potential management issues will be considered as the design is developed, in consultation with local sailing clubs relevant regional and national organisations.

The Environmental Management Plan will outline areas with limited public access, to meet health and safety requirements and to avoid conflicts of interest between different users. The design of the water sports facilities would allow for access to the water at different water levels, including during summer drawdown.

#### F1.4.6 Education and study centre

##### Role and scale

**Your feedback:** There was support for an education and study centre to cater not only for school visits but also for all ages including local interest groups and higher education (to enable field research). A range of topics for study was suggested, including nature conservation, energy efficiency and water conservation. It was also suggested that site access should be provided during construction, for educational purposes.

There was, however, some concern about the number of visitors, including the number of school visits, and how these would be managed. It was suggested that early liaison with local schools and conservation groups would be helpful in designing the education and study centre facilities. The need for funding for long-term maintenance of facilities was also raised.

**Our response:** It is recommended that the education and study centre be provided at the medium scale to reflect the preference indicated, in response to the Stage 2 consultation. This would include research facilities, facilities for informal and school visits and access to nature conservation areas. The opportunity to provide access to the site during construction for education purposes will be discussed with the contractor and considered in the Construction Method Statement.

Consultation with potential users and local and regional nature conservation organisations will continue as the design is developed. The management of school visits will be considered in consultation with the Local Education Authority.

## Location

**Your feedback:** There was support for the location of the education and study centre to the south of the reservoir close to nature conservation areas, with parking provided.

**Our response:** It is recommended that the proposed location for the education and study centre, to the south of the reservoir be retained, with access from the realigned Hanney to Steventon road. It is proposed that a car park be provided next to the education and study centre, replacing the smaller car parks originally proposed close to East Hanney and Steventon.

## F1.4.7 Visitor centre

### Role and scale

**Your feedback:** A range of functions for the visitor centre were suggested, including providing information about the reservoir and recreation facilities, nature conservation, geology, palaeontology, archaeology and local history of the area. Other facilities suggested included a café, toilets and a shop. The importance of providing facilities for disabled people was noted.

There were also concerns about visitor numbers, litter and the impact on the natural setting. Some respondents suggested that a café and shop would be inappropriate. Others argued that any visitor centre would be inappropriate.

**Our response:** It is recommended that the visitor centre be provided at the medium scale. The range of information provided at the visitor centre will be decided, following further consultation with local communities. However, it is likely that it would include information on the operation of the reservoir, water efficiency, nature conservation and opportunities for recreation on-site. Since the Stage 2 consultation, it has been suggested that a higher number of visitors should be expected and that consideration should be given to inclusion of a café/shop.

Facilities for disabled people will be outlined in the Design and Access Statement, which will be submitted as part of any application for consent. All facilities will be required to be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (1995).

## Location

**Your feedback:** It was suggested that the visitor centre should be further separated from the water sports facilities, to minimise conflicts of interest. There was a concern that noise from the A34 would impact the visitor centre in its proposed location in the north-east quadrant. It was suggested that the visitor centre might be combined with the education and study centre to the south of the reservoir.

**Our response:** It is recommended that the visitor centre be retained in the north-east quadrant where it would be located close to the main car park and the main recreational facilities. Locating the visitor centre near to the education and study centre, to the south of the site, would increase vehicle movements and visitor numbers in an area proposed for nature conservation. Screening mounds and planting are proposed to minimise the impact of noise from the A34. It is proposed that the proposed location water sports facilities would be moved approximately 200 metres south, to increase separation between the water sports facilities and visitor centre.

### F1.4.8 Fishing

#### Location

**Your feedback:** There was a range of views on the location for fishing. Some respondents suggested stocking the reservoir. It was also suggested that the lagoons or settlement ponds could be stocked to provide opportunities for fishing.

**Our response:** It is recommended that only the settlement ponds would be stocked with fish. The proposed location of the settlement ponds is determined by construction requirements and is consistent with our aim to concentrate recreational facilities in the north-east corner of the site. During construction and operation the settlement ponds would capture run-off from the site.

The reservoir itself would not be stocked in order to reduce potential adverse effects on water quality. Fishing would not be allowed at the lagoons, in order to maximise opportunities for nature conservation.

#### Management

**Your feedback:** Specific suggestions were made with regard to appropriate fish stocks. It was suggested that the design should ensure access for different age groups and abilities. It was also suggested that local clubs should be consulted on specific proposals. Some respondents were concerned that nature conservation objectives should not be adversely affected.

**Our response:** Detailed proposals for stocking the settlement ponds would be prepared in consultation with relevant local, regional and national organisations, to ensure that opportunities for fishing would complement existing facilities in the area.

Access arrangements and opportunities for all potential users, including facilities for disabled people, will be outlined in the Design and Access Statement. The Environmental Management Plan will outline measures to ensure that opportunities for fishing would not have an adverse effect on nature conservation, such as limiting access during the breeding season for birds.

### F1.4.9 Outdoor health and fitness

#### Activities

**Your feedback:** Respondents suggested outdoor health and fitness facilities including a lido, golf course, jogging track and fitness area, to meet the needs of both adults and children. Other respondents suggested that formal provision was not necessary for activities such as jogging and that existing provision in the local area should not be duplicated.

**Our response:** It is recommended that the design would incorporate a 'trim trail' or other such facilities for outdoor fitness, in the north-east quadrant. Any facilities for outdoor health and fitness would take into account the site's natural setting. Proposals for a lido or golf course are not considered appropriate on the basis that such activities would be likely to attract high numbers of visitors.

### F1.4.10 Facilities for young people

#### Activities

**Your feedback:** There was support for specific provision to meet the needs of local young people. Suggestions included provision of a range of sports facilities and for activities such as skateboarding and an adventure playground. Consultation with the local authority and local youth groups was advised, to identify needs in the area.

**Our response:** The scale of facilities would need to accord with the focus on water-based activities and the rural setting. The provision of specific facilities for young people in or close to the villages would be considered if a need is demonstrated through the Local Panel and via continuing communications with parish councils, and supported by the local planning authority.

#### F1.4.11 Car parking

##### Location

**Your feedback:** There was support for a main car park located close to the concentration of facilities in the north-east quadrant. Some respondents suggested that the smaller car parks located near the villages should be removed from the scheme, to minimise overflow parking in the villages. There was also concern expressed that there might be need to provide more parking to meet demand.

**Our response:** It is recommended that the smaller car parks located close to Steventon and East Hanney would be replaced with one car park (located next to the proposed education and study centre) to the south of the site, to minimise overflow parking and disturbance in the villages, as this location is the furthest from local villages. In addition, parking would be provided for local access to nature conservation from the A338 in the north-west of the site.

Additional studies into recreation demand (and resulting visitor numbers and car parking requirements) will be carried out, based partly on experience at other reservoirs. Temporary overspill parking would be made available for periods of peak usage to prevent overspill parking in the local villages. The impacts of the proposed car parks will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment and Transport Assessment, and measures to minimise those impacts identified.

##### Management

**Your feedback:** It was suggested that the main car park should include parking for disabled people, close to the visitor centre, and provision for bicycle parking. It was suggested that coach parking should be limited to restrict the numbers of large groups visiting the site at any one time. It was also suggested that planting and landscaping should be used to screen the car parks from local villages. There was support for free parking (to minimise parking in local villages) and for parking permits for local residents.

**Our response:** Three car parks would be provided on the proposed site, to the north-east, north-west and the south of the reservoir. All would include toilets and secure parking for bicycles. Parking for disabled people will be provided in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and will be detailed in the Design and Access Statement. Coach parking would be provided at the car parks in the south and north-east to encourage more sustainable travel. Screening and planting would be used to minimise the visual impact of each car park and boat parking at the sailing club. Charging for car parking has not been considered at this stage. However, some charges may be necessary to cover operating and maintenance costs. Incentives for car use, such as parking permits for local residents, would not be considered, as they would be inconsistent with our sustainability objectives.

#### F1.4.12 Public transport

##### Provision

**Your feedback:** There was support for promoting the use of public transport and, in particular, bus services from Oxford, Didcot, Abingdon and Wantage, including a possible Park and Ride scheme. It was suggested that bus services could be subsidised using revenues from car parking charges.

**Our response:** Further consideration will be given to options for public transport links and reducing car use, for example through encouraging car sharing, or charging by the vehicle rather than by the number of people in it. Greater emphasis will be placed on pedestrian and cycle links to the site, including links to bus stops in local villages and existing national and local cycle routes.

#### F1.4.13 Other activities

##### Provision

**Your feedback:** There was some support for the outdoor events arena included in the proposals illustrated as part of the Stage 2 consultation, including use for summer concerts and winter ice-skating. However, there was significant opposition with particular reference to visitor numbers, noise and any night-time use.

It was also suggested that provision could be made for the following: camping (although there were concerns about attracting trespassers); night-time access for astronomy walks; kite flying; and climbing. It was reported that the North Berks Radio Model Aircraft Society currently operates on the reservoir site.

**Our response:** It is recommended that non water-based recreation facilities be kept to a minimum in order to limit overall visitor numbers, while allowing provision for water sports at the district to county level. As such, it is recommended that an events arena and facilities for climbing would not be included on-site.

Further consideration will be given to the provision of limited facilities for camping in the area to the east of the education and study centre in the south but these proposals will be assessed as part of the EIA. Trespassers would be prevented from accessing the site. Proposals for night-time access will be considered in the Design and Access Statement and the Environmental Management Plan. Kite flying would be confined to appropriate, less ecologically sensitive areas.

Consideration will be given to relocating the North Berks Radio Model Aircraft Society off-site, where a suitable site could be identified. It is considered that relocating the society on-site would not be possible, as this would require the society to operate closer to the local communities and new and existing wildlife habitats.

## F1.5 OTHER ISSUES

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### F1.5.1 Consultation

#### Stage 2 consultation

**Your feedback:** A number of responses were received in direct reference to the management and structure of the Stage 2 consultation. Respondents asked why feedback forms were not mailed to all local residents and why exhibitions were not held in Grove. Concern was also expressed that local businesses had not received any formal consultation. The importance of demonstrating how consultation responses were considered and influenced proposals was highlighted.

It was recognised the consultation addressed a number of concerns and clarified many issues relating to the proposed development.

**Our response:** Thousands of local residents were sent a leaflet inviting them to the Stage 2 public exhibitions. Local and national newspapers, television and radio also reported that the exhibitions were taking place. As the exhibitions provided a great deal of information (for example, through drawings, maps and a video), we wanted people to come to the exhibition as the feedback forms were asking for views on specific aspects that could only be provided if the respondent had viewed the consultation materials. The feedback forms were available at the public exhibitions for people to either complete there or take away (and return using a Freepost envelope). The forms were also available on request and were advertised in the leaflet and website with Freephone and email contact details, and via our Customer Centre. In total approximately 1,500 local businesses within the local area were contacted directly via the newsletter inviting them to the exhibitions.

We have made all our consultation materials available on our website and will continue to keep local people updated via a variety of means as set out in our 'Strategy for Community and Stakeholder Involvement' e.g. through the Local Panel, meetings with parish councils and use of local newsletters.

This report demonstrates how consultation responses have been received, how we have considered them and consequently how they have influenced the proposals to date. Ove Arup and Partners were appointed to advise on the approach to consultation and analyse feedback from both Stage 1 and Stage 2, to ensure that responses have been provided to all of the issues raised.

Prior to Stage 1, we discussed potential exhibition venues with officers at the Vale of White Horse District Council. We wanted to make sure that our approach to consultation was in keeping with the Council's (then Draft) Statement of Community Involvement. The venues for Stage 1 provided opportunities at the two nearest large towns (Abingdon and Wantage) as well as two village venues that had ample parking and were in close proximity to the preferred site (East Hanney and Steventon). In response to requests made at Stage 1, we added two further venues into the Stage 2 exhibition timetable at Drayton and Marcham. No formal request was made to visit Grove during Stage 1 but we will consider this request for any future exhibitions.

## Future consultation

**Your feedback:** A number of suggestions were made to inform any future consultation, including:

- Focus on local views.
- Consultation with the relevant organisations at the national, regional and local levels.
- Use of independent public opinion polls and mediation, funded by Thames Water.
- Better engage young people.
- Use of a three-dimensional model, to better illustrate the scale of development.
- Comparison with the largest reservoirs in the UK, in terms of size, traffic once completed and scale of facilities for recreation.
- The publication of supporting technical documents.

**Our response:** We are committed to consulting members of the public wherever possible. We will continue to seek the views of the local communities, on specific aspects of the scheme, via the Local Panel and meetings with parish and town councils.

The Strategy for Community and Stakeholder Involvement sets out which national, regional and local organisations will be consulted at each stage of consultation. As part of the next stage of consultation, technical stakeholders will have the opportunity to comment on the relevant draft chapters of the Environmental Statement, prior to submission.

We do not believe that independent polling or mediation would benefit the consultation process. Independent facilitators from Dialogue by Design were used to run two days of workshops, as part of the Stage 2 consultation.

Any application for consent will be subject to a statutory public examination, ensuring that local people have had the opportunity to formally comment on the submission documents, before consent could be granted. In addition, if the scheme were to be considered at Public Inquiry, participants would have the opportunity to raise their concerns before an independent inspector, who would make recommendations to the determining body in light of the evidence presented.

As part of our efforts to engage more young people, invitations to the Stage 2 exhibition were sent to local schools, and presentations were made by members of the project team at Didcot Girls' School and St Birinus School (also in Didcot). We have also addressed a meeting of the Vale Strategic Partnership.

The Stage 2 exhibition included a short film, showing what the reservoir might look like in the surrounding landscape. Three-dimensional digital modelling was used to illustrate the proposed reservoir from a variety of viewpoints, including existing roads and other features, as well as how the landscape might change over time.

We will consider providing a three-dimensional physical model of the proposed reservoir, if it was helpful in improving public understanding.

A comparison with other large reservoirs in the UK, in terms of size, traffic once completed and scale of facilities for recreation, is being undertaken to assist in defining provision on the site.

A number of supporting technical documents were made available to technical stakeholders in order to assist them in considering the Stage 2 Report. These documents were made available at the Stage 2 exhibition, local libraries and Local Service Points and are still available on our website. They did not form part of the Stage 2 consultation and were provided as background information for technical stakeholders.

## The Local Panel

**Your feedback:** More information on the Local Panel was requested, including:

- Who will attend the Local Panel.
- Who will chair the panel and set the agenda.
- How often the Local Panel will meet.
- Where panel meetings will be held.
- How panel meetings will be reported.
- How the Local Panel will be funded.

It was suggested that the Local Panel should engage young people, local interest groups and technical specialists.

**Our response:** Since the Stage 2 consultation, the Local Panel has been established. The Local Panel is a forum independent of Thames Water and discusses issues and concerns raised by local people. Panel members are selected from local volunteers, to ensure that a range of views and interests are represented, including those of young people. Relevant members of our project team attend as required. Representatives of local interest groups and stakeholder organisations may also be invited, as appropriate.

The Local Panel has decided the frequency of meetings, location and chair. The Local Panel has set up a website [www.utmrd.net](http://www.utmrd.net) where more information can be found. Thames Water meets the costs of running the Local Panel.

## F1.5.2 Planning

**Your feedback:** Respondents were keen to understand more about the process through which any application for consent would be considered and the implications for any planning obligation or equivalent undertakings.

**Our response:** We will apply for planning permission via the most appropriate route available at the time of submission i.e. the Secretary of State for Defra or an Infrastructure Planning Commission. The decision making process would take account of local, regional and national policy requirements and would include a formal public consultation to enable the views of the local community and stakeholders to be expressed, prior to any public examination.

Appropriate measures to minimise the effects of the development will be identified as part of any application for consent. These measures would be discussed with the local authority, and planning conditions and a planning obligation (or an equivalent undertaking) would be agreed with the appropriate bodies to ensure the satisfactory implementation of the measures. Any planning obligation would be prepared in accordance with Circular 05/2005: Planning Obligations, which provides guidance on the use of planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

### F1.5.3 Ownership

**Your feedback:** We were asked if we would retain ownership of the site post-construction. Some respondents wanted to know how long we would expect the reservoir to be operational. There was a concern that any surplus land should not be sold to private developers.

**Our response:** We plan to acquire land required for the development and operation of the reservoir and its associated uses only.

We would retain ownership of the site during the operational life of the reservoir. A range of factors will influence the operational life of the reservoir but we expect it to be not less than 100 years. However, it is anticipated that the reservoir would represent a significant and strategically important piece of infrastructure in the long-term.

### F1.5.4 Costs

**Your feedback:** Many respondents wanted to know how much the project would cost, if any sources of public funding would be available and what impact it would have on customers' bills.

With regard to proposals for landscape, nature conservation and building design and recreation and associated uses, we were asked if these proposals were included in the overall budget for the scheme and how ongoing maintenance and management costs would be met. We were also asked if we could demonstrate that no unnecessary costs would be passed on to customers.

We were also asked if Thames Water would consider supporting local projects, such as the Steventon Church project.

**Our response:** The cost of the planning, design and construction of the reservoir is estimated at approximately £1 billion. We would take out loans to finance the costs of the project. The loans would then be repaid with money received from all of our water supply customers' bills. We would expect the proposed development to have a relatively small impact on customers' bills, as the investment would be repaid over a long period of time. The size of customers' bills must be approved by the Secretary of State, in consultation with Ofwat, and through the price review system.

We have a statutory obligation to consider provision of facilities for recreation and associated uses, as part of the scheme and, as such, one of the aims of the Stage 2 consultation was to allow the local community and stakeholder organisations to indicate what scale and mix of facilities for recreation and associated uses they would like provided. Proposals for landscape, nature conservation and building design and recreation and associated uses are included in the overall cost estimate for the scheme.

Mechanisms for funding ongoing maintenance and management of the site and facilities would be considered, prior to any application for consent.

Government policy requires that any financial contributions must be directly related to the proposed development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development. Support for local projects would be required to meet these criteria.

### F1.5.5 Other secondary impacts

**Your feedback:** Other issues raised by respondents included the impact of the reservoir on television and mobile phone reception.

**Our response:** The impact of the reservoir on television and mobile phone reception would be considered as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment.



<b>Auxiliary drawdown channel</b>	A channel specifically designed to reduce the reservoir level and therefore minimise the risk of uncontrolled water releases if problems should arise.
<b>Bio-fuel crops</b>	Bio-fuel defined broadly is solid, liquid, or gas fuel consisting of, or derived from, biomass provided by crops such as pollarded willow or oilseed rape.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.
<b>Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)</b>	A strategy prepared for a local area aimed at conserving and enhancing biological diversity.
<b>Community Impact Assessment</b>	An assessment, undertaken with the relevant police authority, of the potential impact in relation to issues of site security and safety.
<b>Construction Method Statement</b>	It is important that construction personnel follow good environmental practice to minimise and mitigate the impacts of the construction phase, particularly on local communities. A Construction Method Statement is designed to ensure this happens. This may include, but not be limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-site management and housekeeping</li> <li>• Arrangements for workforce accommodation</li> <li>• Working hours and days</li> <li>• Principles of health and safety management</li> <li>• Access routes and control of traffic</li> <li>• Principle construction works to be carried out</li> <li>• Phasing of the construction</li> <li>• Flood risk management proposals</li> <li>• Controls for protection of ecological and archaeological features</li> <li>• Controls for the protection of air and water quality</li> <li>• Noise and vibration controls.</li> </ul>
<b>Drawdown</b>	The reduction in water level resulting from release of water.
<b>Ecology Forum</b>	A group set up to discuss ecological issues in relation to UTMRD, including a large range of national and local bodies, which meet on a regular basis.
<b>Economic Impact Report</b>	Report of a study exploring the gross and net effects of a development or project, usually in terms of changes in employment turnover and measures of economic value.
<b>Energy Assessment</b>	An assessment of the energy demand of the development, which should demonstrate how energy needs would be met through applying in sequence the following factors: using less energy, using renewable energy and using energy efficiently.
<b>Environment Agency</b>	The government's main statutory body with responsibility for advising on environmental and flood risk management policy, and setting and enforcing environmental standards in England and Wales.
<b>Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)</b>	Required under Directive 85/377 EEC (as amended by Directive 97/11/EC) to carry out an assessment of the impact of a proposed development that is likely to have significant effects on the environment, before consent is granted. EIA in full must be carried out in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999.
<b>Environmental Management Plan</b>	The Environmental Management Plan explains how the measures identified through the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process would be implemented once construction of the reservoir begins. For example, it may consider measures to minimise noise of construction vehicles. As well as construction, the plan also covers operational and recreational elements. The operational aspects relate to management of the water in the reservoir, its quality and any environmental issues arising from plant operation. The recreational elements of the plan cover maintenance activities including grounds maintenance, habitat management, visitor management, footpath maintenance, stock management, and management of recreational activities.

<b>Flood compensation</b>	Environment Agency requirement for the provision of compensation flood storage.
<b>Local Panel</b>	A group of stakeholders brought together to function over a prolonged period so as to influence the development of solutions.
<b>Intake-outfall</b>	Structure through which water would be abstracted from the river and through which stored water would be released back into the river.
<b>Planning obligations</b>	Planning obligations (or 'Section 106 agreements') are legal agreements negotiated between local planning authorities and developers. This type of agreement is normally used to agree the funding and implementation of certain extra measures related to the development that will be of benefit to the local community and/or local area in general.
<b>Price Review System</b>	Every five years Ofwat determines the price that customers pay for the water and sewerage services they receive. Price limits are set on the basis of Business Plans, submitted by water companies. These plans set out in detail the levels of service and improvements that companies will deliver.
<b>Stage 1 Needs and Alternatives</b>	UTMRD work on future needs for water and alternative measures available to meet the deficit.
<b>Stage 2 Preferred Scheme and Design Options</b>	UTMRD work on the preferred reservoir scheme and design options available.
<b>Strategy for Community and Stakeholder Involvement</b>	The Strategy for Stakeholder and Community Involvement outlines the opportunities for involvement, as well as our approach to community and stakeholder involvement at each stage of the development process.
<b>Sustainability</b>	Sustainability is essentially about protecting and enhancing the environment, and careful use of natural resources whilst considering today's needs and those of future generations.
<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b>	A single appraisal tool that provides for the systematic identification and evaluation of economic, social and environmental impacts of a proposal.
<b>Transport Assessment</b>	An assessment of the potential impact of a development on the flows in transport networks, together with a consideration of public transport, pedestrian and cyclist access arrangements.
<b>Travel Plan</b>	A Travel Plan is a package of measures produced by companies to encourage people to use alternatives to single-occupancy car-use. Such a plan for example, could include: car sharing schemes; a commitment to improve cycling facilities; a dedicated bus service, and restricted car parking allocations.
<b>Upper Thames Major Resource Development (UTMRD)</b>	Term specific to this study.
<b>Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP)</b>	A water company's plan for supplying water to meet demand over a 25-year period.
<b>Wastewater treatment works</b>	Plant where wastewater is treated to a standard suitable for discharge.
<b>Water treatment works</b>	Plant where water is treated to the water standards set by the Drinking Water Inspectorate.



## Getting in Touch

You can contact Thames Water 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We record all our calls to ensure that we always give you quality service.

[0845 9200 800](tel:08459200800)

Quoting reference BB733419 or 'Upper Thames Major Resource Development'

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If you prefer you can write to us at: Thames Water, PO Box 436, Swindon SN38 1TU

Visit the Thames Water website on: [www.thameswater.co.uk/utmrd](http://www.thameswater.co.uk/utmrd)

To request any UTMRD documents please call freephone: [0800 1078 001](tel:08001078001)

Any comments you have about this report or related services are welcome. You can write to us at the above address or alternatively e-mail: [customer.feedback@thameswater.co.uk](mailto:customer.feedback@thameswater.co.uk)

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