

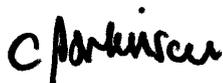
MOAT LANE TOWCESTER

Moat Lane Regeneration Project Environmental Statement Non-Technical Summary



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1 Introduction

Towcester Regeneration Ltd is seeking planning permission for the Moat Lane Regeneration Project. This Non Technical Summary (NTS) forms part of the Environmental Statement that has been prepared for the benefit of the consortium members - South Northamptonshire Council, Morgan Sindall Plc and Clayson Country Homes Ltd.

A planning application for the proposal has been submitted to South Northamptonshire Council and an associated Environmental Impact Assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations, 2011. The Regulations require for an Environmental Impact Assessment to be carried out and the results of the Environmental Impact Assessment to be included in an Environmental Statement to accompany the planning application.

The Environmental Statement comprises the following volumes:

- Volume I – Environmental Statement: Main Text and Figures
- Volume II – Environmental Statement: Appendices
- Non Technical Summary

The Environmental Statement can be viewed at the following location:

South Northamptonshire Council,
Springfields,
Towcester,
Northants,
NN12 6AE.

Printed and CD copies of all the documents (including the Non-Technical Summary) may also be obtained South Northamptonshire Council for a fee.

2 Site Context and Scheme Description

2.1 Site context

Towcester is a market town in rural Northamptonshire located along the A5, with a population of approximately 9,000. The population of Towcester is expected to double over the period to 2021 as a result of the Towcester Vale development; a large mixed-use urban extension to the south of Towcester that will accommodate up to 3,000 homes.

The Moat Lane site lies immediately to the northeast of Towcester town centre, comprising an area of some 2.74 hectares (ha), and is centred on national grid reference SP 6931 4884. The site is bordered by Northampton Road, Watling Street, Chantry Lane and the Mill Stream.

The most prominent feature within the Moat Lane site is Bury Mount, a Scheduled Monument, and there are several Grade II listed buildings on the site including Towcester Mill and Mill House. The site is located within Towcester Conservation Area. Easton Neston Estate, a Grade II Listed Registered Park and Garden, is located immediately to the northeast of the Moat Lane site and is separated from it by Mill Stream.

2.2 Scheme Description

The proposed regeneration project includes:

- Land and property behind Watling Street, between Northampton Road and Chantry Lane;
- Whittons Lane and Bakers Lane and properties either side;
- The Scheduled Monument of Bury Mount and open areas beside it;
- Towcester Mill and adjacent properties; and
- Northampton Road and its junction with Watling Street, extending approximately 66m beyond Mill Stream bridge.

The Moat Lane Regeneration Project is designed to strengthen the town centre in advance of a significant urban extension at the southern edge of Towcester. The aim of the project is to:

“provide the historic market town of Towcester with the level of new economic, social and community infrastructure that is commensurate with the growth proposed for the town through the comprehensive delivery of the highest quality of regeneration that reflects the settlement’s significant cultural and built heritage”.

The primary objectives of the regeneration project are:

- To strengthen and develop the town centre to enable it to support the needs of a thriving, vibrant and growing population;
- To deliver the physical, social and community services and facilities necessary to support the growth of the town as a whole;
- To build upon the distinctive historic identity of Towcester; and
- To strengthen and diversify the local economy.

3 Key Environmental Impacts

This section of the Non-Technical Summary provides an overview of the key findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment undertaken for the proposed Moat Lane Regeneration Project.

3.1 Policies and Plans

Chapter 5 of the Environmental Statement outlines the national, regional and local policies relevant to the Moat Lane Regeneration Project.

Government planning guidance at the national level is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 which replaces most Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance. Regional and Local policies are contained within the Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) Structure Plan- Saved Policy SDA1 (2009), South Northamptonshire Council Local Plan Saved Policies (2007) and the emerging South Northamptonshire Joint Local Development Framework (LDF) and West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS).

The assessment of Policies and Plans found that the Moat Lane Regeneration Project is generally compliant with the national, regional and local policies relevant to the proposed development.

The regeneration of Moat Lane will strengthen Towcester's role as a market town through providing additional facilities, shops and services for the population of Towcester as well as the surrounding rural areas. Regeneration will also enhance and preserve the historic character of the area and make it more accessible to the public.

3.2 Air Quality

Chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement includes an assessment of the potential local air quality impacts of the proposed Moat Lane Regeneration Project. The proposed site is adjacent to Watling Street (A5), part of which has been identified as an area of poor air quality and has been designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) by South Northamptonshire Council.

A detailed level operational phase assessment was conducted with reference to the methodology outlined in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Volume 11, Section 3, Part 1 HA 207/07 (HA, 2007) and assessed in accordance with the EPUK document 'Development Control: Planning For Air Quality' (EPUK, 2010).

It is considered that the significance of impacts during the demolition phase will be '**Negligible Adverse**', during construction phase will be of '**Minor Adverse**' and during occupation will be '**Negligible Adverse**'.

3.3 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

Chapter 7 of the Environmental Statement includes an assessment of the archaeology and cultural heritage within the site boundary of Moat Lane Regeneration Project and also the immediate area surrounding the site.

In total, forty-eight sites were noted within the site boundary including two Listed Buildings and a Scheduled Monument. One other Scheduled Monument is located in the immediate area outside of the site along with a number of Listed Buildings, a Registered Park and Garden, and a Conservation Area.

There is potential for previously unrecorded archaeological features to be found within the site boundary, and evaluation work undertaken has produced extensive evidence for occupation from at least the Roman period onwards. As a result, further detailed open area excavation will be required with construction-phase archaeological supervision in other areas.

The overall significance of impact of the proposed project is considered to be '**Moderate Adverse**'.

3.4 Ground Conditions

Chapter 8 of the Environmental Statement contains an assessment of ground conditions. Initial ground investigations have been undertaken at the site, and potential effects have been identified during both the construction and occupation phases of the proposed development.

All of the construction impacts can be substantially reduced or removed by further ground investigation and risk assessment, and adherence to good site practice, resulting in '**Neutral**' significance for residual construction effects.

A number of occupation phase impacts are likely to create potential effects. However, by implementing proposed mitigation measures any residual impacts will be reduced to **'Neutral'** significance.

3.5 Ecology and Nature Conservation

Chapter 9 of the Environmental Statement includes an assessment of the impact of the proposed Moat Lane Regeneration Project on ecology and nature conservation.

The impact of the regeneration project is assessed as **'Minor Adverse'** without mitigation measures. This is due to temporary disturbance to habitats, permanent habitat loss and the potential to harm/disturb protected species during the works.

Works must be timed to avoid the most vulnerable periods for the protected species identified on site and measures will be implemented to ensure that protected species are avoided or moved out of the working area before works commence.

Compensation and enhancement measures will also be implemented to create a **'Neutral / Minor Beneficial'** significance for overall residual impact for the habitats and species on site. Measures will include the creation of additional roosting opportunities, avoid indirect impact upon foraging and commuting bats by the project design and sensitive lighting, planting native species to compensate for habitat lost, works to Mill Stream to improve its benefit to wildlife, creation of habitat suitable for grass snakes and the provision of bird nesting boxes.

3.6 Townscape and Visual

Chapter 10 of the Environmental Statement includes an assessment of the impact of the proposed Moat Lane Regeneration Project on the existing townscape and visual resource of the townscape and visual study area.

The regeneration project will be likely to create a **'Moderate Beneficial'** significance improvement to the landscape and townscape character of the site and its immediate surroundings within Towcester. While the site opens to rural countryside along its eastern edge the trees along the banks of the mill stream and the parkland landscape of the Watermeadows and Easton Neston Estate help to mitigate views into the proposed Moat Lane site from the east. The proposals would incorporate the character of existing built elements into the Towcester townscape structure to achieve continuity and would be in keeping with the overall landscape/townscape character of Towcester and the surrounding area.

Through substantial townscape improvements the proposals would bring positive continued regeneration to this area of South Northamptonshire. Once complete, the development presents an opportunity for improvement to the townscape of Towcester and its immediately surrounding setting and character.

3.7 Water Quality

Chapter 11 of the Environmental Statement includes an assessment of the proposed Moat Lane Regeneration Project on surface water quality. There is the potential for **'Significant Adverse'** impacts to occur to the water environment during construction works from silt-laden runoff and chemical spillages. However, providing that good practice is followed during construction, including appropriate mitigation measures, all construction impacts can be reduced to **'Neutral'**.

The site poses a low risk of water pollution from diffuse urban pollution and other pollutant sources during the sites occupation. Surface runoff from existing developed areas will drain to a combined sewer, along with all foul flows from the site and no increase in impact from these flows will occur. Surface runoff from new areas will drain to the Mill Stream via a new separate surface water sewer system via permeable pavements which will provide treatment and flow attenuation. No adverse impacts are therefore predicted. The installation of a new outfall will lead to a permanent morphological impact to the Mill Stream, although this will be very localised and will result in a **'Minor Adverse'** impact only, which is not considered to be significant. No other residual impacts are predicted.

3.8 Flood Risk

Chapter 12 of the Environmental Statement includes an assessment of the proposed Moat Lane Regeneration Project on flood risk and drainage. The site is mainly located within Flood Zone 1; at low risk of fluvial flooding, with a small portion falling in Flood Zones 2 and 3. The layout has been developed sequentially within the site and the most vulnerable land uses directed to the least flood risk zones, where possible. The Exception Test is expected to be passed for the existing Mill Building.

The chapter considered the baseline conditions of the site. Mitigation measures have been suggested for potential impacts to both the construction and operation phases of the development. Residual and cumulative impacts have also been identified. There are no expected significant impacts to flood risk during the construction and operation of the project and the overall residual impacts are of **'Neutral'** significance.

3.9 Noise and Vibration

Chapter 13 of the Environmental Statement includes an assessment of the proposed Moat Lane Regeneration Project on noise and vibration and concludes:

Construction Phase

It has been predicted using the appropriate guidance that in the potential worst case scenario, but with the proposed mitigation measures in place, such as by adopting best practicable means and preparing a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), noise from construction activities are predicted to have an impact of a **'Minor/Moderate Adverse'** significance at the nearest receptors. This level of impact will only be present during a proportion of the construction programme.

Typical construction and demolition working practices are unlikely to generate levels of vibration at local receptors above which cosmetic damage to structures would be expected, but with mitigation to ensure vibration is kept to a minimum, impacts of **'Minor Adverse'** might be anticipated at the nearest receptor to the construction works. However, exact impacts will be dependent upon the working methods employed and further consideration of potential vibration impacts will need to be considered once a contractor is appointed.

Operational Phase

Noise from additional vehicles within the site has the potential to result in impacts of up to **'Major Adverse'** significance in the short term without mitigation and as such a number of mitigation measures including reduction of speed limit and acoustic screening have been suggested as measures to be developed further. Residual impacts at a small number of properties towards the northern end of the current Moat Lane are predicted to remain up to **'Moderate/Major Adverse'** significance, although when considering the contribution of noise from other busier local roads and the final mitigation adopted, this is likely to be an over-estimate of the residual impact significance. A more definitive impact significance could be established once % HGV data are available.

It is predicted, based upon professional qualitative judgement, that once the Proposed Development is fully occupied vibration impacts, primarily likely to be associated with road traffic, should be no greater than **'Minor Adverse'**, subject to the condition and maintenance of road surfaces.

3.10 Traffic and Transportation

Chapter 14 of the Environmental Statement has assessed the potential environmental impacts from transport for the operational phase of the site. It is expected that the proposed regeneration will result in only minimal increases in traffic.

The assessment suggest that the traffic will increase by less than 10% on the majority of links within the study area, with increases of greater than 10% being limited to the site accesses. A review of the impact of the increased traffic levels has been undertaken in respect of the likely impact on pedestrian severance and delay, fear and intimidation, driver delay and safety. It is considered that the level of increase will have a **'Negligible Adverse'** significance impact in respect of each of these criteria. Moreover, the development will be designed to provide an attractive environment that is well linked to the surrounding areas, thus encouraging non-motorised modes.

3.11 Waste

Chapter 15 of the Environmental Statement identifies the key impacts of the proposed Moat Lane Regeneration Project related to waste generation.

The waste generated by the proposed development is likely to have a '**Negligible Adverse**' impact on the local and regional waste management infrastructure during the demolition and construction phase. During the construction phase, emphasis will be placed on the efficient use of materials (through adherence to a Site Waste Management Plan) and the necessity to minimise waste generation. Demolition waste, such as building stone and good quality bricks, will be reused within the development where feasible. Even so, robust measures will be put in place to ensure that the maximum level of material is captured for reuse, recycling and recovery.

Waste arising from the residential area of the proposed development during the operational phase is likely to have a '**Minor Adverse**' impact on the local and regional waste management infrastructure. Waste arising from the commercial and retail facilities is likely to remain '**Negligible Adverse**' and will be collected and disposed of under commercial arrangements, in accordance with relevant legislation.

3.12 Cumulative Effects

The following is a summary of the potential cumulative effects that could occur as a result of the Moat Lane Regeneration Project. Further information is provided within each of the technical chapters within the Environmental Statement.

Air Quality

Construction Phase

Cumulative impacts will only occur during this phase if the construction phase of other nearby developments coincides with that of Moat Lane Regeneration Project. If this is the case, even greater attention should be paid to the proposed mitigation measures to ensure the cumulative impact will remain at acceptable levels.

Operational phase

Due to the presence of the AQMA on Watling Street, further proposed development may result in a worsening of air quality within the AQMA and may result in significant impacts.

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

There are several recent developments in the town of Towcester. These are likely to have some cumulative impacts with the Moat Lane Regeneration Project.

The site is in an area where development has seen significant traces of Roman, medieval and post-medieval archaeological evidence removed. There are few sites left in the centre of Towcester which have not been disturbed and which have potential for locating multiple phases of archaeological activity.

Close liaison with the relevant consultees will ensure that cumulative impacts are minimised.

Ground Conditions

The majority of both construction and occupational impacts identified are considered to be of neutral significance with the exception of risks to construction workers and end users of the site. Following the implementation of mitigation, all of the construction and occupational impacts are considered to be neutral. Therefore, these receptors would not be expected to be exposed to significant impacts from other areas of the site and/ other local development sites. Therefore, cumulative impacts are not considered to be significant.

Ecology and Nature Conservation

Cumulative effects are considered where the presence of other projects of a similar type and scale within the study area may have an impact on the ecology and nature conservation value of that area.

A search was undertaken on the LPA website to identify current planning applications within a 2km vicinity of the Moat Lane site. No major planning applications located within a 2km radius of the site are being considered.

Townscape and Visual

There are no developments of a similar type or scale within the study area and as a result there are no cumulative townscape and visual effects.

Water Quality

South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) has granted planning permission for land to the east of the Mill Stream opposite the proposed project site, for the change of land use from private to public open space, along with new vehicular access, footpath and construction of a bridge across the Mill Stream. This work has been carried out in accordance with good practice mitigation measures and appropriate consents from the EA to avoid and minimise any adverse impacts. This change in land use and associated development has been completed in advance of any construction on site, therefore no cumulative impact on the surface water environment is predicted. No other known developments are likely to cause cumulative impacts with respect to the surface water environment.

Flood Risk

South Northamptonshire Council has granted planning permission for a number of development proposals in the Towcester area (Towcester Vale). Flood Risk Assessments have been prepared as appropriate for these development proposals. These Flood Risk Assessments demonstrate that the approved developments should not have an adverse impact on flood risk in Towcester and that appropriate surface water drainage systems should be installed. Assuming that the recommended flood risk mitigation measures are installed and drainage systems are designed and constructed there should be no cumulative impacts with respect to flood risk.

Noise and Vibration

Construction Phase

There is the potential for cumulative noise impacts from the proposed development in conjunction with other concurrent projects in the vicinity arising from simultaneous demolition and construction works. However if best guidance is followed for each development, it is unlikely that significant adverse cumulative impacts will occur.

Operational Phase

It has been recommended that noise limits from mechanical plant are set to ensure that the combined noise from all developments does not significantly affect noise inside nearby existing or proposed dwellings. Therefore, provided this is implemented, and any other new plant at other sites is similarly mitigated, it is unlikely that there will be a significant adverse cumulative impact from fixed building services plant.

Additional traffic flow resulting from other developments is unlikely to result in major or adverse cumulative impacts.

Traffic and Transportation

The assessment of the environmental impact of the traffic associated with the proposed Moat Lane Regeneration Project has been based upon traffic flows set out in the Transport Assessment. Within the Transport Assessment due consideration has been given to any other committed developments and the scope of the assessment was agreed with the consultees.

This assessment has, in using the traffic flows within that Transport Assessment, also considered any other committed developments and the cumulative environmental impact that these may have.

No adverse cumulative impacts are predicted.

Waste

The proposed development will have a negligible adverse impact on the region's waste management infrastructure during the construction phase. There is potential for the significance of this impact increasing should concurrent demolition or construction projects occur in the vicinity of the development. A minor adverse impact on the region's waste management infrastructure from the residential land use during the operational phase is expected; whilst commercial and retail uses will have a negligible adverse impact on the regions waste management infrastructure. These impacts would increase in significance should other developments be constructed in the vicinity of Moat Lane, however no such schemes have been identified at this stage.

4 Conclusion

An Environmental Impact Assessment has been undertaken in order to identify the likely significant effects on the environment of the Moat Lane Regeneration Project. The findings of the individual technical assessments are summarised above. The expected residual (after mitigation) impacts are given in Table A.

Table A: Summary of Impacts

Chapter	Predicted Impacts
Policies and Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliant
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negligible Adverse impact during demolition. • Minor Adverse impact during construction. • Negligible Adverse impact during occupation.
Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate Adverse impact.
Ground Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral impact during demolition/construction. • Neutral impact during occupation.
Ecology and Nature Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral / Minor Beneficial impact.
Townscape and Visual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate Beneficial impact.
Water Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral impact during demolition/construction. • Minor Adverse impact during occupation.
Flood Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral impact.
Noise and Vibration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor / Moderate Adverse noise impact during demolition/construction. • Minor Adverse vibration impact during demolition/construction. • Moderate / Major Adverse noise impact during occupation. • Minor Adverse vibration impact during occupation.
Traffic and Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negligible Adverse impact.
Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negligible Adverse impact during demolition/construction. • Minor Adverse impact during occupation for residential waste. • Negligible Adverse impact during occupation for commercial waste.
Cumulative Effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None anticipated.