

3 THE APPLICATION SITE

Preamble

Minor changes are required to reflect the inclusion of woodland to the north, as described in sections 3.2 Application Site and 3.3 Application Site Context as part of this ES Addendum 2018 to support Chapter 3 of the ES, as set out below. No other additional information is required as part of this ES Addendum to support Chapter 3 of the ES.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 This chapter of the ES provides a description of the Application Site and the surrounding context.

3.2 APPLICATION SITE

3.2.1 The site covers an area of approximately 26.4 hectares of land to the south east of Northampton. The site sits within the District Boundaries of two Local Planning Authorities. The northern section of the site is 8.3 hectares in size and is within Northampton Borough Council (NBC) and the southern section is 18.1 hectares in size and is within South Northamptonshire Council (SNC). The site is made up of an area of arable land and established woodland (northern section) and a parcel of land, formerly landfill, which comprises of semi improved grassland and a broadleaved plantation (southern section). The whole of the Application Site is 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.

3.2.2 The site is located, at its closest point, approximately 50m south of Brackmills Industrial Estate and the outskirts of Northampton are separated from the southern boundary of the site by Newport Pagnell Road. The hamlet of Preston Deanery is 1km to the south and the village of Great Houghton is 1.6km north east.

3.2.3 The northern parcel of land, within NBC, encompasses existing woodland which is subject to a Tree Protection Order (TPO). Further woodland lies to the north and west. 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.

3.2.4 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 a small road called '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.

3.2.5 Current vehicular access through the site is via two access points off Newport Pagnell Road in to the southern parcel of land and then a single access off 'The Green' which forms the southern boundary of the northern parcel; this small road separates the two sections of this Application Site.

3.2.6 The landform of the Application Site has subtle undulations with landform varying from c.96m to c.117m AOD in the southern section to c.101m to c.108m AOD in the

northern section. The highest point of the whole of the Application Site occurs in the South East corner of the southern parcel of land.

3.2.7 No Public Rights of Way (PRoW) traverse the site however, there is a Footpath (KM1) which ends on the other side of Newport Pagnell Road. Its location and the other environmental features discussed in this Chapter can be seen on **Figure 3.1 Environmental Constraints Plan**. This plan has considered the environmental constraints within a 3km radius of the Application Site. There are further PRoW within 600m of the Application Site, including footpaths KM3 and KN4 to the south; KN6 to the north west, and KU15 to the east.

3.2.8 Other than the TPO that covers woodland in the northernmost part of the Application Site, the site is not subject to any ecological, landscape or heritage designations.

3.3 APPLICATION SITE CONTEXT

3.3.1 The Application Site is defined to the north by the South of Brackmills Industrial Estate and the west by the City of Northampton. The Industrial Estate is made up of a mix of office and warehouse business, and has direct access off the A45, to the North.

3.3.2 As the Application Site is located within the SUE area, which is allocated for new housing. This SUE Area extends to the northwest and comprises of the HCA planning application (N/2013/338) which was granted planning consent for 1,000 new dwellings, a school, retail space and the necessary infrastructure. Land to the immediate south of the site, separated by Newport Pagnell Road (B526) has also been granted planning consent, this time for a further 300 dwellings and a number of these homes are currently being constructed.

3.3.3 At this time there is an established, but gappy hedgerow along all boundaries of the southern section of the site. There is also hedgerow and trees along the southern boundary and the majority of the western and eastern boundaries of the northern parcel. The northern section of the site encompasses and is wrapped by established woodland. This woodland offers a buffer strip between the Proposed Development and the South of Brackmills Industrial Estate.

3.3.4 Between the two parcels of land runs a small single carriageway road, known locally as 'The Green'. This road forms the District Boundary between South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) and Northampton Borough Council (NBC). It is proposed within the Application Indicative Masterplan (**Figure 4.6**) and the Access and Movement Parameter Plan (**Figure 4.3**) that the western section of this road will be downgraded to become a pedestrian/cycle link.

3.3.5 There are no Statutory Designated Sites for ecology within the site boundary, however, there is a Statutory Designated Site within 2km. To the north (c.2km) is the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits. This site is designated a Special Protection Area (SPA), Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a RAMSAR site. This site is made up from disused sand and gravel pits which extend for over 35km along the River Nene floodplain. This habitat is used by over-wintering and migratory bird populations.

3.3.6 Local ecological designations include Barnes Meadow which is a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and is approximately 1.8km to the north. This site is made up of three meadows either side of the River Nene. Brackmills Small Wood is a non-designated Potential Wildlife Site and is located on the northern boundary of the Application Site. There are a further seven Potential Wildlife Sites (PWS) within a 1km radius of the site. These sites include Brackmills Woods West (1km NW); Coca Cola field (0.2km NW) and Brackmills track (0.6km N). These PWS were considered by Northamptonshire County

Council when designating their Local Wildlife Sites and none were considered to contain a wide enough diversity or a rare habitat to warrant a higher level of designation.

3.3.7 The site is not subject to any local or national landscape designations. There are no Registered Parks and Gardens (RP&G) or statutory designations within the vicinity of the Site. Hardingstone Conservation Area is separated from the Proposed Development by the already approved new residential development of 1,000 new dwellings in the HCA scheme. This already approved scheme is anticipated to be in the foreground of any views from the Conservation Area towards the Proposed Development. There are a further four Conservation Areas within 3km radius of the Application Site. Wootton Conservation is 1.25km away and is separated by, and surrounded by the existing urban and residential development of Northampton. The remaining two Conservation Areas are located to the north east of the Application Site. These are Great Houghton and Little Houghton Conservation Areas. The closer of the two is Great Houghton which is approximately 1.6km away from the Application Site and between it and the Proposed Development is the existing South of Brackmills Industrial Estate.

3.3.8 No Listed Buildings occur within or adjacent to the site. The closest Listed Building is a Grade II property approximately 1.1km to the south east, on the outskirts of the hamlet of Preston Deanery. The nearest Grade I Listed Building is within Wootton Conservation Area and therefore over 1.25km away from the Application Site. The majority of all other Listed Buildings within a 3km assessment area of the Site are located within the Conservation Areas detailed above. Through the Screening and Scoping exercises for this Application, it has been determined by both Local Planning Authorities that it is unlikely that this proposal will have an environmentally significant effect on the local cultural heritage environment. Therefore, this environmental topic is not assessed in more detail within this Environmental Statement.

3.3.9 The majority of the Application Site is underlain by Glacial Till (predominantly cohesive strata). The solid geology underlying the site comprises a sequence of thin Jurassic beds, which vary from west to east across the site and include: Blisworth Limestone Formation, Wellingborough Limestone Member, Stamford Member (interbedded sandstone and siltstone), Northampton Sand Formation (Ooidal ironstone) and Whitby Mudstone Formation. No dip information for the solid strata is shown, although the cross section suggests a shallow dip to the east and south east. The site area is not affected by faulting and the nearest fault to the site area is 139m to the west.

3.3.10 The Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping indicates that the aquifer status varies across the site and includes unproductive strata in the west, secondary aquifers in the central area and principal aquifer along the western boundary. The Application Site is located within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone.

3.3.11 The site is not located within Zone 2 or 3 Flood Risk areas and is therefore not considered to be at risk of flooding. It is also not within a Source Protection Zone.

