



LAND TO THE WEST OF HATFIELD

Environmental Statement – Chapter 1: Introduction

Arlington Business Parks GP Ltd

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

This Environmental Statement ('ES') has been prepared by Triptych PD Limited on behalf of Arlington Business Parks GP Limited ('the client') and sets out the results of an Environmental Impact Assessment undertaken for the proposed development at Land to the West of Hatfield. This Environmental Statement is to form part of an outline planning application submitted to the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council which seeks consent for:

"Large-scale mixed-use development including 1,100 new homes and supporting infrastructure including a primary school, local centre and open space."

The masterplan of the proposed development have been prepared by LDA-Design and have been guided through an iterative design process by the various technical consultants that are instructed on this project. Further information regarding the development proposals, its design and the consideration of 'alternatives' are contained within Chapter 3 of this ES.

1.2 THE APPLICANT & LAND OWNERSHIP

Arlington Business Parks GP Limited is the freehold owner of the site. The red line plan identifies the application site and also includes the blue line showing the Applicant's adjacent ownership.

1.3 THE PLANNING APPLICATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 (as amended) this ES accompanies the formal planning application submission. As a whole, the planning application submission consists of the following:

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| • Application forms, including associated Certificates & CIL | Maddox Associates |
| • Planning Statement | Maddox Associates |
| • Statement of Community Involvement | Maddox Associates |
| • Design & Access Statement | LDA-Design |
| • Masterplan | LDA-Design |
| • Flood Risk Assessment | Baynham Meikle |
| • Water and Drainage Assessment | Baynham Meikle |
| • Land Contamination Assessment | Baynham Meikle |
| • Transport Assessment | Vectos |
| • Travel Plan | Vectos |
| • The Environmental Statement & Non-Technical Summary. | (see below) |

1.3.1 The Environmental Statement

With regard to the **Environmental Statement ('ES')**, this document reports the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') and is presented as follows:

- Chapters 1 to 5 are predominantly descriptive in nature, setting out the background to the site, the development proposals, the surrounding area and the applicable planning policy:
 - Chapter 1 – Introduction Triptych PD
 - Chapter 2 – Site and Surroundings Triptych PD
 - Chapter 3 – Proposals and Alternatives Triptych PD
 - Chapter 4 – Committed Developments Triptych PD
 - Chapter 5 – Planning Policy Triptych PD
 - Chapter 6 – Topics Not Considered to have Significant Effects Triptych PD

- Chapters 7 to 17 form the findings of the EIA, with each technical discipline detailing the applicable background information, the applicable scope of work, assessing the potential impacts of the development, considering cumulative impacts, recommending mitigation where appropriate and detailing any residual impacts. Drawings are included where necessary, whilst chapters are also supported by Technical Appendices, where necessary.
 - Chapter 7 – Air Quality SLR Consulting
 - Chapter 8 – Ground Conditions and Contamination Baynham Meikle
 - Chapter 9 – Noise and Vibration Hoare Lea
 - Chapter 10 – Socio-Economics Development Economics
 - Chapter 11 – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment LDA-Design
 - Chapter 12 – Transport Vectos
 - Chapter 13 – Water Resources, Flood Risk and Drainage Baynham Meikle
 - Chapter 14 – Ecology BSG Ecology
 - Chapter 15 – Cumulative Impacts Triptych PD
 - Chapter 17 – Mitigation Triptych PD
 - Chapter 18 – Conclusion Triptych PD

- **Technical Appendices** include the masterplan, supplementary information related to the environmental aspects of the proposal and selected technical reports in full.

A **Non-Technical Summary ('NTS')** of the ES has been provided as a separate document, providing a brief summary of the proposed development and its likely effects on the environment in non-technical language.

1.4 THE REQUIREMENT FOR AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Applications for development that fall to be considered under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 are required to be supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment. Under the Regulations, a request for Screening Opinion can be made to a local planning authority to confirm whether the development would fall to be considered under the Regulations as an 'EIA Development'. Within the Regulations the criteria for considering whether the proposals constitute an 'EIA Development' are defined as either 'Schedule 1' or 'Schedule 2' developments within the Regulations.

Schedule 1 developments consist of those which are likely to have significant environmental effects, including significant infrastructure, waste, transport, power, and other chemical or petrochemical projects. For all other projects which fall to be considered under Schedule 2, the requirement for an EIA is determined on the basis of the following criteria:

- The development is within a class contained within Column 1 of Schedule 2 (i.e. 'Infrastructure Projects')
- The development either meets or exceeds the thresholds contained within Column 2 of Schedule 2 (i.e. Class 10 (a) – 'the area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectares); and
- The development proposals are likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as the character of the development, location and potential impact (as defined by Schedule 3).

The development falls to be considered under Schedule 2 Class 10 (b) – 'Urban Development Projects'. The applicable thresholds for this Class under the 2017 Regulations are as follows:

- (i) The development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or
- (ii) The development includes more than 150 dwellings; or
- (iii) The overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.

1.5 SCREENING & SCOPING

1.5.1 Screening Opinion

The proposals are for 1,100 dwellings plus associated infrastructure with an overall site area of 67.5 hectares. It was therefore the professional judgement of the Team and in discussions with Officers at Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council ('WHBC', 'the Council', 'local planning authority' and/or 'LPA') that the proposals were considered EIA development and that an ES would be required to accompany any subsequent planning application.

1.5.2 Scoping Opinion

The gaining of a Scoping Opinion is not a mandatory requirement in terms of the EIA Regulations. In this instance, the decision has been taken by the Applicant/Project Team to submit the outline planning application without gaining an Opinion but based on combined professional judgement. Chapter 6 sets out those topics not considered to have significant environmental effects and therefore not part of the disciplines assessed and reported in this ES.

1.6 EIA SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

1.6.1 Applicable Regulations

The proposed development is subject to the formal EIA process in accordance with Directive 2011/92/EU and the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ('the EIA Regulations'). The EU Directive was amended in 2014.

1.6.2 Scope of the EIA

The ES for the proposed development has been prepared in line with Part 5 Paragraph 18 (3) of the EIA Regulations 2017, which states:

An environmental statement is a statement which includes at least—

- a. a description of the proposed development comprising information on the site, design, size and other relevant features of the development;*
- b. a description of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment;*
- c. a description of any features of the proposed development, or measures envisaged in order to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment;*
- d. a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, taking into account the effects of the development on the environment;*
- e. a non-technical summary of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (d); and*
- f. any additional information specified in Schedule 4 relevant to the specific characteristics of the particular development or type of development and to the environmental features likely to be significantly affected.*

(4) goes onto state:

An environmental statement must:

- a. where a scoping opinion or direction has been issued in accordance with regulation 15 or 16, be based on the most recent scoping opinion or direction issued (so far as the proposed development remains materially the same as the proposed development which was subject to that opinion or direction);*
- b. include the information reasonably required for reaching a reasoned conclusion on the significant effects of the development on the environment, taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment; and*
- c. be prepared, taking into account the results of any relevant UK environmental assessment, which are reasonably available to the person preparing the environmental statement, with a view to avoiding duplication of assessment.*

In accordance with (5) that states:

In order to ensure the completeness and quality of the environmental statement:

- a. the developer must ensure that the environmental statement is prepared by competent experts; and*
- b. the environmental statement must be accompanied by a statement from the developer outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts.*

Confirmation of such accompanies this ES.

1.6.3 EIA Methodology

The EIA has been prepared in accordance with the statutory guidance and requirements, and the contents of the ES have been prepared in line with the EIA Regulations 2017. The technical chapters of the ES address the potentially significant environmental impacts, as determined through site analysis completed to date and as outlined further in Chapter 4 of this ES.

The EIA has addressed the potential environmental impact and effects of the proposed development and, where appropriate, the following categories of effects have been analysed:

- residual and cumulative;
- temporary and permanent (short and long term); and
- beneficial, negligible and adverse.

The ES provides a description of the baseline environment(s) against which the environmental impacts will be assessed and a description of the proposed development, whilst the detailed methodology utilised is outlined within each of the technical chapters contained herein.

The significance criteria used in undertaking the EIA have been described within each technical chapter and are based on relevant standards, criteria, guidance and statutory requirements, where applicable. Where possible, quantitative analysis has been utilised, with qualitative analysis undertaken where this is not possible, in line with professional opinion and judgement. For consistency and where possible within the technical chapters of the ES, the significance level of quantitative and qualitative impacts will reference impact criteria as follows:

- major;
- moderate;
- minor; and
- negligible.

An example significance matrix is provided in Table 1.1 below. However, as outlined above, each technical chapter will define the applicable significance matrix within their methodology in accordance with the applicable relevant standards, criteria, guidance and statutory requirements.

Table 1.1 – Example Significance Matrix

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

Each of the technical chapters contained within the ES has outlined the appropriate mitigation measures which are recommended or required to address, reduce or avoid the significant adverse impacts on the environment. These mitigation measures are also summarised within Chapter 16.

1.6.4 Cumulative Effects

The EIA has considered the cumulative effects associated with the proposed development. As detailed within EIA guidance, cumulative effects can be considered as:

- The combined effect of individual effects arising as a result of the Proposed Development: i.e. a single receptor experiencing multiple effects as a result of noise, air quality and transport; and
- The combined effects of the proposed development in combination with other development schemes in the locality: i.e. effects which on an individual basis are insignificant but in combination with other development scheme would lead to a significant effect.

Further consideration of cumulative effects is contained within Chapter 15 of the ES.

1.7 VIEWING THE ES AND REPRESENTATIONS

1.7.1 Requesting Copies of ES Documents

The ES and associate NTS will be available to view (free of charge) either via the planning applications page of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (<http://www.welhat.gov.uk/planning>) or at the Council offices located at The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6AE.

Alternatively, a copy of the ES can be requested from Triptych PD in either electronic or hard copy. The cost of duplicating the ES will be charged at cost (i.e. no additional uplift) dependent on the format that the copy is requested. These costs are detailed below:

- Electronic copy via CD – £10
- Hard copy via post – £450 + postage

Unfortunately, given the size of the ES, it is not possible to disseminate copies of this document via email.

A copy of the NTS can also be requested from Triptych PD in either electronic (email or CD) or hard copy and is available free of charge. If a hard copy is requested, please send an A4 size stamp addressed envelope to the following address: 62 Queen's Park Terrace, Brighton, BN2 9YB.

1.7.2 Representations

Should you wish to make representations to the application or in direct reference to the ES, these should be made within 30 days of the date that the application has been registered by the local planning authority – 30 days is set as a LPA cannot determine an EIA application within that initial timescale. Any such representations can be submitted to the planning department of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council either via the planning applications page or by writing to the Council offices located at The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6AE.