

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1 This **Environmental Statement (ES)** forms part a planning application submitted by the applicant, Hallam Land Management, Barratt David Wilson and Davidson Developments to Blaby District Council.
- 1.1.2 The planning application is for a new Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) and Strategic Employment Site (SES) at Lubbesthorpe, Blaby. The planning application covers an area of 394 hectares. This application throughout the **ES** is herein referred to as '**Lubbesthorpe**' or the '**Project**'.
- 1.1.3 The **ES** Project area encompasses agricultural farmland at the western edge of Leicester. The development site is bound to the east by the M1 Motorway and to the west by Beggars Lane. The Project's context in relation to Leicester and the surrounding area is demonstrated at **Appendix 2A: Figure 2.1**. A more detailed location plan and aerial photographs are attached at **Appendix 2A: Figures 2.1, 2.2.1 and 2.2.2**.
- 1.1.4 A request for a Scoping Opinion was submitted to Blaby District Council on 23rd December 2009, in accordance with Part IV, section 10, of the **Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment –England & Wales Regulations 1999)** and the subsequent **Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment (Amendment) (England) Regulations** Sept 2008. The covering letter and request is included at **Appendix 1A**. The District Council's formal Scoping Opinion was received on 5th February 2010 and is included at **Appendix 1B**.

1.2 REQUIREMENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 1.2.1 European Community Directive 85/337 EE came into effect in July 1998 and required an assessment to be undertaken for certain types of major projects which are judged to have significant environmental effects.
- 1.2.2 The Department of Environment, Transport and The Regions (DETR) published **Circular 2/99 Environmental Impact Assessment** (March 1999). The document gives guidance on the '**Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England & Wales) Regulations 1999**'. Part of Regulations 3 to 11 have been subsequently amended by the **Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment (Amendment) (England) Regulations** Sept 2008.
- 1.2.3 The regulations control the need and procedure for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); the main objective being to ensure that the authority granting planning permission for a particular project makes such decisions having had regard to the likely significant effects of development on the environment. Where an EIA is required, information must be provided by the applicant in the form of an **Environmental Statement (ES)**.

- 1.2.4 The **ES** sets out the findings of the EIA as required by the regulations and includes a **Non-Technical Summary**. Supporting and background information is included as a series of technical appendices within the **ES**.

1.3 SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

- 1.3.1 The **ES** is required to include “at least” the information included in Part II, Schedule 4 to the Regulations and such information in Part I as is reasonably required to assess the environmental effects of the development, and which the applicant can reasonably be required to complete. EIA regulations require that the following information should be included in an ES:-

- *A description of the development comprising information on the site, design and size of the development;*
- *A description of the measures envisaged in order to avoid, reduce and, if possible remedy significant adverse effects;*
- *The data required to identify and assess the main effects which the development is likely to have on the environment;*
- *An outline of the main alternatives studied by the applicant or appellant and an indication of the main reasons for this choice, taking into account the environmental effects;*
- *A Non-Technical Summary of the above information.*

Each environmental topic is considered in the following way:-

- *A description of the baseline conditions;*
- *An assessment of potential effects that may arise during construction, operation and decommissioning (where appropriate);*
- *Detail of the design/mitigation measures proposed to remove, reduce or remedy any potentially significant adverse effects;*
- *A description of any significant adverse effects that may remain following implementation of the mitigation measures (residual effects).*

- 1.3.2 The **ES** evaluates the following *environmental* topics, which have been agreed through the Scoping Request with Blaby District Council. These topics are considered *most* likely to be affected by construction and operation of the proposed Project.

- **Planning Policy Context** (prepared by David Lock Associates)
- **Consideration of Alternatives** (prepared by David Lock Associates)
- **Socio Economic Issues** (prepared by David Lock Associates)

- **Landscape Visual Resources** (prepared by fpcr)
- **Ecological Resources (including Arboriculture)** (prepared by fpcr)
- **Cultural Heritage and Archaeology** (prepared by University of Leicester Archaeological Services)
- **Agricultural Land Quality** (prepared by Land Research Associates)
- **Water, Hydrology and Drainage** (prepared by Waterman Group)
- **Land Contamination** (prepared by Rodgers Leask)
- **Noise and Vibration/Acoustics** (prepared by Waterman Group)
- **Air Quality** (prepared by Waterman Group)
- **Waste** (prepared by fpcr)
- **Traffic and Transport** (prepared by Waterman Boreham)
- **Infrastructure and Services** (prepared by Waterman Boreham)

1.3.3 Each environmental topic is based on the following structure:-

Introduction and Methodology

A brief outline of the technical criteria and methodology used for the assessment is described. Where applicable this refers to any consultation.

Planning Context

An outline of the Planning Context (National, Regional and Local) *relevant* to the Chapter is included.

Baseline Conditions

This identifies an assessment of the existing condition, sensitivity and qualities of the site/project area. All research and field work is explained along with any constraints or difficulties encountered during the baseline process. This provides comparative measure against the Project.

Project Design

Each topic refers to the Project design as set out in **Chapter 2: Development Proposals** and the **Parameters Plans (Appendix 2A: Figures 2.4 – 2.10.3)**. In order to establish a project that seeks to minimise any adverse significant environmental effects and maximise environmental benefits, each topic explains how the Project and its design has responded to the baseline assessment and any potential significant adverse impacts. Where applicable to each discipline, the chapter demonstrates the specific project measures that

will be used to avoid, reduce and/or remedy any adverse effects as well as to enhance and provide beneficial effects.

Assessment of Effects

Operation

Each topic assesses the *significant* environmental impacts that would arise from the Project. This is represented by the magnitude of impact, whether it is adverse or beneficial, short term or long term, and also the duration and the scale of the impact. Impact is quantified negligible, slight/minor, moderate, or substantial.

Construction

Environmental effects arising from the construction phase of the Project are explained following the criteria outlined above.

Residual Effects

This provides a description and assessment of the magnitude and significance of any effects that will remain after the proposed mitigation/design measures are applied. Effects may be adverse or beneficial

Cumulative Effects

This section assesses the likely significant environmental effects of the Project when considered in the context of other future projects.

Statement of Effects

This is a summary statement, which clearly describes the impacts of the Project and the overall effects on the environment; i.e. negligible slight, moderate or substantial. Effects can be either adverse or beneficial.

1.3.4 A **Non-Technical Summary** of the **Environmental Statement** is also included.