

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Requirements for Environmental Impact Assessment.

1.1.1 European Community Directive 85/337 EE came into effect in July 1998 and required an assessment to be undertaken for certain types of major project which are judged to have significant environmental effects.

1.1.2 The Department of Environment, Transport and The Regions (DETR) published Circular 2/99 Environmental Impact Assessment (March 1999). The document gives guidance on the 'Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England & Wales) Regulations 1999'. The regulations control the need and procedure for the preparation of an EIA; the main objective being to ensure that the authority granting planning permission for a particular project makes such decisions having had regard to the likely effects of development on the environment. Where an EIA is required, information must be provided by the applicant in the form of an Environmental Statement (ES).

1.1.3 The Environmental Statement sets out the findings of the EIA as required by the regulations and includes a Non-Technical Summary. Supporting and background information is included as a series of technical appendices within Volume One.

1.2 Scope and Content of the Environmental Statement

1.2.1 The EIA regulations require that the following information should be included in an Environmental Statement.

- A description of the development comprising information on the site, design and size of the development;
- A description of the measures envisaged in order to avoid, reduce and, if possible remedy significant adverse effects;
- The data required to identify and assess the main effects which the development is likely to have on the environment;

- An outline of the main alternatives studied by the applicant or appellant and an indication of the main reasons for this choice, taking into account the environmental effects;
- A Non-Technical summary of the above information.

1.2.2 Part I of Schedule 4 details additional information which the applicant might reasonably be required to provide to assess environmental effects of the proposal. These elements include a description of the site, anticipated likely environmental effects and the inter-relationship between them covering direct, indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development.

1.2.3 The scope of the EIA was agreed by Wolverhampton City Council with a formal written response received on 24th October 2005 which is included at Appendix 1.2 The ES considers and evaluates the following key topics which are considered most likely to be affected by construction and operation of the development;

- Socio-economic issues
- Townscape
- Ecology & Nature Conservation
- Archaeology , architectural and historic heritage
- Water, Hydrology and Drainage
- Geology & Contamination
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Traffic and transport
- Climate Change

1.2.4 A comprehensive assessment of each topic and its associated impacts has been prepared. Assessment methodology for each topic area broadly follows a similar model involving the following stages, where appropriate :

- Description of Methodology employed;
- Description of existing baseline environmental conditions;
- Reasoned prediction of the nature and significance of changes to the local environment as a consequence of the construction and operational activities of the proposed development;
- Identification of mitigation measures, if and where appropriate, which would eliminate or minimise significant effects;
- Reference to any residual effects that may occur after mitigation has been implemented.

1.2.5 Significant environmental effects are assessed by accepted scientific methods. In cases such as visual impact, where the effects cannot be scientifically measured, it has been necessary to define specific criteria and thresholds that are widely professionally accepted.