

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Martin Grant Homes (MGH) and Harcourt Developments (the "Applicant") are seeking to obtain planning permission for a residential development and associated infrastructure (the "Proposed Development") on Land on Hampton Green, Northamptonshire (the "Application Site").

1.1.2 This Environmental Statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application for the:-

**"The erection of up to 525 dwellings with associated infrastructure, open space and new vehicular access to Newport Pagnell Road."**

1.1.3 The planning application seeks outline planning consent with matters of landscaping, access, layout, scale and appearance reserved for future determination.

1.1.4 The Application Site is situated within the administrative area of two local authorities. The northern section of the site is located in Northampton Borough Council (NBC) and the section in the south is within South Northamptonshire Council (SNC). The location of the Application Site and the boundary line for the two Local Planning Authorities is shown on **Figure 1.1** and the extent of the Application Site is shown on **Figure 1.2**. Through pre-planning consultation it has been determined that both of these Planning Authorities will be a determining Authority. Therefore, they will determine the acceptability of the section of the Proposed Development which is located within its own District boundary. The same planning application documents (Environmental Statement and other supporting documents and plans) have been submitted to both of these Local Planning Authorities.

### 1.2 EIA REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

1.2.1 An Environmental Statement (ES) is a document that sets out the findings of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). An EIA is a process for identifying the likely significance of environmental effects (beneficial or adverse) arising from a Proposed Development, by comparing the existing environmental conditions prior to development (the baseline) with the environmental conditions during/following the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of a development should it proceed. The EIA is carried out prior to the submission of a planning application.

1.2.2 In May 2017, the 2011 Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations were updated. However, in Regulation 76 of the amended EIA Regulations, certain transitional provisions are outlined. It states that:

"(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (4), the 2011 Regulations are revoked.

(2) Notwithstanding the revocation in paragraph (1), the 2011 Regulations continue to apply where before the commencement of these Regulations –

(a) an Applicant, appellant or qualifying body, as the case may be, has submitted an environmental statement or requested a scoping opinion; ..."

1.2.3 A request for a Scoping Opinion was made to both Northampton Borough Council (NBC) and South Northamptonshire Council (SBC) in January 2017 and therefore this application complies with Regulation 76. The detail of this request and the Scoping

Opinions from both Councils are discussed in more detail in Chapter 2 of this Environmental Statement (ES). Due to this Regulation, the statutory requirements for carrying out this EIA, the contents of the ES and the procedures for determining planning applications for 'EIA Development' remain those set out within the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 as amended (the "EIA Regulations").

1.2.4 Where an application is made for planning permission for EIA development the local planning authority (LPA) is not permitted under the EIA Regulations to grant planning permission unless they have first taken the relevant environmental information into consideration.

1.2.5 In order to determine if it is necessary to undertake an EIA to accompany a planning application, Regulation 5 of the EIA Regulations makes provision for an applicant to apply to a LPA for a 'Screening Opinion'; in the absence of a submitted EIA, Regulation 7 of the EIA Regulations provides for LPAs to screen a planning application on receipt if it appears to require a screening opinion.

### **Screening**

1.2.6 The EIA Regulations require that any proposed development falling within the categories set out within Schedule 2 should be considered as 'EIA Development' where the development is considered likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of such factors as its nature, size or location (Regulation 2).

1.2.7 The Proposed Development falls within the category of "Infrastructure Projects" under Schedule 2, paragraph 10 (a-c). Given that the Application Site exceeds the screening threshold of a development area in excess of 5 hectares, also set out within Schedule 2, it was considered appropriate to screen the proposals with both of the Local Planning Authorities to determine if an EIA is required to be undertaken. A formal request for a Screening Opinion was made on behalf of the applicant to both SNC and NBC on 1st June 2016 (see **Appendix 1.1**).

1.2.8 Northampton Borough Council issued their formal Screening Opinion on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2016 (see **Appendix 1.2**) which concluded that an EIA was required for this proposal due to the fact that it fell within Category 10(b), Infrastructure Projects, of Schedule 2 of the Regulations.

1.2.9 The Screening Response also includes an opinion on which environmental topics should be included within the EIA. The response concludes that this site forms part of a larger site allocated under Policy N6 of West Northampton Joint Core Strategy. Whilst this proposal does not exceed the criteria of 1,000 dwellings as defined by the Planning Policy Guidance, NBC consider that the cumulative impact should be considered within the EIA as it has the potential to result in significant effects upon the environment.

1.2.10 NBC advise that Ecological and Arboricultural Surveys are required to accompany the planning application, but due to the cumulative impacts of this scheme these details form part of the EIA.

1.2.11 South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) issued their formal Screening Opinion on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2016 (see **Appendix 1.2**) which concludes that an EIA was required for this proposal due to the fact that it fell within Category 10 (b), Urban Development Projects, of Schedule 2 of the Regulations.

1.2.12 This initial opinion was review by SNC and a second Screening Opinion was issued on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016. The advice stated below comes from the revised Screening Opinion.

**SBC confirm that an EIA is required for this proposal as it considers it to be a Schedule 2 10(b) as defined by the Regulations. However, only the environmental topics of Landscape and Visual, Transport and Ecology and Nature Conservation should be considered within an EIA. They should be within the Environmental Statement due to the cumulative impacts of adjacent developments rather than their being the possibility of a site specific significant impact. All other environmental topics which need to be assessed for this proposal can be satisfactorily assessed through standalone reports.**

1.2.13 Accordingly, the Proposed Development has been deemed EIA Development and an ES is required to be submitted to accompany the planning application.

### **Scoping**

1.2.14 In order to determine the scope of an EIA, the EIA Regulations make provision for, but do not statutorily require, an applicant to request that the LPA provide a written opinion as to the information to be provided within the ES. Details of the scoping exercise carried out with regards the Proposed Development is set out in **Chapter 2: Assessment Scope and Methodology**.

## **1.3 STRUCTURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT**

1.3.1 This ES comprises studies on each of the aspects of the environment identified as likely to be significantly affected by the Proposed Development (the 'technical chapters'), which are supported with figures and technical appendices where appropriate.

1.3.2 This ES is structured as follows:

- **Environmental Statement: Main Report** - Comprises the main volume of the ES, including 'general chapters' that describe the EIA context, provide a description of the Application Site and Proposed Development, and set out the scope of the ES, followed by the 'technical chapters' for each environmental theme with the associated figures and appendices and concluding with a summary.
- **Environmental Statement: Non-Technical Summary (NTS)** - this provides a concise summary of the ES identifying the likely significant environmental effects and the measures proposed to mitigate or to avoid adverse effects of the Proposed Development.

1.3.3 The content of the ES Main Report comprises:

- Chapter 1 Introduction
- Chapter 2 Assessment Scope and Methodology
- Chapter 3 The Application Site
- Chapter 4 The Proposed Development and Alternatives Considered
- Chapter 5 Landscape and Visual Impact
- Chapter 6 Transport & Access
- Chapter 7 Ecology & Nature Conservation
- Chapter 8 Summary

1.3.4 For continuity, the figures and appendices are arranged and presented using the same reference numbers as the chapters as a means of providing supportive background and technical information.

**The EIA Consultant Team**

1.3.5 The ES has been coordinated and managed by Pegasus Group Limited. The consultants who have contributed to the preparation of this ES are referenced in the project directory at the front of this document.

**1.4 OTHER DOCUMENTS**

1.4.1 A number of other documents have been submitted to South Northamptonshire Council and Northampton Borough Council as part of, and accompanying, the planning application. These are set out in the covering letter to the planning application and summarised below:

- Planning Application Form;
- Planning Application Drawings;
- Planning Statement;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Traffic Assessment;
- Travel Plan;
- Flood Risk Assessment (FRA);
- Phase 1 Habitat Survey (inc Bats, Dormouse, Reptiles and GCN Survey);
- Statement of Community Engagement (SCI);
- Tree Survey and AIA;
- Archaeology Desk Based Assessment;
- Noise Assessment;
- Air Quality Assessment;
- Ground Conditions Phase I and II;
- Landscape Strategy;
- Utilities Report; and
- Viability Report.

**1.5 ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT AVAILABILITY AND COMMENTS****Availability**

1.5.1 This ES should be made available by both Local Planning Authorities for public viewing during normal office hours. For details of where they can be viewed and the times they are available will be available from

- Northampton Borough Council's Planning Department, who can be contacted by Telephone on 0300 330 7000; and
- South Northamptonshire Borough Council's Planning Department, who can be contacted by telephone on 01327 322249

1.5.2 The ES and planning application documents may also be available via the each of the Council's website once the planning application has been registered:

- Website for NBC: [www.northants.gov.uk](http://www.northants.gov.uk)
- Website for SNC: [www.snc.planning-register.co.uk/](http://www.snc.planning-register.co.uk/)

1.5.3 Alternatively, the ES may be purchased, the costs for which are set out below:

- Main Report - £75
- Non-Technical Summary (NTS) - Free of charge

- Digital copies of the above documents on a CD - £10

1.5.4 For copies of any of the above please contact Pegasus Group (quoting reference CAM.0897) at the following address:

Pegasus Group Limited  
Suite 4,  
Pioneer House,  
Vision Park,  
Histon,  
Cambridge,  
CB24 9NL

Tel: 01223 202100

Email: [Cambridge@pegasuspg.co.uk](mailto:Cambridge@pegasuspg.co.uk)

### **Comments**

1.5.5 As this planning application is being considered by the two Local Planning Authorities you can submit comments to either local authority and they will be considered prior to the application being determined. Each of the two Local Planning Authorities are determining the section of the Proposed Development which is located within their District Boundary. It is therefore important that any comments that you wish to submit on this application are directed to the correct Local Planning Authority to ensure that they are considered. For example, if you have comments that you wish to make over the proposed new road off Newport Pagnell Road these comments need to be sent to South Northamptonshire Council as this road is within their district boundary.

1.5.6 Comments on the planning application should be forwarded to the either of the following Council's.

Northampton Borough Council  
Planning Department  
The Guildhall  
St Giles Square  
Northampton  
NN1 1DE

Telephone: 0330 330 7000  
Email: [planning@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:planning@northampton.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.northampton.gov.uk](http://www.northampton.gov.uk)

South Northamptonshire Council  
Planning Department  
The Forum  
Moat Lane  
Towcaster  
Northants  
NN12 6AD

Telephone: 01327 322237  
Email: [planning@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning@oxfordshire.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.southnorthants.gov.uk](http://www.southnorthants.gov.uk)

**Figure 1.1**

**Site Location Plan**

**Figure 1.2**

**Application Site Boundary**

**Appendix 1.1**

**Screening Requests**

**Appendix 1.2**

**Screening Opinions**