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# HAMPTON GREEN, (LAND NORTH OF NEWPORT PAGNELL ROAD), NORTHAMPTON, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCOPING REPORT

## ON BEHALF OF MARTIN GRANT HOMES (MGH) AND HARCOURT DEVELOPMENTS


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## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report has been prepared on behalf of Martin Grant Homes (MGH) and Harecourt Developments (the "Applicant") in respect of Land on Hampton Green, Northamptonshire (the "Application Site") which is proposed for a residential development, a primary school and associated infrastructure (the "Proposed Development"). The Application Site is situated across the administrative boundaries of two Local Planning Authorities. These are Northampton Borough Council (NBC) and South Northamptonshire Council (SNC). The location and extent of the Application Site are shown on a figure provided at **Appendix A**. Through discussions with both of these Local Authorities it has been determined that neither wish to become a delegated consultee on this planning application, and therefore there will not be a lead Planning Authority. Therefore, each Planning Authority will determine the acceptability of the Proposed Development within its District Boundary.

1.2 This Scoping Report has been prepared to identify the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development which will need to be assessed in detail in the EIA and reported within the Environmental Statement (ES), which will accompany the planning application. This Scoping Report has been submitted to both Local Planning Authorities to assist in forming their Scoping Opinion.

1.3 An initial Scoping Report was submitted to both Local Planning Authorities at the end of 2016. That Scoping Report stated that this scheme would include up to 445 dwellings and a 2 form entry primary school. However, through ongoing consultation the local Education Authority are still determining if a new Primary School is needed in this location or whether education provision can be addressed via s106 funding. If the school is not required there would be the capacity to build more dwellings on the site. In that scenario the Proposed Development would increase the number of dwellings to up to 525 new dwellings.

1.4 In order to ensure that this 'Scoping' exercise is robust this amended Scoping Report is being submitted to both Local Authorities for their consideration. We are therefore requesting that the Local Authorities undertake a Scoping exercise for two scenarios. This Scoping Request therefore seeks a formal Scoping Opinion on the following two scenarios;

> *"The erection of up to 525 dwellings with associated infrastructure and new vehicular access to Newport Pagnell Road* ***or*** *the erection of up to*

*450 dwellings and a 2fe Primary School with associated infrastructure and new vehicular access to Newport Pagnell Road"*

**Screening Requests**

1.5 The applicant submitted Requests for a Screening Opinion to both Local Planning Authorities and both have confirmed that an EIA is required for this application. The comments from each of the Local Authorities are described below.

Northampton Borough Council

1.6 The Screening Response (29th June 2016) determined 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.

1.7 The Screening Response also includes an opinion on which environmental topics should be included within the EIA. 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.

1.8 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.

South Northamptonshire Council

1.9 SNC issued their initial Screening Opinion on the 24th June 2016, this initial opinion was review by SNC and a second Screening Opinion was issued on the 5th July 2016. The advice stated below comes from the revised Screening Opinion.

1.10 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.

**Requirements of an Environmental Statement**

1.11 EIA is a process for identifying the likely significant environmental effects (beneficial and adverse) of proposed developments before development consent is granted.

1.12 The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 (as amended) require that any proposed development falling within the description of a 'Schedule 2 development' within the meaning of the Regulations, is required to be subject to an EIA where such development is likely to have 'significant' effects on the environment by virtue of such factors as its nature, size or location (Regulation 2(b)).

1.13 The Application Site area is greater than the threshold of development area of 'exceeding 5ha' under Schedule 2 Section 10 (b) with respect to Infrastructure Projects that may require the submission of an ES. It is also in excess of the threshold of Schedule 2 Section 10 (b) as it is proposed the development will be up to 510 dwellings. However, it is below the 1,000 dwellings criteria defined by the Planning Policy Guidance.

1.14 The EIA process identifies likely 'significant' environmental effects of proposed developments, by comparing the existing situation, that which pertains before development is carried out (baseline) with the situation once the proposals are in place. The significance of effects during construction should also be considered. Information required to be included within an ES in accordance with Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations is described in **Appendix B**.

1.15 The ES will be prepared with reference to the National Planning Practice Guidance.

**Purpose of the Scoping Report**

1.16 The first stage of the EIA process is to identify the issues which should be addressed in the ES; this is termed 'scoping' and the results are presented as a Scoping Report.

1.17 This Scoping Report sets out the views of the Applicant, as to the proposed scope of the environmental issues to be considered in the EIA and as to the method by which assessment will be undertaken.

1.18 Comments of the local planning authority and other stakeholders are invited as to the method and scope of the assessment proposed to be undertaken as set out in this report.

1.19 It should be remembered that just because an environmental topic is 'scoped out' of the EIA process it can still be considered in the planning application and assessment work may need to take place before the Local Planning Authority is in a position to be able to determine the application. The 'scoping out' process is to determine if the potential effect on the development is likely to be of such a significant level that it needs consideration against the EIA Regulations and therefore needs to be included within the Environmental Statement.

**Structure of Report**

1.20 Section 2 of this report describes, in broad terms, the nature and derivation of the Application Site and the Proposed Development, whilst Section 3 sets out, under a series of headings, the issues which the EIA will address. Section 4 identifies the proposed structure of the ES.

1.21 Section 5 identifies the statutory consultees and other parties which will be consulted concerning the ES.

## 2. APPLICATION SITE

### Application Site

2.1 The Application Site covers an area of approximately 24.15 hectares of land to the south east of Northampton. The northern parcel of land, within NBC, is bounded by existing woodland to the north and northwest. The woodland, to the north is subject to a Tree Protection order (TPO). To the west the parcel is bounded by the agricultural land, which falls within the approved HCA planning application area. This application has a reference of 2013/0338 and was granted Outline Planning consent by PINS in February 2016.

2.2 The southern parcel of land, within SNC, currently comprises of an open field with an intermittent belt of hedgerow running through the centre of the site (east to west). To the northwest the site is bounded by 'The Green', beyond which lies the HCA development site referenced above. To the south the site is bounded by Newport Pagnall Road, beyond which lies the Morris Homes development which is currently under construction. Land along the southern boundary has previously be used as landfill.

2.3 The Site forms part of the Northampton South of Brackmills SUE, as designated by policy N6 of the adopted West Northampton Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS). Part of the Site also falls within Skyline Conservation (Saved Local Plan policy E7). Adopted Policy N6 allocates the Northampton South of Brackmills SUE for development which will make provision for in the region of 1,300 dwellings.

2.4 The Application Site boundary and context is identified on a figure provided at **Appendix A**.

### Proposed Development

2.5 A set of development parameters will be devised and assessed as part of the EIA. At this stage the parameters will be defined by such conditions including:

- the maximum footprint of the Proposed Development;
- the maximum heights of development;
- landscaping and open space; and
- access and linkages.

2.6 It is anticipated that the Proposed Development will comprise of either of the following key components:

2.7 Scenario 1

- Up to 450 dwellings;
- 2F Primary School;
- Open space and landscaping;
- Children's Play Areas
- Vehicular Access off Newport Pagnell Road and to the northern parcel off 'The Green'.
- The downgrading of 'The Green' into a pedestrian and cycle green link;
- Access, parking; and
- Supporting infrastructure and utilities.

2.8 Scenario 2

- Up to 525 dwellings;
- Open space and landscaping;
- Children's Play Areas
- Vehicular Access off Newport Pagnell Road and to the northern parcel off 'The Green'.
- The downgrading of 'The Green' into a pedestrian and cycle green link;
- Access, parking; and
- Supporting infrastructure and utilities.

## 3. SCOPE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

3.1 **Table 1** sets out how the various environmental parameters, as detailed within the EIA Regulations, will be considered within the ES. Where a topic has been scoped out of the ES, the reasoning is provided.

**Table 1: Environmental Parameters**

| EIA Topic | Scoped In / Out | How/Where addressed/Reason for Scoping Out |
|---|---|---|
| **Population** | Scoped in | The population increase from the development and the impact on the local economy will be considered within **Chapter 6: Transport & Access** of the ES and Travel Plan. |
| **Fauna** | Scoped in | There is considerable recent information about the ecology of the surrounding area in the public domain due to the neighbouring planning applications. This information, and on site data, will be assessed within **Chapter 7: Ecology**<br><br>Nothing within the public ecology data indicates that the effect of this development will cause a significant effect due to its cumulative impact. |
| **Flora** | Scoped in | There is considerable recent information about the ecology of the surrounding area in the public domain due to the neighbouring planning applications. This information, and on site data, will be assessed within **Chapter 7: Ecology** of the ES which |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | will accompany this application.<br><br>Nothing within the public ecology data indicates that the effect of this development will cause a significant effect due to its cumulative impact. |
| **Water** | Scoped out | To be assessed within standalone reports which will accompany the application. |
| **Air** | Scoped out | There will be an increase in traffic in the local area due to the increase in population from construction of these new homes. Air Quality will be assessed within standalone reports which will accompany the application as this increase is not deemed to be significant. |
| **Climatic Factors** | Scoped out | To be assessed within standalone reports which will accompany the application. |
| **Material Assets** | Scoped out | There are no material assets within or in close proximity to the Application Site |
| **Architectural and Archaeological Heritage** | Scoped out | To be assessed within standalone reports which will accompany the application. |
| **Landscape** | Scoped in | To be assessed in **Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Impact** of the Environmental Statement. |
| **Ground Conditions & Contamination** | Scoped out | To be assessed within standalone reports which |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | will accompany the application. |
| **Interrelationship between above factors** | Scoped in | LVIA cumulative impact will be considered in the Landscape and Visual chapter. The possible cumulative effects on the local highway network and ecology will also be considered within the ES. The possible cumulative impacts of other environmental topics will be considered in the standalone reports that will accompany the planning application. |

3.2 The issues set out below are considered appropriate for assessment in an ES in the event this is found to be necessary. It is considered that the Proposed Development may have the potential to give rise to significant environmental effects in these areas:

- Landscape and Visual;
- Transport and Access;
- Ecology; and
- Cumulative Impact on these three environmental topics.

3.3 It is proposed that the ES will examine these issues. The chapters will consider, as appropriate, the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium, long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development. The assessments will consider the significance of the effects identified with reference to the magnitude of the impact and the sensitivity of the receptor. These evaluations will be specific to the environmental discipline in the ES and may involve the use of recognised standards, industry guidance and professional judgement in the assessment.

3.4 Following the assessment of effects, mitigation measures to reduce and avoid these effects will be identified and detailed, and any residual effects significance evaluated in each chapter.

3.5 The following sections set out the intended scope of each of the above issues.

**Introduction**

3.6 This chapter of the ES will provide an introduction to the document and present details in terms of the Application Site location and current use, as well as a comprehensive description of the Proposed Development.

**Alternatives**

3.7 In accordance with the EIA Regulations the ES will include an outline of the main alternatives and alternative site designs studied by the Applicant and an indication of the main reasons for the choice made, taking into account the environmental effects.

**Landscape and Visual**

Introduction

3.8 An assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development will be undertaken, in accordance with 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' Third Edition (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment).

Baseline Conditions

3.9 The Site is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory designations for landscape character or quality. There are no public rights of way crossing the Site or running along the boundaries.

3.10 The Proposed Development will be visible from roads, public rights of way and other public access areas. There will also be some intervisibility with existing and under-construction residential properties.

Scope of the Landscape and Visual Assessment

3.11 A landscape character analysis will be undertaken which will involve establishing the nature of the landscape character that currently forms the Application Site, as well as identifying the character of adjacent areas. This analysis will assist in demonstrating the potential landscape effects of the Proposed Development upon the character of the landscape.

3.12 A visual assessment will be undertaken to determine how the Proposed Development would have a bearing upon the surrounding environment in visual amenity terms. This assessment will involve determining the visibility of the

Proposed Development and its effect upon receptors, particularly with regard to public locations including highways, public rights of way and other public places. The assessment will also consider visual effects upon private residential receptors.

3.13 The assessment will also examine the effects in the short term and those that will remain in the long-term or 'residual effects' once mitigation measures have established. In this assessment, the visual effects of the development have been considered at completion of the entire project and after 15 years. In this regard, the visual assessment will take into account the structural landscape framework proposed, which will be assumed would be in place in year 1. Establishment and growth of the proposed planting and existing vegetation will be considered as mitigation measures in the visual analysis.

3.14 An approximate area from which the Application Site is visible to a person standing on the ground will be determined through the production of a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV Map), to help determine the potential visibility of the Site. This will be produced through a combination of reviewing topographical information, aerial photography, site visits and through computer generated modelling.

3.15 A number of representative views from visual receptors (accessible to the public), such as from local residential areas, roads and public rights of way will be identified from which the visual effects will be assessed and will be agreed in advance with both NBC and SNC (if possible.) Photographs will be reproduced within the Landscape and Visual chapter to illustrate these views.

**Cumulative and In-combination Effects**

3.16 A section of the ES Chapter will respond to the requirement in the Regulations to assess the cumulative effects of the Proposed Development. Due to the fact that for this application there will be two determining Local Planning Authorities the cumulative and in-combination effects will be a more complex assessment than if there was just one determining Authority. As this application is split over two Local Planning Authorities there is the potential for one to approve the Proposed Development in their District and the other to refuse the section of the Proposed Development in theirs'. For the cumulative assessment, two types of effect will be considered:

i. The combined effect of individual effects, and

ii. The combined effects of surrounding/adjoining development schemes which may, on an individual basis be insignificant but, cumulatively, have

a greater effect. This will be conducted principally with reference to approved development in the surrounding area.

3.17 These cumulative effects will be considered against the whole of the Proposed Development and each individual part of the Proposed Development, i.e. the development in NBC and then SNC. The two parts of the development will also be considered cumulatively against each other to ensure that the ES robustly considers the possible cumulative effects of the Proposed Development where there are two determining Local Planning Authorities.

3.18 Planning permission was granted for the development of the land immediately to the north/north west of the site for up to 1,000 dwellings, a school retail space and the necessary infrastructure (REF:2013/0338). To the south, by the B526 is a further permitted development of up to 300 homes (REF: S/2011/0989/MAR) with 38 dwellings on this site currently being built out (REF: S/2014/0440/MAF). These schemes will be considered in the assessment of cumulative effects.

3.19 Impact interactions are also likely to occur for a small number of localised receptors, such as residential buildings. These potential interactions are likely to be related to noise, vibration, dust and traffic. Interactions are likely to take place during the construction phase.

**Transport & Access**

Introduction

3.20 The effect of the Proposed Development on transport and access will be assessed. The assessment will be undertaken with the IEMA Guidelines which provide guidance on a range of potential traffic related impacts arising from new development. Where no specific method is defined within the IEMA Guidelines, alternative means of assessment have been undertaken based on published transportation assessment and best practice.

Baseline Conditions

3.21 The Proposed Development will have an impact on the local highway network. Available sustainable transport modes will be established along with the location of existing facilities and amenities. Junctions within an agreed study area will be assessed to established baseline operational conditions.

Scope of the Transport Assessment

3.22 Review of sustainable transport modes including public transport (bus and train), walking and cycling routes and connectivity to key local facilities and amenities including a review of journey times and the quality of routes available.

3.23 Junction counts to be completed for 16 junctions and assessment of traffic impact at 2031 with and without development to be considered. Trip generation to be determined from comparison between TRICS and a local donor site. Trip distribution to be based on 2011 Journey to Work data.

3.24 5-year accident data to be reviewed for study area identifying any accident patterns along the network.

3.25 Outline how new access points will be created onto the highway network to serve the Proposed Development. The will include the provision of a new roundabout junction onto Newport Pagnell Road and a change of priority and downgrading of 'The Green' to facilitate access in this location. All junctions to be assessed in 2031 with and without development and Stage 1 Road Safety Audits to be completed.

3.26 Mitigation measures to be outlined to demonstrate how the Proposed Development can ensure sustainable transport modes are provided and the development does not have a severe impact on the highway network.

Cumulative and In-combination Effects

3.27 A section of the ES will respond to the requirement in the Regulations to assess the cumulative effects of the Proposed Development. This will include:

- The combined effects of development schemes which may, on an individual basis be insignificant but, cumulatively, have significant effect. This will be conducted principally with reference to committed development in the surrounding area.
- Assessment of construction traffic impacts including trip generation, noise, dust and dirt.

3.28 These cumulative effects will be considered against the whole of the Proposed Development and each individual part of the Proposed Development, i.e. the development in NBC and then SNC. The two parts of the development will also be considered cumulatively against each other to ensure that the ES robustly considers the possible cumulative effects of the Proposed Development where there are two determining Local Planning Authorities.

3.29 Planning permission was granted for the development of the land immediately to the north/north west of the site for up to 1,000 dwellings, a school retail space and the necessary infrastructure (REF:2013/0338). On the southern boundary, separated by the B526 is a further permitted development of up to 300 homes (REF: S/2011/0989/MAR) with 38 dwellings on this site currently being built out (REF: S/2014/0440/MAF. These schemes will be considered in the assessment of cumulative effects.

**Ecology**

Introduction

3.30 The Ecology Chapter of the Environmental Statement, and supporting Technical Appendices, will describe the assessment methodology; the baseline conditions at the proposal site and surroundings; the likely significant environmental effects; the mitigation measures required to avoid, mitigate and/or compensate for any significant adverse effects; and the likely residual effects after these measures have been employed.

Baseline Conditions

3.31 The following summary of the baseline conditions within and around the proposal site is based on an extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, desk study and further surveys in respect of bats, badger, dormouse, reptiles and great crested newt undertaken by CSA Environmental Planning in 2016. Breeding bird data and historic data for the above species/groups was also obtained from surveys undertaken in 2013 by CSA environmental. Wintering bird surveys (targeting golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria* and other wintering birds likely to use SPA hinterlands i.e. lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*) surveys are scheduled for winter 2016/2017.

***Designated Sites***

3.32 The proposal site is not covered by any statutory nature conservation designations. However, there is a single international statutory designation within 10km of the site, namely Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar located c. 2.1km north of the Site. A single national statutory designation is present within 3km of the Site, namely Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SSSI located c. 2.1km north of the Site.

3.33 Potential adverse effects arising from the proposed development on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site/SSSI include the loss of roosting/foraging habitat for over-wintering golden plover and lapwing. Golden plover and lapwing,

both of which are a qualifying features of the SPA, are known to use arable and grassland habitats such as those present at the Site. The wintering bird surveys scheduled for 2016/2017 will determine whether golden plover and lapwing make use of habitats at and surrounding the Site. The results will be used to assess whether the development is likely to result in direct effects on the integrity of the SPA.

3.34 Potential indirect adverse effects arising from the proposed development on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site/SSSI include an increase in recreational pressure.

3.35 A single local statutory designation is present within 3km of the Site, Barnes Meadow LNR located c. 2.2km north of the Site. No adverse effects arising from the development on this designation are anticipated.

3.36 There are no ratified non-statutory designations covering any part of the Site or within 2km of the Site. However, one Potential Wildlife Site is present within the Site itself and a further eight PWSs are present within 2km of the Site. Given that the PWS within the Site will be retained and buffered from development, no adverse effects arising from the development on this designation are anticipated. No adverse effects arising from the development on any other PWS are anticipated.

***Habitats***

3.37 The northern land parcel is dominated by arable land which falls fall short of the criteria for features of significant ecological importance. The southern land parcel is dominated by semi-improved grassland which together with the surrounding young plantation woodland is of some ecological importance. The hedgerow network at the Site and the woodland in the north are of elevated ecological importance.

*Species*

3.38 The following protected species surveys have been/will be undertaken at the Site

- Bats – Surveys complete. At least five species of bat have been recorded foraging/commuting within the Site. These are predominantly common and widespread species. However, a low number of rare barbastelle were recorded.
- Badger – Surveys complete. No setts recorded within the Site. However, a large main badger sett is present within close proximity to the Site and

evidence recorded indicates that badger make use of the Site for foraging/commuting.

- Dormouse – Surveys ongoing in 2016. No dormice recorded to date.
- Breeding bird surveys – Surveys completed in 2013 and a further one has been commissioned.
- Wintering birds – Surveys scheduled for 2016/2017
- Reptiles – Surveys complete. Reptiles considered likely absent from the Site
- Great crested newt – Surveys complete. GCN considered likely absent from the Site

*Methodology*

3.39 **Desk Study.** Contextual baseline information, in particular information on designated sites and protected species records within the proposal site's potential zone of influence, was collated in 2016 from the following sources:

- Northamptonshire Biodiversity Records Centre;
- MAGIC website;
- CSA Environmental. (March 2014). *"Land at Wootton Fields, Northampton: Ecological Appraisal"*
- (August 2015). *"Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area: Supplementary Planning Document"*
- Environ. (February 2010) *"Survey Work to Support the Appropriate Assessment for the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy"*
- Parsons Brinckerhoff. (2012) *"Land South of Brackmills SUE: Extended Phase 1 Assessment."* Prepared for the Homes and Communities Agency

3.40 **Field Surveys.** In addition to the extended Phase 1 Survey, the following field surveys have been/will be undertaken in order to gather robust baseline information on the habitats and species present within or near to the proposal site:

- Bat Surveys
    - Commuting /foraging – 4 remote detectors were deployed for three survey periods (July-September 2016) and four transect surveys (July-August 2016) were undertaken.
    - Roosts – Ground based roost assessment of trees to assess potential for roosting bats undertaken August 2016.

- Badger Survey – undertaken in 2016 to record any field signs of badger. Historic survey data available from 2013.

- Dormouse Survey- Dormouse nest tubes (No=100) were deployed at the Site and monthly checks scheduled for July-November 2016 (5 in total). Historic survey data available from 2013.

- Breeding Bird Surveys – Surveys previously undertaken between May and July 2013, with incidental recording of birds in 2013 (including nocturnally and over winter). A further BBS has been commissioned to support any planning application.

- Wintering Bird Surveys – Targeting key species associated with the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA (i.e. golden plover and lapwing) which may potentially use the Site and surrounding land. Scheduled for winter 2016/2017 Historic survey data available from 2013.

- Reptiles Survey – Artificial refugia were deployed in a sample of suitable habitats at the Site and 7 survey visits undertaken (July-September 2016) to check refugia. Historic survey data available from 2013.

- Great crested newt survey – eDNA samples of the on-site pond (P2) and off-site pond (P1) located c.80m north of the Site were taken in June 2016. Historic survey data available from 2013.

3.41 Surveys were/will be undertaken with reference to published best practise guidance where this exists.

3.42 Consultation with relevant consultees, such as Natural England, has been/will be undertaken where appropriate to inform the scope of surveys and subsequent Ecological Impact Assessment.

3.43 An arboricultural assessment undertaken in accordance with BS5837 2012 Trees in Design, Demolition and Construction will be submitted with the planning application. The arboricultural assessment report will inform and be appended to the ecology chapter in the ES.

Assessment

3.44 The identification and evaluation of Important Ecological Features for the purposes of Ecological Impact Assessment, and the assessment of significant adverse or beneficial effects on Important Ecological Features, will be undertaken with reference to the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Guidelines, Second Edition, January 2016.

3.45 Important Ecological Features for the assessment are very likely to include a small number of statutory and non-statutory designated sites and a range of habitats and species. The findings of the ongoing baseline studies will inform the evolving

masterplan through an iterative design process to achieve a significant degree of inherent mitigation (avoidance of adverse effects through design). However, it is likely that the assessment will identify potential indirect and direct adverse effects on Important Ecological Features, relating either to the construction or operational phases of development, which cannot be avoided through inherent mitigation alone. Where this is the case, the necessary avoidance, mitigation or compensatory measures will be outlined within the ES Chapter together with the appropriate delivery mechanisms.

Cumulative and In-combination Effects

3.46 A section of the ES will respond to the requirement in the Regulations to assess the cumulative effects of the Proposed Development. For the cumulative assessment, two types of effect will be considered:

i. The combined effect of individual effects, for example the effects in relation to noise, airborne dust or traffic on a single ecological feature; and

ii. The combined effects of development schemes which may, on an individual basis be insignificant but, cumulatively, have significant effect. This will be conducted principally with reference to committed development in the surrounding area.

3.47 Planning permission was granted for the development of the land immediately to the north/north west of the site for up to 1,000 dwellings, a school retail space and the necessary infrastructure (REF:2013/0338). On the southern boundary, separated by the B526 is a further permitted development of up to 300 homes (REF: S/2011/0989/MAR) with 38 dwellings on this site currently being built out (REF: S/2014/0440/MAF). These schemes will be considered in the assessment of cumulative effects.

3.48 These cumulative effects will be considered against the whole of the Proposed Development and each individual part of the Proposed Development, i.e. the development in NBC and then SNC. The two parts of the development will also be considered cumulatively against each other to ensure that the ES robustly considers the possible cumulative effects of the Proposed Development where there are two determining Local Planning Authorities.

3.49 Effects at both the construction and operational phases will be assessed.

**Summary**

3.50 A summary chapter will be included at the end of the ES, providing a synopsis of the findings of the EIA.

3.51 A non-technical summary of the findings will also be prepared, as required by the EIA Regulations.

**Environmental Report**

3.52 As stated above it is the intent of the applicant to also provide the LPA with environmental assessment information on other topics that should be considered when determining the application but are not within the scope of the ES. The following paragraphs consider these different environmental topics and state what would be assessed and the proposed methodologies. It is hoped that this detailed information will provide SNC and NBC with the information they require to conclude that these environmental effects will be adequately assessed and are not required to be considered within the Environmental Statement.

**Socio Economic Issues**

Introduction

3.53 This report will consider the socio economic issues relating to the Proposed Development. Likely significant effects on social and economic conditions will arise directly from the uses provided, as well as the employment opportunities created during the construction and following the completion of the Proposed Development.

Baseline Conditions

3.54 The Application Site is predominantly agricultural land and a change in land use will result from the Proposed Development. Due to the nature of the Proposed Development, it is considered likely that there will be an effect relating to population, education, healthcare, employment, and open space and community facilities.

Scope of the Socio Economic Assessment

3.55 To gain a clear understanding of the scale and nature of the proposed socio economic effects and the need for new or expanded facilities, published statistical information and bespoke research sources will be used to establish existing conditions and indicate where the development is likely to have an effect in the future. Consultation with appropriate bodies will be undertaken to establish current baseline conditions with respect to facilities and capacities.

3.56 The socio economic effect of the Proposed Development will be evaluated by:

- assessing the levels of housing requirement in the area, including affordable housing needs;
- assessing the effect of the economically active elements of the residential population on the labour market and the prospects for employment;
- assessing the effect of the Proposed Development on primarily public services including education, social services, and health facilities;
- assessing the effect of the Proposed Development on recreational and leisure facilities; and
- consulting the local authority, community groups, business representatives and police as appropriate.

3.57 Where necessary, as a result of these assessments, mitigation strategies will be devised to ensure adequate and/or enhanced facilities and services provision for both existing and future residents of the area.

**Archaeology and Cultural Heritage**

Introduction

3.58 This Report will address the potential for significant effects on archaeology and cultural heritage.

Baseline Conditions

3.59 There are no Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings within or on the immediate site boundary. The nearest heritage asset is to the south east of the Application Site and is St Peter and Paul's Church, Preston Deanery. This a Grade II* property and is approximately 1.1km southeast of the site. Other closest listed buildings and Schedule Monuments (SM) are further away from the site with clusters of listed buildings within Northampton.

3.60 Further into the town of Trowbridge to the west of the Application Site, are three Conservation Areas; Hardingstone (1.4km), Wootton (1.7km) and Great Houghton (1.8km) that contains Listed Buildings. To the south west, circa 3.5km from the Application Site boundary is the site of Courteenhall, a Registered Park and Garden.

Content of the Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Assessment

3.61 A review of existing information will be conducted in consultation with NBC and SNC and Historic England. Should the need for further assessment of the site be identified, it will be undertaken in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists'

(IfA) Standard Guidance and any mitigation strategy for cultural heritage resource/ below ground archaeological remains on the Application Site will be agreed with the LPA's (or the lead LPA if this has been agreed by this point) and Historic England.

3.62 The Report will:

- Quantify any receptors beyond the Application Site which may be impacted upon by changes to their setting related to the Proposed Development, such as Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Monuments;
- Assess any previous impacts which may have affected resource survival;
- Provide an evaluation of resource value (significance) based on professional judgement where resources have no formal designation;
- Assess development impacts and hence the significance of effects arising from the Proposed Development (both the construction and operation phases);
- Provide recommendations for further investigation and mitigation that would reduce or eliminate any adverse effects; and
- Quantify any effects that remain after mitigation

3.63 The report will outline a suitable programme of archaeological investigation and subsequent mitigation strategy in order to remove any negative impact upon archaeological resources, or reduce them to a level acceptable to the statutory consultees.

- The assessment will be carried out in accordance with: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA) 2014 *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment;*
- English Heritage (EH), 2008 Conservation Principles: policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment.
- Historic England (HE), 2015a *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment.*
- Historic England (HE), 2015b *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning, Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets.*

**Air Quality**

Introduction

3.64 An assessment report of the potential effects of the Proposed Development on air quality will be included within the application.

Baseline

3.65 There are six Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) within the Northampton Borough Council administrative area and a further one AQMA is present in South Northamptonshire Council. None of these AQMA's are near the application site. Baseline air quality at the Application Site will be determined by identifying relevant monitoring data and existing sources of pollutants in the area. This will include:

- Discussions with the LPA's Air Pollution and Quality team;
- A review of the LPA's emissions regulation processes and collation of published data, as well as any unpublished data made available by the Council's;
- Examination of maps and aerial photographs; and
- A review of nearby industrial operations using the Government's Pollutant Release and Transfer Register.

Scope of the Air Quality Assessment

3.66 Consultation with the LPA's will also be undertaken to confirm details regarding the assessment methodology. Notwithstanding this, the following scope of works is proposed:

- A qualitative assessment of the effects of the construction phase on local air quality in terms of dust/particulate generation using relevant publications and guidance; and
- A quantitative assessment of the effect on air quality due to emissions from traffic associated with the Proposed Development once operational. This will be undertaken using the detailed dispersion model ADMS Roads to predict the impact of the development on local concentrations of $NO_2$, $PM_{10}$ and $PM_{2.5}$. Concentrations will also be predicted at the Application Site in order to assess the likely exposure of future occupants to concentrations of these pollutants.

3.67 The assessment will include a sensitivity test for the prediction of nitrogen dioxide road traffic impacts. This is an essential step given the recent recognition by Defra that the forecast improvements in vehicle emissions (as incorporated in official DfT emission factors) are now unlikely to materialise.

3.68 Exact details regarding the methodology for the air quality dispersion modelling will be agreed during consultation with the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) at the LPA's.

Temporal Scope

3.69 The assessment of construction phase effects will take into account the anticipated duration and phasing of the construction works.

3.70 The assessment of operational phase effects will consider current and future air quality within the vicinity of the Application Site, both with and without the Proposed Development.

Spatial Scope

3.71 The study area for the assessment of construction phase effects will include sensitive receptors (e.g. residential properties, sensitive habitats) located within 350m of the Application Site boundary or near to roads within 500m of the site entrance. Consideration will be given to the neighbouring applications that have planning consent (including outline) even if the properties have not yet been built.

3.72 Consideration of the air quality impacts from road traffic will focus on the area identified for the Transport Assessment. Air quality will be assessed at a range of worst-case receptors closest to busy roads, particularly those close to junctions.

Significance Criteria

3.73 The predicted concentrations will be compared with the relevant air quality objectives as defined within the Air Quality Regulations 2000 and Amendments 2002, and limit values as defined in the Air Quality Regulations 2007.

3.74 There are no statutory objectives for dust. It is therefore common practice to provide a qualitative assessment based largely on experience of the distances over which impacts may occur.

3.75 The evaluation of significance of impacts for construction will be based on criteria recommended by the Institute of Air Quality Management [1] and the significance of operational impacts will be assessed based on criteria recommended by Environmental Protection UK and the Institute of Air Quality Management[2]. These significance criteria take into account the sensitivity of the receptor (i.e. how close concentrations are to exceeding the air quality objectives) and the predicted change in concentrations as a result of the Proposed Development.

**Noise and Vibration**

Introduction

3.76 A report of the potential noise and vibration effects of the Proposed Development during construction and operation will be submitted with the planning application.

Baseline Conditions

3.77 The Application Site currently comprises predominantly agricultural land and is adjacent two developments. The Morris Homes site, which is to the South is currently building out 38 homes, but it has outline consent for 300. The Hardingstone SUE is to the north/northwest and has planning consent for 1,000 homes and associated infrastructure.

3.78 The Application Site is bounded to the south by the B526, and a minor road 'The Green' splits the site into two parcels. Currently the nearest residential properties are along The Choakles which are separated from the Application Site by the B526. The Brackmills Industrial Estate is approximately 300m to the north of the site, but is separated by a woodland band, which is remaining if this development were to progress.

Scope of the Noise Assessment

3.79 The Screening Opinion issued by SNC (24th June 16) and NBC (29th June 16) advised that consideration should be given to the cumulative effects of this and surrounding developments. With regards to noise, the main cumulative effect would be associated with the additional road traffic, and the temporary effects of the construction process of these surrounding developments would be considered within the assessment. Changes in road traffic noise levels would be assessed in

1 Institute of Air Quality Management (2011) Guidance on the Assessment of the Impacts of Construction on Air Quality and the Determination of their Significance.

2 Environmental Protection UK & Institute of Air Quality Management (2015) Land-Use Planning & Development Control: Planning For Air Quality, IAQM.

accordance with the methodology described in a Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, to enable an evaluation of the likely effects and increases in disturbance to noise sensitive receptors affected by a change in road traffic noise. As there is the intension to close 'The Green' from a minor road to a pedestrian/cycle road this will impact the operational noise within the development.

3.80 On site noise surveys in accordance with BS7445:2003 'Description and Measurement of Environmental Noise' will be undertaken. The methodology will be agreed with the local Environmental Health Officers. Noise surveys will take place at:

- Land adjacent to Newport Pagnell Road; and
- Land adjacent to the eastern site boundary in the northern development parcel.

3.81 The existing noise levels within the Application Site are low and no effects are anticipated associated with the design of the proposed dwellings, as standard construction techniques would ensure an acceptable noise environment.

3.82 Consideration would also be given to the potential effects associated with the construction of the Proposed Development, with regards ensuring Best Practicable Means are adopted to minimise noise during the works.

Legislation and Guidelines

3.83 Legislation and guidance documents to be used in the assessment will include:

i. World Health Organisation - Guidelines for Community Noise 1999;

ii. Department of Transport - Calculation of Road Traffic Noise 1988;

iii. Highways Agency. Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. Volume 11. Section 3. Part 7. HD 213/11 – Revision 1. Noise and Vibration;

iv. BS8233: 2014: Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings;

v. BS5228-1:2009+A1:2014 and BS5228:-2:2009+A1:201414: Code of Practice for Noise & Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites.

Sources of Baseline Information

3.84 As discussed above, the site is approximately 300m from Brackmills Industrial Estate but noise levels are controlled from this area and there are no other major noise sources and existing noise levels are low.

3.85 Baseline noise monitoring is proposed as part of the assessment, given the low levels of noise, no mitigation measures would be required for the proposed dwellings.

Proposed Methods of Identifying the Probable Effects

3.86 The report will include the review and interpretation of any work undertaken to date, site surveys and predictions. The potential effects to be assessed are:

- Construction activities;
- Traffic affecting the surrounding area (principally associated with future operational traffic associated with the Proposed Development and cumulative impacts associated with the operation of the Proposed Development and other surrounding developments); and
- The suitability of the site for the future occupants of the Proposed Development.

Construction Activities

3.87 During construction, there will be a number of potential sources of noise and vibration. Based upon likely construction plant, anticipated noise levels will be predicted at the nearest sensitive locations using the methodology set out in BS 52281-2009+A1 2014 'Code of Practice for Noise & Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites.'

Traffic Noise

3.88 Changes in traffic noise on the local roads surrounding the development will be based on changes in traffic flow, speed and percentage of heavy goods vehicles. The changes will be assessed for the operational phases, using data from the Transport Assessment. The standard method used to predict traffic noise levels in the UK is the Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (CRTN).

3.89 Standard acoustic principles will be used to estimate the changes in noise level due to changes in flow, speed, and percentage HGVs, with the calculated noise levels assessed using the methodology within DMRB. Effects on both existing and future residents will be considered.

Site Suitability

3.90 In accordance with the relevant national and local guidance, the suitability of the proposed uses (e.g. dwellings) within the development area would be considered

with respect to the prevailing noise climate which is expected to be principally influenced by distant road traffic.

3.91 Where appropriate, and based upon the results of the baseline noise monitoring exercise, noise and/or vibration mitigation measures would be identified, which would seek to ensure a satisfactory noise and vibration environment was achieved.

**Hydrology, Flood Risk and Drainage**

Introduction

3.92 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be undertaken for the Proposed Development based on the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. The FRA will consider:

- Potential sources of flooding.
- Historic flooding.
- Existing conditions.
- Potential outfall routes and the impact on the downstream network.
- Management of surface water including how sustainable drainage can be implemented within the development to manage surface water.
- Overland flows.
- Climate change effects.

3.93 This FRA will consider the potential effects on water resources, to encompass surface water and groundwater quality, surface water and groundwater resources (in terms of water quality) and flooding issues within the vicinity of the Application Site will be conducted.

Baseline Conditions

3.94 The Application Site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1 (low probability of flooding) which means that the Application Site comprises land which has been assessed as having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual possibility of flooding from rivers and sea.

Content of the Hydrology, Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment

3.95 The assessment will consider the potential effect on water resources (both surface and groundwater) and local hydrology.

3.96 The FRA will include a drainage strategy outlining in principle how the site will be drained. This will be based on using appropriate SUDs in accordance with policy guidelines. Such features shall be designed to ensure that they are readily maintained. The selection of SUDS features shall be dependent on how appropriate they are for their location and role within the wider drainage scheme.

3.97 The assessment of the effect on the water environment will involve consultation with the Environment Agency, Northamptonshire County Council, and Anglian Water.

Identification of Potential Effects

3.98 The EIA process will include the assessment of construction impacts on surface water and groundwater. It will focus on surface runoff and assess the proposed drainage design in the environs of the Application Site. Operational effects such as water consumption, changes in the rate and volume of runoff and the control of pollution will also be assessed in the EIA.

3.99 The following potential water resource effects are considered pertinent to the Application Site:

Construction

- General site drainage; and
- Change in the urban form which may have a subsequent effect on surface water drainage patterns;

Operation

- Fluvial flood risk; and
- Site drainage.

Existing Conditions

3.100 Publicly available environmental databases will be accessed to obtain information on water resources (abstractions, designations, discharge consents etc.,) and identified existing biological and chemical surface water quality for any nearby watercourses.

3.101 It will be determined through consultation with the Environment Agency, whether the Application Site lies outside of the extent of the extreme flood and the chance of flooding each year.

3.102 Baseline environmental data searches will be carried out to show whether the Application Site lies within a groundwater source protection zone (SPZ) or within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ).

3.103 BGS mapping together with intrusive ground investigation will be used to illustrate soils underlying the Application Site and leaching potential. Surface and groundwater abstractions will be identified using a suitable database.

Method of Assessment

3.104 The methodology for carrying out baseline research involves the following steps:

- Review of previous reports (PFRA, SFRA, FRA, uFMfSW…);
- Review of data for the site and 2km radius;
- Review of local plan;
- Consultation with the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority, Anglian Water and the Local Planning Authority;
- Review of BGS mapping and intrusive ground investigation; and
- Review of the Environment Agency online groundwater vulnerability map.

Significance Criteria

3.105 The assessment of the likely effects of the Proposed Development on water resources will be undertaken in accordance with current Government guidance and Environment Agency guidelines on EIA, surface water and groundwater quality and flood risk assessment.

Mitigation

3.106 The potential effects of the Proposed Development will be mitigated through a series of measures during both the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development and these will be identified within FRA and supporting report.

**Ground Conditions and Contamination**

Introduction

3.107 This report will address issues relating to existing geo-environmental conditions at the Application Site, with the aim of ensuring that suitable and safe conditions are achieved for the end-use proposed.

3.108 The range of effects associated with the design, construction and operation of the Proposed Development will be considered, including potential ground contamination.

Baseline

3.109 As part of the site has previously been used for landfill a Phase I and Phase II Ground Investigation Assessment has been undertaken. This has revealed that none of the results from the natural topsoil and Made Ground recorded contaminants that exceed the relevant thresholds for residential land use/plant uptake. Therefore, natural topsoil and disturbed topsoil/Made Ground on site are considered suitable for re-use. Negligible levels of both methane and carbon dioxide were recorded during the gas monitoring period.

Scope of the Ground Conditions and Contamination Assessment

Potential Effects

3.110 Potential effects to be addressed by this chapter of the ES include:

- Health and safety risks to workers and site visitors during development works from existing ground contamination, ground gas or other potentially hazardous materials;
- Health and safety risks to future users from existing ground contamination, ground gas or other materials;
- Risks to proposed new landscaped areas from the release of existing contamination;
- Risks to groundwater and surface water from the release of existing contamination;
- Risks to groundwater and surface water from potential contamination attributable to construction plant/activities;
- Risks to new structures, primarily foundations and services from ground contamination;
- Risks to existing adjacent structures, from proposed construction activities; and

- The opportunities to re-use soil arisings and appropriate 'management' and disposal of contamination or hazardous waste materials removed from the site.

Approach and Methodology

3.111 A desk based assessment and an intrusive investigation will be undertaken to identify any constraints on the Application Site. Further investigation will be undertaken in consultation with both LPA's (where necessary) should any further investigation identify the potential for significant effects that may pose a risk to human health and/or controlled waters. This may lead to recommendations for remedial measures to ensure that the developed site is "fit for purpose."

## 4. STRUCTURE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

4.1 The ES will address the requirements of Parts 1 and 2 of Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations. The anticipated structure and content of the ES is as follows:

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

4.2 Within the assessment chapter, the main structure of the information presented, although not exclusively, will be as per the following headings:

- Assessment Methodology
- Baseline Conditions
- Likely Significant Effects
- Mitigation and Enhancement
- Cumulative and In-combination Effects
- Summary of Findings

4.3 The ES will be supported by Technical Appendices, where appropriate, and a Non-Technical Summary.

## 5. STATUTORY AND OTHER CONSULTEES

5.1 This Scoping Report is submitted to the Local Authority as part of the request for a Scoping Opinion under Regulation 13 of the EIA Regulations 2011. It has also been submitted to the neighbouring Local Planning Authority for their comments, due to the site being positioned over the administrative areas of two Local Planning Authorities.

5.2 It is anticipated that the Local Authority will invite statutory and other consultees to comment on the proposed scope and contents of the ES. It is considered that these consultees are likely to include:

- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Highways Agency
- Historic England
- Local Authority departments such as Environmental Health

5.3 This consultation will also include any other consultation bodies that the Planning Authority nominates, as required under Regulation 15 of the EIA Regulations 2011.

## Appendix A

**Application Site Location Plan**

**Appendix B**

**Schedule 4 of 2011 EIA Regulations**

SCHEDULE 4

Regulation 2(1)

INFORMATION FOR INCLUSION IN ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENTS

PART I

**1.** Description of the development, including in particular -

(a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole development and the land-use requirements during the construction and operational phases;

(b) a description of the main characteristics of the production processes, for instance, nature and quantity of the materials used;

(c) an estimate, by type and quantity, of expected residues and emissions (water, air and soil pollution, noise, vibration, light, heat, radiation, etc.) resulting from the operation of the proposed development.

**2.** An outline of the main alternatives studied by the applicant or appellant and an indication of the main reasons for his choice, taking into account the environmental effects.

**3.** A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development, including, in particular, population, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, including the architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the inter-relationship between the above factors.

**4.** A description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment, which should cover the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development, resulting from:

(a) the existence of the development;

(b) the use of natural resources;

(c) the emission of pollutants, the creation of nuisances and the elimination of waste,

and the description by the applicant of the forecasting methods used to assess the effects on the environment.

**5.** A description of the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and where possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment.

**6.** A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 5 of this Part.

**7.** An indication of any difficulties (technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered by the applicant in compiling the required information.

PART II

**1.** A description of the development comprising information on the site, design and size of the development.

**2.** A description of the measures envisaged in order to avoid, reduce and, if possible, remedy significant adverse effects.

**3.** The data required to identify and assess the main effects which the development is likely to have on the environment.

**4.** An outline of the main alternatives studied by the applicant or appellant and an indication of the main reasons for his choice, taking into account the environmental effects.

**5.** A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 4 of this Part.