

# Environmental Statement Non-Technical Summary

i54 Western Extension (South)

30 July 2018

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## Non-Technical Summary

### Introduction

The City of Wolverhampton Council and Staffordshire County Council propose to extend the existing i54 strategic employment area (“i54 Western Extension (South)”), to provide up to 100,000 m<sup>2</sup> of employment development. The proposed development will also include the creation of a new highway access. The land required for a roundabout in the north-east of the application site is owned by Midland Land Portfolio Ltd (Severn Trent). The “applicants” for the project are City of Wolverhampton Council, Staffordshire County Council and Midland Land Portfolio Ltd (Severn Trent) as owners of the land within the application site. Any future development of the land to the north will be as a separate application to this application.

AECOM has been appointed by City of Wolverhampton Council and Staffordshire County Council to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment to accompany the planning application for the proposed development. This document is a non-technical summary of the main Environmental Statement and forms the first Volume of that document. It follows the structure of the main Environmental Statement to enable the reader to quickly locate additional detail in the main volume as required.

### EIA Methodology

To focus the Environmental Impact Assessment and to identify all of the potential impacts caused by the proposed development, a Scoping Report was produced. A Scoping Report looks at the potential impacts that could arise from the construction and operation of the proposed development.

The Scoping Report concluded that the following environmental topics associated with the proposed development should be addressed in detail in the Environmental Impact Assessment:

- Transport;
- Noise and Vibration;
- Landscape and Visual;
- Air Quality;
- Ecology and Nature Conservation; and
- Land Contamination.

The following statutory and non-statutory organisations have been consulted by City of Wolverhampton Council and Staffordshire County Council regarding the proposed development:

- South Staffordshire Council;
- City of Wolverhampton Council;
- Staffordshire County Council;
- Telford and Wrekin Council (Ecology and Green Infrastructure Specialist);
- Environment Agency;
- Natural England;
- Highways England; and
- Utilities – Western Power Distribution.

In addition, many other stakeholders and local people, including representatives from equestrian and ramblers groups were invited to take part in the consultation and attend exhibitions.

## Application Site and Surroundings

The application site of 29 hectares is owned by City of Wolverhampton Council and Staffordshire County Council, with the land for an access road roundabout being owned by Midland Land Portfolio Limited (Severn Trent). It is located to the west of the existing i54 strategic employment area on Innovation Drive, immediately north of Wolverhampton. It is located to the south-west of Junction 2 of the M54. The application site lies within the administrative area of South Staffordshire Council.

The application site is currently undeveloped agricultural land, used primarily for grazing animals. One field has recently been cultivated for maize. The application site is currently within the green belt, but is to be removed from the green belt in accordance with the South Staffordshire Council Local Plan which is anticipated to be adopted in August 2018. There are boundary hedges and small areas of woodland. The south-east corner of the application site comprises 1.7 hectares of deciduous plantation woodland with a ground flora of bluebells, formerly used as a "Shooting Pit". Four small ponds occur on the site. The application site is located in an area at low risk of flooding. The nearest watercourse to the application site is the River Penk, approximately 200m to the west of the application site.

A bridleway known as Middle Lane crosses the application site, dividing the two southern-most fields from west to east before turning northwards and running along the eastern boundary of the application site. The bridleway is surrounded by hedgerows with mature trees. Middle Lane forms part of the Monarch's Way National Trail, and is signposted as 'Jubilee Walks North'. The route of Middle Lane is identified as being a holloway (ancient road), however archaeological surveys have not provided any clear evidence on its origin. Archaeological surveys on the application site have located evidence of a potential Roman road running north-south through the western part of the application site.

The surrounding land uses include commercial and manufacturing/ industrial facilities to the east and south-east, giving way to the large residential areas around the north and west of Wolverhampton. The existing i54 strategic employment area lies to the east and Pendeford Business Park is located south of the application site, south of Wobaston Road. To the west of the application site are Pendeford Hall Lane and Lawn Lane, beyond which lie Pendeford Hall Mobile Home Park and Pendeford Mill Nature Reserve. Pendeford Hall Mobile Home Park is a residential park made up of detached bungalow-style mobile homes. To the north is farmland owned by Midland Land Portfolio Ltd (Severn Trent), beyond which is the M54. The land owned by Midland Land Portfolio Ltd (Severn Trent) is a former landfill known as Coven Heath Reclamation works.

Vehicular access to the application site is proposed through a new access road and roundabout, connecting to Innovation Drive through the existing i54 strategic employment area, providing subsequent access to the nearby strategic road network which includes the M54 and A449 (Stafford Road).

## Project Description

The proposed development will create up to 100,000 m<sup>2</sup> of employment development together with the creation of primary highway access to the application site. The proposed development will ensure that there are adequate opportunities to continue the attraction of high quality, high technology and advanced manufacturing uses to South Staffordshire, Wolverhampton and the wider Black Country.

Two options are proposed for the units on the proposed development to retain commercial flexibility. Both propose unit(s) with a maximum height of 15m. Alteration of the ground levels across the application site are proposed to allow much of the unit(s) to be hidden by the terrain.

- Option A would be developed if a large single user were to be interested in the application site. This option proposes a single unit with a total external floorspace of up to 100,000 m<sup>2</sup>, with a service yard and car parking for 1,749 cars.
- Option B is an alternative scenario for how the application site could be developed to meet its full potential but responding to the needs of a number of smaller users. Option B would contain multiple units from approximately 4,650 m<sup>2</sup> to approximately 34,800 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space, allowing for a wider range of occupiers. The levels across the sloping application site allow the development plots to be terraced down from the south toward the north end of the application site. Option B proposes a total of 82,000 m<sup>2</sup> of units on five development plots, along with service areas and total 1,593 car park spaces.

It is anticipated that between 1,500 and 1,800 jobs will be provided on the application site. The amount will depend on how many different businesses are accommodated on the application site and their manufacturing processes.

The highway, pedestrian and cycle access and landscaping proposals are the same for both options.

All vehicular access including servicing and deliveries to the proposed development will be via a proposed new dual carriageway in the north-east corner of the application site. This will link to an existing roundabout at the northern end of the application site off Innovation Drive, through the existing i54 strategic employment area, linking to the A4510 to access the M54 and the A449 corridor. The new access road will extend westwards to a roundabout providing future access to the Midland Land Portfolio Ltd (Severn Trent) owned land to the north of the application site. A crossing point will be provided on this roundabout for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians, ensuring that the existing bridleway route is maintained. From this roundabout the new access road runs along the eastern boundary of the application site. Access to the individual plots will be from an internal road network which will be determined as part of future detailed design.

A new access for pedestrians and cyclists will be provided from Wobaston Road, running north to the access road. Access by public transport will be achieved through extending the existing bus services that serve the existing i54 strategic employment area.

All building and car park lighting will be designed to limit upward light spill to the sky and minimise potential glare.

The application site will be surrounded by green landscaping, including along the proposed access road, with tree and hedgerow planting proposed within large grass verges. New hedgerows will be planted to supplement existing hedgerows.

The northern half of Shooting Pit Wood (0.9 hectares) will be removed but the southern half will be retained and managed to improve its health and value to wildlife. A total of 2.52 hectares of new woodland will be planted around the application site. The largest area of proposed planting will be in the south-west corner of the application site adjacent to the southern half of Shooting Pit Wood, with 1.05 hectares of new woodland planting.

A number of features will be provided along the western boundary of the application site, opposite the Pendeford Mobile Home Park to assist with visually screening the proposed development. This will include a 30 metre wide green landscape area, including an earth bund planted with native trees and shrubs and planting of semi-mature native trees along the hedgerow. Woodland planting (0.67 hectares) will be provided along the western boundary of the application site on the screening bund alongside Lawn Lane.

The section of Middle Lane crossing the application site is to be removed to accommodate the proposed development plot. Approximately 120m of hedgerow along Middle Lane will be moved and replanted along Wobaston Road and Lawn Lane. The Middle Lane bridleway is to be diverted from Lawn Lane around the northern side of the proposed development and link back with the existing Middle Lane path near to the northern entrance of the proposed development, where it continues north-east along its existing route, towards the M54 bridge. The bridleway will be a 5 metre wide grass path with a 2 metre wide footpath alongside. The footpath will

be surfaced with rolled stone. Additional woodland and small groups of trees (0.8 hectares) will be planted around the west and northern boundaries alongside the diverted bridleway.

A rolled stone footpath will also be constructed to provide a recreational walking route around the south and west of the proposed development, through new woodland and Shooting Pit Wood. The path will circle the proposed development boundary enabling employees and the general public to walk off-road around the application site.

Two flood attenuation ponds are proposed on the western side of the application site. These are designed to hold some permanent water and will fill during times of heavy rainfall. The ponds will drain through a controlled system into a pipe and discharge into the River Penk.

A wetland ditch will be located in the north-west corner of the application site, alongside the diverted bridleway. Four ponds are also proposed and these along with the ditch will provide wetland habitat for wildlife, including amphibians, invertebrates and plants.

## Alternatives

An alternative sites assessment for strategic employment land within South Staffordshire has been undertaken by South Staffordshire Council as part of the Local Plan site allocation process. 11 potential employment sites were identified and assessed. Employment site selection by South Staffordshire Council has been guided by the adopted Core Strategy. Core Policy 7 allows for 'modest extensions' to the four free standing strategic employment sites in South Staffordshire (i54, Hilton Cross, ROF Featherstone and Four Ashes) where robust evidence and a reasoned justification is provided to support their expansion. Based on economic employment studies undertaken as part of the Local Plan process, i54 and ROF Featherstone were identified as suitable for modest extensions.

City of Wolverhampton Council and Staffordshire County Council have selected the southern part of the i54 extension area for the proposed development as there has been a high take up of land on the existing i54 strategic employment area with continued market demand. This demand supports the need for the extension of i54 to make a critically important contribution to the economic regeneration of the Black Country by providing for identified high quality strategic employment land needs which cannot be accommodated within the urban area.

City of Wolverhampton Council and Staffordshire County Council have considered several alternative designs which have evolved following consultation feedback. The design evolution of the proposed development is summarised in Chapter 5 of the Environmental Statement. The design also includes two options for the proposed development to retain commercial flexibility.

## Transport

### Methodology

The chapter considers the potential impact of the proposed development on the strategic road network, local highway network, public transport and pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.

### Policy

The following policies are relevant to this chapter:

- National Planning Policy Framework (2012);
- Planning Practice Guidance 'Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements in Decision-Taking' (2014);

- Department for Transport Circular 02/2013;
- Highways England Delivery Plan 2015 – 2020 (March 2015);
- West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2011-2026;
- Black Country Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2011-2026; and
- South Staffordshire Local Plan.

## Baseline

The road network surrounding the existing i54 strategic employment area includes the M54 and A449, both of which are accessed via the existing internal i54 access road. Various peak hour traffic surveys have been undertaken between 2015 and 2017 at the local highway junctions.

The existing i54 strategic employment area is served by frequent bus services which connect the i54 to Wolverhampton. Five existing cycle routes connect the existing i54 strategic employment area to the nearby canal network and neighbouring settlements. The area surrounding the application site is comprised of a well-established network of footways that provide access to local facilities. There is a bridleway between Lawn Lane (along the western boundary of the application site) and the bridge across the M54 motorway (to the north of the existing i54 strategic employment area) which runs west-east across the application site.

## Impacts

The proposed development will affect the Innovation Drive roundabout on the northern periphery of the existing i54 strategic employment area where a new access road will tie in with the existing road and junction.

The construction of the proposed development will impact on the existing i54 strategic employment area internal access roads, however, it is predicted that there will be low increases in traffic during construction, so there will be a minimal change in the level of traffic on the highway network and minimal impact on the operation of adjacent junctions.

The proposed development will not require bus routes in the local area to be diverted or delayed. The bridleway will be diverted around the application site prior to the access road being constructed so that bridleway users will be able to continue using this facility.

The analysis of traffic associated with the operation of the proposed development indicates traffic is expected to have at worst a minor adverse effect on the local highway network which is identified as being not significant.

## Noise and Vibration

### Methodology

This chapter assesses the noise and vibration impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed development.

To quantify the baseline sound climate in the area, noise measurements were carried out in the vicinity of sensitive locations such as residential areas, including Pendeford Hall Mobile Home Park and Pendeford.

As no detail of the specific construction programme is available, a qualitative assessment of construction noise and vibration was carried out based on the methodology outlined in 'Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites', focusing on the likely impact at existing residential properties.

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As no details of the specific operations at any of the proposed units are available, the assessment of noise and vibration during operation focuses on predictions based on typical operations in similar developments and on setting noise limits. The assessment was based on 'Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound'.

An assessment of the noise impacts resulting from construction and operational traffic on the surrounding highway network has also been carried out.

## Policy

The following legislation and policy are relevant to this chapter:

- Environmental Protection Act 1990;
- Control of Pollution Act 1974;
- National Planning Policy Framework (2012);
- Noise Policy Statement for England, 2010;
- Planning Practice Guidance; and
- South Staffordshire Council Core Policy 3: Sustainable Development and Climate Change (2012);

## Baseline

Four receptors (houses on Pendeford Hall Road, Pendeford Mobile Home Park, Upper Pendeford Farm and Houses in Pendeford) are closest to the application site and have been considered for the impact of operational noise.

Six receptors (houses on Pendeford Hall Road, Pendeford Mobile Home Park, houses on Stafford Road, Premier Inn (Wolverhampton North), residential properties in Coven Heath and Lower Pendeford Farm)) are close to roads predicted to experience notable changes in traffic flow as a result of the proposed development, and have been considered for the impact of changes in traffic noise.

## Impacts

The impact of vibration due to construction and operation is minimal. Construction activities (particularly piling) usually only generate significant vibration effects when they are located within 20m from sensitive locations. Although the exact location of units has not been determined, the plans currently propose a distance of 50m from the nearest unit to dwellings at Pendeford Hall Mobile Home Park, such that the effects of vibration are predicted to be not significant.

Best practice during building of the proposed development and the use of 'sound-reduced' equipment will ensure noise impacts are reduced to not significant.

Construction vehicle movements will be focussed around the M54 and A449 (Stafford Road). The number of construction vehicles generated by construction of the proposed development are considered negligible compared to the existing traffic volumes on these roads, and thus the effect of construction works noise is predicted to be not significant.

During the operational phase, the proposed development will be required to have appropriate equipment and technology built-in to prevent significant noise effects from occurring. A noise bund located along the western

boundary of the proposed development will reduce noise effects on their closest residential receptors at Pendeford Hall Mobile Home Park, such that noise effects are predicted to be not significant.

The noise resulting from operational traffic on the surrounding highway network is also predicted to be not significant.

## Landscape and Visual

### Methodology

Impacts on the landscape are due to changes in the physical landscape. Visual impact takes into consideration the changes in the physical landscape and peoples' responses to these changes.

The study covers the whole of the area from which the proposed development would be seen. The existing landscape has been identified based on a desktop study, field surveys and analysis. Land-use in terms of special historic and cultural values as well as built-up areas was explored.

A study area with a radius of 2km was chosen to determine the locations from which the proposed development would be visible. A Zone of Theoretical Visibility model was developed and a field assessment of views was carried out. The visual receptors have been assessed for their sensitivity by consideration of the value of the view and susceptibility to the proposed development. Photomontages were prepared to illustrate how the proposed development would look.

### Policy

The following policies are relevant to this chapter:

- South Staffordshire Council (June 2018) Site Allocations Document, Policy SAD5: Employment Land Allocations.

### Baseline

The landscape of the application site consists of arable and pastoral farming with a small area of woodland. Strong hedge lines and trees form field boundaries within the farmland. The surrounding study area consists of mixed land use, with arable and pastoral farming forming the majority of the open land use. Other land use includes commercial/ industrial; sports grounds; green space and parks; retail; leisure; educational and residential. The study area is not a heavily wooded landscape with woodland limited to river valleys and regular shaped copses/ plantations. The application site lies immediately to the west of the existing i54 strategic employment area, which is a major employment site.

There are a number of residential areas in close proximity to the application site. The closest is Pendeford Hall Mobile Home Park which is located 5m to the west of the application site. There are a number of other individual residential properties with views of the application site. There are also a number of employment areas in close proximity to the application site including the existing i54 strategic employment area and the Pendeford Business Park.

Transient views are also provided to car users and pedestrians along Wobaston Road, Pendeford Hall Lane, Lawn Lane and the M54.

### Impacts

A landscape strategy for the proposed development has been developed which includes measures to reduce adverse landscape and visual effects.

The landscape assessment has considered that the impacts and effects associated with proposed development options A and B will be the same on the landscape character areas because construction operations will be similar; landscape mitigation proposals are the same for both options and both options are for similar industrial units, parking and support areas.

Indirect impacts will be caused to the setting of the green belt through the change of use from that of rural land to the proposed development which will increase the extent of built development in the area. Both options will cause direct impacts to Middle Lane as this part of the bridleway will be diverted along the northern boundary of the application site. Direct impacts will be caused to an area of Shooting Pit Wood that falls within the application site and will be lost due to the proposed development.

The adverse effects on landscape character resulting from construction would be largely offset in operation by the improved range and amenity of landscape features created within the proposed development and a positive management regime. The establishment of soft landscaping including a landscape bund will promote the integration of the proposed development into the surrounding landscape. Whilst significant adverse effects are predicted to the landscape character area of the rural green belt incorporating Pendeford Mill Nature Reserve during construction and year 1 of operation, by year 15 of operation, effects are predicted to be reduced to not significant. Overall, the effects of operation of the proposed development on landscape character will be negligible or minor adverse with no significant adverse effects on landscape character areas within the study area.

Due to the scale of the development proposed, inevitably there would be some temporary adverse visual effects resulting from construction. Visual effects are likely to arise from large items of machinery which are likely to be needed for earthworks and construction of units. It is considered that there will be significant adverse visual effects of construction for a number of groups of residential properties, public rights of way, open spaces in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development and a limited number of roads, particularly from Wobaston Road, Pendeford Hall Lane, Pendeford Hall Mobile Home Park and the Middle Lane bridleway. The scale of the proposed development will result in a change in views. At year 1 of operation, it is considered that there will be a significant adverse effect on views considered in the assessment at Wobaston Road, the junction of Wobaston Road and Pendeford Hall Lane, Middle Lane bridleway and at Pendeford Hall Mobile Home Park. At year 15, the landscape strategy should reduce adverse effects on views considered in the assessment to negligible or minor adverse with no significant adverse effects, except for the view from Middle Lane bridleway which is identified as moderate adverse and significant.

## Air Quality

### Methodology

This chapter considers the potential effects associated with releases to the atmosphere during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development. The main focus of this assessment is on residential buildings, as these are considered most sensitive to air quality impacts. However, the assessment has also considered office buildings along Wobaston Road and within the existing i54 strategic employment area.

The assessment has considered:

- The impacts caused by dust generated during construction;
- The impacts caused by dust generated during operation;
- The effect of additional road traffic on air quality; and
- The potential effects on nearby designated sensitive habitat sites.

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## Policy

The following legislation and policy is relevant to this chapter:

- Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2018) National Planning Policy Framework;
- Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2018) Planning Practice Guidance;
- Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe Directive 2008/50/EC (2008);
- Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010 (2010);
- The UK National Air Quality Strategy (2000), as amended (2007); and
- The Core Strategy for South Staffordshire (2012).

## Baseline

Baseline surveys were undertaken for nitrogen dioxide. The survey indicated a situation of good air quality across the study area with localised areas on Stafford Road north of the M54 with annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentrations very close to national objective values set for the protection of human health. In the future (2028), the baseline air quality is forecast to have improved to a good standard across the study area.

## Impacts

Locations which may experience reduced amenity due to deposition of dust onto their property and an increase in the concentration of very small particulates in the air arising from construction works are residential properties located at Pendeford Hall Mobile Home Park and Wobaston Road and industrial units off Innovation Drive. The nearest locally designated ecological receptor which may experience reduced amenity due to dust soiling from construction works is Pendeford Mill Nature Reserve, located approximately 50m west of the application site boundary.

Construction works associated with the proposed development have the potential to increase the rate at which properties would become soiled and possible health effects from an increase in emissions of very small particles. Using industry standard mitigation techniques to reduce the rate of dust soiling and number of very small particulates the effect of the proposed development will not be significant.

During construction works there would be a short term increase in large vehicles required for the various construction stages. These additional large vehicles have the potential to increase air pollutant concentrations at sensitive locations. The change in air pollutants due to road vehicles associated with the various construction stages would be too small to affect local air quality.

The full build out of the proposed development is in 2028, by then there would have been reductions in air pollutant concentrations compared to current conditions. With the proposed development in use the change in air pollutants due to additional road traffic would be too small to effect the ongoing achievement of air quality objective values.

The overall effect of the full build out of the proposed development in 2028 on local air quality is considered to be negligible and not significant.

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## Ecology

### Methodology

This chapter considers the ecological impacts associated with the proposed development. A desk study, habitat survey and protected species surveys were completed to identify the ecological baseline of the application site. Data was collected by LCA and Focus Ecology between 2014 and 2018.

The assessment of potential construction impacts has focused on landtake and temporary loss of habitat, killing and injury of protected species and disturbance (due to noise and lighting).

The assessment of potential operational impacts has focused on air quality, lighting and landscaping.

### Policy

The following legislation and policy is relevant to this chapter:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (2012);
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006;
- The Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017;
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992; and
- The Hedgerows Regulations 1997.

### Baseline

The application site includes grassland and arable habitats surrounded by hedgerows. There is an area of planted woodland in the south-east corner of the application site, named Shooting Pit Wood. The ground flora of the woodland includes native bluebells. There is also a small area of woodland located to the south of Middle Lane. The Middle Lane bridleway crosses the southern part of the application site from west to east and is surrounded by hedgerows. Six hedgerows are identified as important for historic, visual and ecological reasons. There are four ponds present on the application site.

Five species of bats were recorded feeding across the application site. 11 trees were identified as having the potential to support bat roosts. The habitats on the application site support 10 species of breeding birds. A low population of great crested newts has been identified, breeding within two of the ponds on the application site. Badgers have been identified to the north-west, beyond the application site boundary.

Pendeford Mill Nature Reserve, a non-designated nature reserve, is located less than 50 m to the west of the application site and is separated from the application site by Pendeford Hall Lane.

### Impacts

In summary, no impacts on designated sites are predicted as a consequence of the proposed development.

Potential impacts on great crested newts, bats, badgers and birds will be avoided through the use of ecological best practice. Construction works which have potential to kill or injure great crested newts and bats, or damage their habitat will not be permitted. Works will only be undertaken following the granting of a relevant licence from Natural England and measures to protect great crested newts and bats will be put in place. Potential ecological impacts during the construction stage are therefore considered not significant.

Potential impacts relating to loss of habitat for breeding birds will be offset by provision of new bird boxes on trees.

The ecological value of retained habitat will be enhanced and habitats re-instated after construction will also be of ecological value. Four new wildlife ponds will be created to mitigate for the loss of two great crested newt breeding ponds.

## Land Contamination

### Methodology

This chapter assesses the effects of the proposed development with respect to ground and groundwater contamination.

In particular, it considers the potential impact from the disturbance of contamination and hazardous materials on human health and the environment, and the impacts of potentially contaminated ground or groundwater conditions on the proposed development.

### Policy

The following legislation and policy is relevant to this chapter:

- Building Act 1984;
- Environment Act 1995;
- Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC);
- Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) as amended Regulations 2016;
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 Part IIA;
- Environmental Quality Standards Directive (2008/105/EC);
- Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC);
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990;
- Water Resources Act 1991;
- Water Act 2003;
- The Contaminated Land (England) (Amendment) Regulations, 2012;
- The Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations, 2009;
- Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC);

- Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005;
- National Planning Policy Framework (2012); and
- Planning Practice Guidance (2014).

## Baseline

Desk study reviews of historic land use indicate the application site has remained undeveloped and predominantly in agricultural use with a number of field boundaries and hedgerows since before 1884. The south-eastern corner of the application site, which now contains a wooded area, has been used as a “Shooting Pit” since 1902, potentially as a firing range. The potential route of a Roman Road runs through the western area of the application site from north to south.

Adjacent to the north and east of the application site is a former landfill, known as Coven Heath Reclamation works, which was used for sludge disposal between 1897 and 1993.

Potential contamination sources identified based on the available desk study information include on-site agricultural land uses, the presence of imported materials which may be contaminated associated with the historic landfill north of the application site; the presence of gases from the former landfill; contamination from former uses of Shooting Pit Wood and migration of contaminated groundwater from the sewage works to the north-east, or other off-site receptors.

Based on the known history of the application site and surrounding area, there is considered to be limited potential for significant soil contamination to be present. However local areas of soil contamination could be present in Shooting Pit Wood. In addition, there is considered to be potential for contaminated materials to be present in the access road area, associated with the historical landfill activities and embankment in that area. It is also considered possible that soil contaminants could have migrated from the adjacent landfill (which is largely off-site) into the northern part of the application site.

The groundwater beneath the application site is considered to be of high sensitivity as it is within the area of influence for drinking water abstraction wells.

## Impacts

The major contamination risks from construction of the proposed development are assessed as being risks to construction workers, risks to controlled waters through contamination of surface water and groundwater receptors and risks to off-site receptors. These risks can be largely eliminated during construction through the implementation of an appropriate Construction Environmental Management Plan and are therefore considered not significant.

Based on the proposed development of commercial/ manufacturing units and associated infrastructure, there is considered to be potential during the operational phase for contaminants to be generated that could pose risk to the surface water and/ or groundwater. It is expected that the operator of the proposed development will comply with the requirements of any permits and/ or will handle and store any hazardous materials as recommended by the manufacturer. The sustainable drainage design will incorporate appropriate measures to minimise impacts associated with accidents and spillages during the operational phase.

Therefore potential effects during operation are considered not significant.

## Cumulative Effects

This chapter looks at the combined effects of different types of impacts, for example noise, dust and visual impacts, as well as the impacts from several developments considered together.

The Pendeford Hall Mobile Home Park, as the closest sensitive receptor, would experience higher levels of disturbance from noise, dust and visual impacts than any other receptor. This is mitigated as far as practicable through the provision of a 30m wide landscape zone including an earth bund along the western boundary of the application site. Only visual effects are predicted to be significant during construction and year 1 of operation and as such there are no cumulative effects identified for the proposed development on any sensitive receptors.

None of the schemes identified for inclusion in the cumulative effects assessment is considered close enough to the application site to lead to significant cumulative environmental effects. Thus the proposed development is unlikely to lead to significant cumulative environmental effects with other committed development in the South Staffordshire area.

## Conclusions

This report provides a summary of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the application site and surrounding environment. It also identifies some of the measures to offset significant adverse effects that are set out in the main volume.

In summary, the proposed development is predicted to have the following effects on the environment:

- The proposed development will affect the Innovation Drive roundabout within the existing i54 strategic employment area where a new access road will tie in with the existing road and junction but levels of traffic generated from the proposed development during construction and operation on the surrounding strategic and local highway network are predicted to be not significant.
- Noise impacts during construction are predicted to be not significant, provided that best practices during construction are implemented. A noise bund located along the western boundary of the proposed development will reduce noise effects on the closest residential receptors at Pendeford Hall Mobile Home Park to not significant levels. The effect of traffic noise during construction and operation is predicted to be not significant due to low levels of traffic generation compared to existing traffic volumes.
- The establishment of soft landscaping including a landscape bund along the western boundary of the application site will integrate the proposed development into the surrounding landscape so that overall effects during operation on landscape character will be not significant. Whilst significant adverse effects are predicted to the landscape character area of the rural green belt incorporating Pendeford Mill Nature Reserve during construction and year 1 of operation, by year 15 of operation, effects are predicted to be reduced to not significant.
- Due to the scale of the proposed development, temporary adverse significant visual effects are predicted during construction and year 1 of operation, particularly from Wobaston Road, Pendeford Hall Lane, Pendeford Hall Mobile Home Park and the Middle Lane bridleway. The scale of the proposed development will result in a change in views. At year 15, the landscape strategy is predicted to reduce adverse effects on these receptors to not significant, except for the view from Middle Lane bridleway which is identified as moderate adverse and significant.
- Air quality effects during construction are predicted to be not significant, based on using industry standard mitigation techniques. The change in air pollutants due to road vehicles associated with the construction stage is predicted to be too small to affect local air quality. The overall effect of the proposed development on local air quality by the operational year of 2028 is predicted to be negligible and not significant.
- The landscape strategy for the proposed development seeks to set the new development within a woodland setting, supported by diverse grassland and wetland habitats. No significant effects on ecology and nature conservation are predicted from the construction and/ or operation of the proposed

development. A great crested newt licence application and mitigation strategy will be prepared prior to construction commencement.

- Potential contamination risks during construction and operation to construction workers, controlled waters through contamination of surface water and groundwater receptors and risks to off-site receptors are expected to be eliminated through implementation of best practice construction and operation methods to not significant levels.

The assessment indicates that the proposed development has been shown not to have significant environmental effects in the long-term.

