



MAMHILAD

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



Consultation Draft

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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document is the Environmental Statement (ES), which has been prepared on behalf of Johnsey Estates UK (JE) to accompany the planning application for the redevelopment of land at Mamhilad in Torfaen County Borough.
- 1.1.2 The planning application is a hybrid application, principally in outline (all matters apart from access reserved) but with full details of proposals for alteration of the main industrial building on the site. It is being submitted concurrently with an application for Listed Building Consent for alterations to the former Nylon Spinners factory, a Grade II* listed building located within the site.
- 1.1.3 The application site is located within the Mamhilad Strategic Action Area which is allocated for mixed use redevelopment in the adopted Torfaen Local Development Plan (LDP) under Policy SAA4. The location of the application site is shown on Figure 1.1.
- 1.1.4 A detailed description of the proposed development is provided in Chapter 2 of this ES. In summary it includes:
- Approximately 22 hectares of residential development providing a mix of densities and dwellings;
 - Continued use of the Mamhilad Park Estate buildings for employment;
 - Refurbishment and re-use of appropriate parts of the former Nylon Spinners factory for employment;
 - A neighbourhood centre including shopping and community facilities;
 - A primary school;
 - A public transport corridor through the site with strategic access points off the A4042 and Old Abergavenny Road;
 - Strategic landscaping including the protection and enhancement of existing woodlands and green infrastructure; and
 - Recreational open space and sports pitches.
- 1.1.5 The purpose of this ES is to describe and assess the likely significant environmental impacts and effects of the proposed development and to describe any mitigation employed to avoid or ameliorate these impacts. It has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2016 (the 2016 EIA Regulations).
- 1.1.6 This Chapter provides an introduction to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), sets out the structure of this ES, the methodology that underpins it and describes the scoping and pre-application consultation that has taken place and which has informed the EIA and the development proposals.

1.2 Legislative Context

- 1.2.1 EIA is the process of compiling, evaluating and presenting all likely significant environmental effects of a proposed development and ensures such effects are fully understood. The purpose of an EIA therefore is to provide the local planning authority, when determining a planning application, with sufficient information to allow it to properly assess the environmental effects of a scheme.
- 1.2.2 The assessment process is designed to help produce an environmentally sensitive scheme. Detection of potentially significant adverse environmental impacts will enable appropriate mitigation measures to be built into the design at an early stage.

- 1.2.3 The legislative background for EIA originated with the European Community Directive on 'The Assessment of the Effects of Certain Public and Private Projects on the Environment' (85/337/EEC) as amended by Directive 97/11/EC. These directives are currently implemented in Wales for the purpose of determining planning applications via the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2016 which came into force on 1st March 2016.
- 1.2.4 The above Regulations establish the criteria which determine whether EIA is necessary or not, and identify the nature and scale of the projects and their applicability to be determined as Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 projects. Schedule 1 projects require EIA in every case. Schedule 2 projects may or may not require EIA dependent on whether the project in question is likely to give rise to significant environmental effects by virtue of factors such as nature, size or location.
- 1.2.5 The proposed development does not fall within Schedule 1 of the Regulations. The proposed development, however, exceeds the applicable thresholds prescribed by Schedule 2 paragraph 10 for 'Urban Development Projects' in that (i) the site area exceeds 1 hectare of development that is not residential, (ii) the proposal involves more than 150 houses and (iii) the site is over 5 hectares overall. Accordingly, it has been necessary to establish if the development is likely to have significant effect on the environment by virtue of its size, nature or location.
- 1.2.6 Paragraph 33 of Circular 11/99 'Environmental Impact Assessment' identifies three main types of cases where EIA will be needed for Schedule 2 developments:
- for major developments, which are of more than local importance;
 - for developments which are proposed for particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable locations; and
 - for developments with unusually complex and potentially hazardous environmental effects.
- 1.2.7 Whilst the proposed development does not necessarily fall into any of the above categories, due to the nature of the proposals and because the subject site forms part of the wider Mamhilad Strategic Action Area, which is allocated in the adopted Torfaen LDP for mixed uses, including residential, employment and associated community uses, it was however agreed that an EIA of the proposed development would be undertaken in order to assist the local planning authority in determining the applications and to consider potential cumulative effects with the wider Strategic Action Area site.

1.3 Content of the Environmental Statement

- 1.3.1 As stated above, this ES has been prepared in accordance with the 2016 EIA Regulations.
- 1.3.2 Although there is no statutory provision as to the form of an ES, Regulation 2(1) and the associated Schedule 4 of the 2016 EIA Regulations set out the broad requirements regarding the content of an ES. This specifies that the ES must contain the information specified in Part II, and such of the relevant information in Part I as reasonably required to assess the effects of the project and which the developer can reasonably be required to compile having regard in particular to current knowledge and methods of assessment.
- 1.3.3 For the avoidance of doubt, the specified information required within Part II of Schedule 4 is provided below:
- '8. A description of the development comprising information on the site, design and size of the development.*
- 9. A description of the measures envisaged in order to avoid, reduce and, if possible, remedy significant adverse effects.*
- 10. The data required to identify and assess the main effects which the development is likely to have on the environment.*
- 11. An outline of the main alternatives studied by the applicant or appellant and an indication of the main reasons for the choice made, taking into account the environmental effects.*
- 12. A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 8 to 11 of this Part.'*
- 1.3.4 Having regard to the above requirements this ES consists of three volumes:

- Volume 1 The main ES text (subdivided into Chapters) and figures – this document.
- Volume 2 Supporting Technical Appendices.
- Volume 3 Non-Technical Summary (NTS).

1.3.5 Volume 1 (this document) considers the potential impacts of the proposed development on the environment on a topic-by-topic basis. Each topic is discussed under a separate chapter within which the following matters are addressed where relevant:

- Introduction;
- Assessment Methodology;
- Legislation and Policy Context;
- Baseline Conditions;
- Mitigation Proposals;
- Residual Effects;
- Assessment of Cumulative Effects; and
- References.

1.3.6 Volume 1 is document made up of the following chapters which were prepared by RPS unless otherwise stated below:

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Description of Site and Proposals
- Chapter 3: Planning Policy Context
- Chapter 4: Transportation and Access – Clarkebond
- Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual – Ecus Environmental Consultants
- Chapter 6: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage – Grover Lewis and LOCUS Consulting
- Chapter 7: Ecology and Nature Conservation - Ecus Environmental Consultants
- Chapter 8: Ground Conditions (including agricultural land) – Clarkebond
- Chapter 9: Hydrology, Water Quality, Flood Risk and Drainage Effects – Opus
- Chapter 10: Air Quality - Ecus Environmental Consultants
- Chapter 11: Noise and Vibration
- Chapter 12: Socio-economics
- Chapter 13: Waste Assessment – Clarkebond
- Chapter 14: Utilities – Clarkebond

1.3.7 In addition to the above consultants Barton Willmore are the Project masterplanners and Graham Frecknall Architects are appointed to the Project Team as specialist conservation architects with a particular brief to advise on the proposals for the listed building.

1.4 Methodology

The Process of EIA

1.4.1 EIA is a tool for systematically examining and assessing the impact and effects of development on the environment. Essentially, it is a process that examines the environmental consequences of development actions before they go ahead (i.e. are granted planning permission).

1.4.2 In terms of the EIA process, the following stages are typically included in an EIA:

- 'Screening' (i.e. determining whether a development proposal needs an EIA – as mentioned above due to the characteristics of the proposed development it was agreed with the Council that an EIA would be undertaken);
- 'Scoping' (i.e. determining the issues that the EIA should address – a scoping exercise was undertaken and is reported in further detail in section 1.5 below and in the individual topic chapters);
- Preparing the ES itself (i.e. establishing baseline data, evaluating effects etc.);
- Submitting the ES (as part of the planning application following pre-application consultation); and
- Reviewing and evaluating the ES to ensure it contains specified information in order to allow the determination of the planning application (by the Council or other determining authority).

Assessment

1.4.3 Generally, the potential environmental effects of both the construction and operational phases of the proposal were identified by:

- Observations on site;
- Consultation with the Council and other relevant authorities/agencies;
- A review of existing survey data;
- A review of the Council's Scoping Opinion;
- A review of relevant literature and guidance;
- Specific survey work; and
- Assessment using standard methodology and expert judgement on the sensitivity of environmental parameters to the predicted effects.

1.4.4 Within this ES, potential effects have been determined based on the characteristics of the existing environment and the alteration of any physical, chemical, biological or perceived characteristic (including social and cultural) of, or on that, environment. Where effects could potentially occur, methods or actions (mitigation) to reduce or alleviate their effects are proposed.

1.4.5 Following the inclusion of mitigation measures, the effect is subsequently reassessed to determine the scale and magnitude of the mitigated effect: the 'residual effect'.

Statement of Impact

1.4.6 For each topic, a textual description of potential effects is provided followed by a characterisation of the effect in terms of its nature and magnitude, or physical extent. The magnitude or physical extent of effects has been quantified wherever possible. The nature of predicted effects has been identified and described, as appropriate, using one or more of the following terms where relevant:

- Beneficial or adverse;
- Direct or indirect;

- Short, medium or long-term;
- Permanent or temporary;
- Reversible or irreversible; and
- Cumulative.

1.4.7 Where an effect is quantified, standard thresholds for specific topics are applied to determine the level of significance of the effect. Where an effect cannot be quantified because of the nature or complexity of the impact, a subjective scale has been used to determine its significance.

Defining Significance

1.4.8 Defining significance involves consideration, through data analysis, consultation and experience, of a number of aspects relating to the potential effect where relevant. These are listed and explained below in general terms although definitions in individual topic chapters may vary from these.

Sensitivity of the receiving parameter

1.4.9 This is a measure of the adaptability and resilience of an environmental parameter to an identified effect:

- High – The environmental parameter is fragile and an effect is likely to leave it in an altered state from which recovery would be difficult or impossible.
- Medium – The parameter has a degree of adaptability and resilience and is likely to cope with the changes caused by an effect, although there may be some residual modification as a result.
- Low – The parameter is adaptable and is resilient to change.

Magnitude of the effect

1.4.10 This is the scale of change which the effect may cause compared to the baseline and how this change relates to accepted thresholds and standards:

- High – A large change compared to variations in the baseline. Potentially a clear breach of accepted limits.
- Medium – Change which may be noticeable and may breach accepted limits.
- Low – When compared with the baseline, change which may only just be noticeable. Existing thresholds would not be exceeded.

Frequency of the effect

1.4.11 This is the duration of the effect compared to the activity causing it:

- Continuous
- Frequent
- Infrequent

Extent of the effect

1.4.12 This relates to the geographical area that the effect may affect:

- Local/immediate – The effect is likely to affect interests at district level or for a limited area around the scheme.
- Regional – The effect is likely to affect sub-national concerns such as regional and county level interests.
- International – The effect is likely to affect an interest of supra-regional concern.

1.4.13 Unless otherwise explained in the accompanying text it is considered that all identified effects are local in extent, although interest features of potential regional and/or international significance may be affected.

Timescale of the effect

1.4.14 This is the duration of the effect irrespective of the activity causing it:

- Short-term – The period over which the effect is experienced is temporary and lasts for the period of construction or less.
- Medium-term – The effect occurs for longer than the full period of construction.
- Long-term – The effect remains for a substantial time, perhaps permanently after construction.

1.4.15 In general terms, throughout the following sections it is assumed, unless otherwise stated, that the effects are:

- Short-term, if only experienced during the construction phase;
- Long-term, if experienced during the operational phase;
- Local rather than regional; and
- Can be reduced in significance through the application of proposed mitigation measures.

Determining Significance

1.4.16 Following on from the above and in order to better portray the identified significance of the project on specified receptors, significance levels have been applied to effects throughout this ES. To calculate the level of significance, the following formula was utilised (these have been used unless otherwise explained in the individual topic chapter):

$$\text{Significance of Effect} = \text{Magnitude of Impact} \times \text{Sensitivity of the Receptor}$$

1.4.17 The matrix below illustrates how the formula was utilised:

MAGNITUDE	High	Moderate	Moderate/Major	Major
	Medium	Minor/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Major
	Low	Minor	Moderate	Moderate
	Negligible	Minor/No Impact	Minor/Moderate	Minor/Moderate
		Low	Medium	High
		SENSITIVITY		

1.4.18 The definitions of the significance of the effects are set out in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 Definition of significance

Impact Significance	Characteristic
Major beneficial	The effect is large scale, giving rise to a significant gain to the environment.
Moderate beneficial	The effect will provide a positive gain to the environment.
Negligible to Minor beneficial	The effect is small and will have a slight benefit to the environment.
No impact	No effect
Negligible to Minor adverse	The effect is of little concern; it is undesirable but acceptable.

Moderate adverse	The effect gives rise to some concern but is likely to be tolerable in the short-term (e.g. during the construction phase); mitigation to reduce the effect should be sought or the issue will require a value judgment as to its acceptability.
Major adverse	The effect is large scale, giving rise to concern; it could be considered unacceptable and requires mitigating, compensating or a change to the development if no alternative is available. If no mitigation is possible, then the effect will require a value judgment as to its acceptability.

1.5 Scoping

- 1.5.1 A formal request for a Scoping Opinion was submitted to Torfaen County Borough Council on 7th March 2014. The Council's Scoping Opinion was issued on 11th July 2014 (ref: RMcA/14/P/00143) and included comments from Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT), Cadw, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, Monmouthshire County Council, Glandwr Cymru Canal and River Trust, Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW), Pontypool Community Council and Welsh Government.
- 1.5.2 A copy of the Council's Scoping Opinion is included at Appendix 1.1. The matters raised in the Council's Scoping Opinion and those raised by the other bodies listed above have been taken into account throughout the preparation of this ES.
- 1.5.3 In addition and because the site is allocated as a Strategic Action Area in the Torfaen LDP, JE and its core consultant team have had regular Project Delivery Group meetings with officers of the Council. Six Project Delivery Group meetings were held from February– September 2016, although other more informal meetings were held prior to the Project Delivery Group being set up and additional meetings on specific aspects of the scheme (such as s106 requirements) were also held.
- 1.5.4 Similarly, in addition to the Scoping Opinion, the JE topic specific consultants have been in direct contact with their counterparts in the Council and the appropriate statutory bodies in order to confirm the scope for the work undertaken and to agree methodologies. Where such discussions have been held they are documented in the individual topic chapters.

1.6 Pre-Application Consultation

- 1.6.1 Section 17 of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 requires proposals for major development to undergo statutory pre-application consultation before a planning application is submitted. As such, the draft application documents for the project, including this ES, were made available for public inspection, site notices were put up and adjoining owners, Town Council, local members and specialist consultees were consulted on the proposals.
- 1.6.2 The pre-application consultation took place between [DATE TO BE INSERTED] and [DATE TO BE INSERTED].
- 1.6.3 The specialist consultees that were consulted in accordance with Schedule 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2016 included the local planning authority, the local highway authority, the Welsh Ministers, NRW and Glandwr Cymru Canal and River Trust.
- 1.6.4 In accordance with the above Regulations, a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report has also been submitted with the application. The PAC Report provides a summary of all issues raised in response to the statutory public consultation and sets out whether they have been addressed and, if so, how. It also includes copies of all responses received from specialist consultees and an explanation of how each response has been addressed.

1.7 Availability of the ES

- 1.7.1 The ES will be available for public inspection at the Council Offices, Ty Blaen, Panteg Way, New Inn, NP4 0LS whilst the planning application is being determined.
- 1.7.2 It is also available to view on the Project website www.mamhiladconsultation.co.uk or can be purchased from RPS Planning & Development, Park House, Greyfriars Road, Cardiff, CF10 3AF (Tel: 02920 668662) for £250 for a hard copy or £10 for a CD-ROM.

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