

2 ASSESSMENT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 This chapter explains the methodology used to prepare the technical chapters of this ES and describes its structure and content. In particular, it sets out the process of identifying and assessing the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development.

2.2 GENERAL APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

2.2.1 As stated in Chapter 1 of this Environmental Statement (ES) this document has been prepared and assessed using the 2017 EIA Regulations (as amended).

2.2.2 Schedule 4 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 '*Information for inclusion in environmental statements*' requires that an Environmental Statement should include at least the following information:

- *Part 1: 'A description of the development' – including information on the location of the development site, the physical characteristics of the development,*
- *Part 2: 'A description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the developer' – for example with regard to development design, technology, location, size and scale*
- *Part 3: 'A description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (baseline scenario)'- including how the baseline might evolve if the development were not to proceed*
- *Part 4: 'A description of the factors specified in regulation 4(2) likely to be significantly affected by the development' – including with regard to population, human health, biodiversity (for example fauna and flora), land (for example land take), soil (for example organic matter, erosion, compaction, sealing), water (for example hydromorphological changes, quantity and quality), air, climate (for example greenhouse gas emissions, impacts relevant to adaptation), material assets, cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological aspects, and landscape*
- *Part 5: 'A description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment' – including with regard to: construction and/or demolition works, the use of natural resources, emission of pollutants and the disposal of waste, the potential for accidents, cumulative effects with other developments, vulnerability with respect to climate change and the technologies and materials to be used. The description of the likely significant effects should cover 'direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development'*
- *Part 6: 'A description of the forecasting methods or evidence, used to identify and assess the significant effects on the environment' – including with regard to: technical*

deficiencies or lack of knowledge encountered compiling the required information and the main uncertainties involved.

- **Part 7:** *'A description of the measures envisaged to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any identified significant adverse effects on the environment'* – including where appropriate with regard to: any proposed monitoring arrangements (for example the preparation of a post-project analysis). The description should explain the **'extent, to which significant adverse effects on the environment are avoided, prevented, reduced or offset'**, and should cover both the construction and operational phases.
- **Part 8:** *'A description of the expected significant adverse effects of the development on the environment deriving from the vulnerability of the development to risks of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned'*. Where appropriate, this description should include measures envisaged to prevent or mitigate the significant adverse effects of such events on the environment and details of the preparedness for and proposed response to such emergencies.
- **Part 9:** *'A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 8'*.
- **Part 10:** *'A reference list detailing the sources used for the descriptions and assessments included in the environmental statement'*.

2.2.3 Accordingly, this ES includes each of the elements set out above.

2.3 DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

2.3.1 The Proposed Development, which has been the subject of this EIA, is described in more detail within **Chapter 3: The Site and the Proposed Development** and its accompanying Figures. This Chapter sets out the basis on which the assessment of the potential for the Proposed Development to result in significant environmental effects, as defined in the EIA Regulations, has been undertaken.

2.4 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

2.4.1 As noted above, Schedule 4 (Part 2), Paragraph 2, of the EIA Regulations requires that the ES contain *"A description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the developer"*. Furthermore, the published National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) on EIA (Paragraph O35) states that *"Where alternative approaches to development have been considered, the Environmental Statement should include an outline of the main alternatives studied which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics and provide an indication of the main reasons for the choice made, including a comparison of the environmental effects"*.

2.4.2 Accordingly, this ES contains **Chapter 4: Alternatives Considered** setting out the main alternative development proposals and/or design iterations, as appropriate, as considered by the Applicant.

2.5 SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2.5.1 In order to determine the scope of an EIA, the EIA Regulations make provision for, but do not statutorily require, an applicant to request that the LPA provide a written opinion as to the

information to be provided within the ES. In the case of this application, a request was made by the Applicant for such an opinion and the Scoping Opinion was issued dated 16.11.22.

2.5.2 It should be noted that environmental effects may be positive or negative and this will be noted in the ES. Effects will be considered both during the construction phase, when the development is being built (generally temporary effects) and following completion of the development (generally permanent effects).

2.5.3 Accordingly, the environmental themes scoped into or out of the EIA are given in **Table 2.2**.

Table 2.2: Environmental Themes Scoped In / Out

Environmental Theme	Scoped In/Out	How/ Where Addressed / Reason for Scoping Out
Human Beings	In	Effects on views from nearby visual receptors (people in their properties and users of footpaths and roads) are addressed within Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Effects .
Fauna and Flora	In	Consideration of the potential effects on both fauna and flora, and protected species has been addressed in Chapter 8: Ecology .
Soil	Out	No potential for significant effects to arise.
Water	Out	No potential for significant effects to arise.
Air	Out	No potential for significant effects to arise.
Climatic Factors	Out	No potential for significant effects to arise.
Cultural and Archaeological Heritage	In	Addressed within Chapter 7: Archaeology & Cultural Heritage
Landscape	In	Addressed within Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Effects
Inter-relationship between above factors	In	Where applicable, within each topic chapter (Chapters 6 to 8) under the heading Cumulative and In-combination Effects.

2.6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

2.6.1 The content of the ES is based on the following:

- Review of the baseline situation through existing information, including data, reports, site surveys and desktop studies;
- Consideration of the relevant National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and accompanying National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), and the statutory extant and emerging development plan policies;
- Consideration of potential sensitive receptors;
- Identification of likely significant environmental effects and an evaluation of their duration and magnitude;
- Expert opinion;
- Modelling;
- Use of relevant technical and good practice guidance; and
- Specific consultations with appropriate bodies.

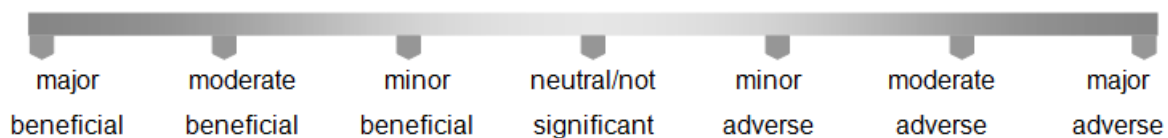
2.6.2 Environmental effects have been evaluated with reference to definitive standards and legislation where available. Where it has not been possible to quantify effects, assessments have been based on available knowledge and professional judgement.

2.7 DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

2.7.1 The purpose of the EIA is to identify the likely 'significance' of environmental effects (beneficial or adverse) arising from a Proposed Development. In broad terms, environmental effects are described as:

- Adverse – detrimental or negative effects to an environmental resource or receptor;
- Beneficial – advantageous or positive effect to an environmental resource or receptor; or
- Negligible – a neutral effect to an environmental resource or receptor.

2.7.2 The significance of environmental effects (adverse, negligible/neutral or beneficial) are generally described in the ES in accordance with the following 7-point scale, unless where specifically explained otherwise :-



2.7.3 Significance generally reflects the relationship between two factors:

- The magnitude or severity of an effect (i.e. the actual change taking place to the environment); and
- The sensitivity, importance or value of the resource or receptor.

2.7.4 The broad criteria for determining magnitude are set out in **Table 2.3**.

Table 2.3: Degrees of Magnitude and their Criteria

Magnitude of Effect	Criteria
High	Total loss or major/substantial alteration to elements/features of the baseline (pre-development) conditions such that the post development character/composition/attributes will be fundamentally changed.
Medium	Loss or alteration to one or more elements/features of the baseline conditions such that post development character/composition/attributes of the baseline will be materially changed.
Low	A minor shift away from baseline conditions. Change arising from the loss/alteration will be discernible / detectable but the underlying character / composition / attributes of the baseline condition will be similar to the pre-development.
Negligible	Very little change from baseline conditions. Change not material, barely distinguishable or indistinguishable, approximating to a 'no change' situation.

2.7.5 The sensitivity of a receptor is based on the relative importance of the receptor using the scale in **Table 2.4**.

Table 2.4: Degrees of Sensitivity and their Criteria

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	The receptor / resource has little ability to absorb change without fundamentally altering its present character, or is of international or national importance.
Medium	The receptor / resource has moderate capacity to absorb change without significantly altering its present character, or is of high and more than local (but not national or international) importance.
Low	The receptor / resource is tolerant of change without detrimental effect, is of low or local importance.
Negligible	The receptor / resource can accommodate change without material effect, is of limited importance.

2.7.6 Placement within the 7-point significance scale is generally derived from the interaction of the receptor’s sensitivity and the magnitude of change likely to be experienced (as above), assigned in accordance with **Table 2.5** below, whereby effects assigned a rating of Major or Moderate would be considered as having the potential to be ‘significant’.

Table 2.5: Degrees of Significance

Magnitude of Change	Sensitivity of Receptor				
		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
High		Major	Major	Moderate	Negligible
Medium		Major	Moderate	Minor to Moderate	Negligible
Low		Moderate	Minor to Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Negligible		Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

2.7.7 The above magnitude and significance criteria are provided as a general guide for specialists to categorise the significance of effects within the ES. Where discipline-specific methodology has been applied that differs from the generic criteria above, this is clearly explained within the given chapter and it should be noted that discipline-specific methodology is often used rather than generic criteria, particularly where best practice and guidance require subtle differences.

2.7.8 A significance of effect is assigned both before and after mitigation, where any measures have been set out.

2.8 MITIGATION

2.8.1 Standard measures and the adoption of construction best practice methods to avoid, minimise or manage adverse environmental effects, or to ensure realisation of beneficial effects, are assumed to have been incorporated into the design of the Proposed Development and the methods of its construction from the outset. Further information is detailed in **Chapter 3: The Site and the Proposed Development**. Where outlined, the assessment is of the Proposed Development incorporating these measures.

2.8.2 Where mitigation measures are proposed that are specific to an environmental theme (i.e. ecological measures incorporated into the landscaping scheme, exclusion of areas of

archaeological significance from development etc) and incorporated into the design, these are also highlighted within the relevant technical chapter.

2.8.3 Where the assessment of the Proposed Development has identified potential for adverse environmental effects, the scope for mitigation of those effects, for example by way of compensatory measures, has been considered and is outlined in the appropriate technical chapter. It is assumed that such measures would be subject to appropriate planning conditions or obligations.

2.8.4 Where the effectiveness of the mitigation proposed has been considered uncertain, or where it depends upon assumptions of operating procedures, then data and/or professional judgment has been introduced to support these assumptions.

2.9 CUMULATIVE AND IN-COMBINATION EFFECTS

Cumulative Effects

2.9.1 Within EIA, cumulative effects are generally considered to arise from the combination of effects from the Proposed Development and from other proposed or permitted schemes in the vicinity, acting together to generate elevated levels of effects. The effects of the Proposed Development in combination with other relevant nearby developments have been considered within the EIA. In particular, it is noted that in the vicinity of the site, on the opposite side of the A4074 immediately to the east, there is an approved Solar farm (application ref: P20/S4360/FUL), which provides 45MW of renewable energy across an overall area of 123ha. Cumulative effects are considered in each technical chapter, they are not presented as a single standalone chapter within the ES.

2.10 GENERAL ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

2.10.1 The principal assumptions that have been made and any limitations that have been identified in preparing this ES are set out below:

- All of the principal land uses adjoining the Application Site remain as present day, except where redevelopment proposals have been granted planning consent. In those cases it is assumed the redevelopment proposals will be implemented or would but for the development being implemented;
- Information received from third parties is complete and up to date;
- The design, construction and completed stages of the Proposed Development will satisfy legislative requirements; and
- Conditions will be attached to the planning permission with regards "mitigation", where considered necessary to make the development acceptable.

STRUCTURE OF TECHNICAL CHAPTERS

2.10.2 Throughout the EIA process, the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development will be assessed. Within each of the technical chapters (Chapters 6 to 9) the information which will inform the EIA process has generally been set out in the following way:

- **Introduction** – to introduce the topic under consideration, state the purpose of undertaking the assessment and set out those aspects of the Proposed Development material to the topic assessment;
 - **Assessment Approach** – to describe the method and scope of the assessment undertaken and responses to consultation in relation to method and scope in each case pertinent to the topic under consideration;
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- **Baseline Conditions** – a description of the baseline conditions pertinent to the topic under consideration including baseline survey information;
- **Assessment of Likely Significant Effects** – identifying the likely effects, evaluation of those effects and assessment of their significance, considering both construction and operational and direct and indirect effects;
- **Mitigation and Enhancement** – describing the mitigation strategies for the significant effects identified and noting any residual effects of the proposals;
- **Cumulative and In-combination Effects (*where applicable*)** consideration of potential cumulative and in-combination effects with those of other developments; and
- **Summary** – a non-technical summary of the chapter, including baseline conditions, likely significant effects, mitigation and conclusion.