

1. Introduction

Overview

- 1.1 This Environmental Statement (ES) is part of a suite of documents submitted by Northern Gateway Development Vehicle LLP (NGDV) (referred to as the 'Applicant') to Bury Council (BC) and Rochdale Borough Council (RBC) as the local planning authorities (LPAs) for an outline planning permission (all matters reserved) (referred to as the 'Application').
- 1.2 Turley were commissioned by the Applicant to undertake the EIA and prepare this ES, with support from a competent project team (as set out in **Table 1.1**). The ES reports the outputs of the EIA process undertaken in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017¹ (as amended) (the 'EIA Regulations').
- 1.3 The Application is for the delivery of a predominately B2 (Industrial)/B8 (Storage & Distribution) project located within the allocation of JPA 1.1 (Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document, March 2024)² (referred to as the 'Proposed Scheme'). The 'Proposed Scheme' refers to the development for which outline planning permission is sought through the Application. The Proposed Scheme will be delivered on approximately 210 hectares (ha) of land. The Proposed Scheme comprises up to 605,000m² of development described as:

'Application for outline planning permission (all matters reserved) for a national-scale employment development, comprising Storage & Distribution (Use Class B8) and Industrial (Use Classes B2, E(g)(ii) and E(g)(iii)) uses (including, but not limited to, Logistics, Manufacturing Processes and Data Centres), with supporting ancillary uses including Hotel (Use Class C1), Commercial, Business & Service (Uses Class E(a-g)), Education (Use Class F1(a)), Local Community (Use Class F2(a-c) uses, Sui Generis uses (in accordance with the Uses Schedule), and associated demolition works, landscaping, drainage, ecological enhancements, highway works, cycleway and footpath linkages and other ancillary infrastructure.'

- 1.4 However, the EIA has needed to consider likely significant effects of the whole of the comprehensive development project. This is considered to be the JPA 1.1 allocation (excluding the consented South Heywood development) alongside the potential highways works (including the Pilsworth Road highways improvements, works to Junction 3 of the M66 and any remodelling works associated with the M62). The whole of the comprehensive development project is referred to as the 'Project for Assessment'. The Project for Assessment includes for the same uses as described above for the Proposed Scheme and comprises up to 1,034,540m² and 200 dwellings. It should be noted that the Project for Assessment is inclusive of the Proposed Scheme.
- 1.5 The Project for Assessment will be delivered on approximately 570 hectares (ha) on land west of the M66. The spatial footprint of the Project for Assessment is referred to as the 'Assessment Boundary' and is shown on **Figure 1.1**. The Assessment Boundary is considered to represent the maximum extent of all temporary and permanent works that may be required as part of the Project for Assessment. The exception to this is the

potential off-site ecological mitigation area (POSEMA) which is also defined on **Figure 1.1**. The approach to ecological mitigation is discussed further in **Chapter 2: Approach to EIA**. The Proposed Scheme boundary is referred to as the 'Application Boundary' and is shown on **Figure 1.2**.

- 1.6 As the EIA assesses a much wider area than the Application, the methodology for this single ES has been devised to ensure the following are clearly defined and communicated for both the Proposed Scheme and Project for Assessment:
- Description of development;
 - The level of effects and whether they are significant or not;
 - The mitigation that can be implemented through the Application alongside other mitigation required for the Project for Assessment.
- 1.7 Further details regarding the methodology are provided in **Chapter 2: Approach to EIA**.
- 1.8 The description of the Project for Assessment is defined in **Chapter 4: Development Specification – Project for Assessment** and the description of the Proposed Scheme is defined in **Chapter 5: Development Specification – Proposed Scheme**.
- 1.9 The single ES, alongside a series of other application documents and plans, has been submitted to BC and RBC (referred to collectively as 'the Councils') and is available on both websites for viewing and downloading at the following links:
- Bury Council (BC): <https://planning.bury.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple&searchType=Application>; and
 - Rochdale Borough Council (RBC): <https://publicaccess.rochdale.gov.uk/online-applications/>.
- 1.10 A Non-technically summary has been prepared as **Volume 4: Non-Technical Summary** and this is further discussed below.
- 1.11 Members of the public may comment via BC and RBC, either in writing or through BC's and RBC's planning portal websites.

Definition and Aims of EIA

- 1.12 EIA is defined by Regulation 4, Paragraph 1 of the EIA Regulations as "*a process consisting of:*
- (a) the preparation of an environmental statement;*
 - (b) any consultation, publication and notification required by, or by virtue of, these Regulations of any enactment in respect of EIA development; and*
 - (c) the steps required under Regulation 26"* (consideration of whether planning permission or subsequent consent should be granted).

- 1.13 Under Regulation 4, Paragraph 2 of the EIA Regulations, an EIA must “*identify, describe and assess in an appropriate manner, in light of each individual case, the direct and indirect significant effects of the proposed development on the following factors -*

(a) population and human health;

(b) biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under any law that implemented Directive 92/43/EEC(1) and Directive 2009/147/EC(2);

(c) land, soil, water, air and climate;

(d) material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape; and

(e) the interaction between the factors referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (d)”.

- 1.14 The aim of EIA, as outlined by the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)³, is “*...to protect the environment by ensuring that a local planning authority when deciding whether to grant planning permission for a project, which is likely to have significant effects on the environment, does so in the full knowledge of the likely significant effects, and takes this into account in the decision making process. The regulations set out a procedure for identifying those projects which should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment, and for assessing, consulting and coming to a decision on those projects which are likely to have significant environmental effects. The aim of EIA is also to ensure that the public are given early and effective opportunities to participate in the decision making procedures”.*

- 1.15 The EIA Regulations do not require an ES to assess compliance with planning policy or guidance with respect to the Proposed Scheme (for which the Application is sought for). A **Planning Statement** has been prepared and submitted with the Application that examines the merits of the Proposed Scheme against relevant national and local planning policy. However, where planning policy has informed assessments within the ES (i.e. the level of effect or assessment methodology) this has been clearly referenced.

Legal Framework for EIA

Overview of the EIA Process

- 1.16 The EIA Regulations require that prior to consent being granted, for certain types of development, an EIA must be undertaken. The EIA Regulations set out the types of developments which must always be subject to an EIA (referred to as ‘Schedule 1 development’) and other development which may require an EIA, if they are likely to give rise to significant environmental effects (referred to as ‘Schedule 2 development’). The EIA process is summarised below.

EIA Screening

- 1.17 The Project for Assessment has been compared to descriptions of development set out within Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations.
- 1.18 Based on the information available for the potential highways works (including the Pilsworth Road highways improvements, works to Junction 3 of the M66 and any remodelling works associated with the M62), it is considered that the Project for

Assessment does not fall within the description of any project listed within Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations. However, the Project for Assessment falls within the remit of the EIA Regulations as it meets the threshold/criteria within Schedule 2:

1. 10(a) Industrial estate development projects, as it includes an area of development which exceeds 0.5ha;
2. 10(b) (Urban development projects), as it includes over 150 dwellings and the overall spatial footprint area is over 5ha;
3. 10 (f) Construction of roads (unless included in Schedule 1), as it includes potential supporting highways infrastructure which exceeds 1 ha; and
4. 10 (p) Motorway service areas as the area of development exceeds 0.5ha.

1.19 It should be noted that points 2 – 4 above are only associated with the Project for Assessment and the current planning application does not seek planning permission for these elements.

1.20 The threshold/criteria does not determine the requirement for EIA but requires a subsequent stage to determine “*whether the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location*”, often presented within an EIA Screening Report and submitted to the determining authority for their opinion. However, given the characteristics of the Project for Assessment and receiving environment (the Assessment Boundary), a number of potentially significant effects were identified.

1.21 The need for EIA was established by the Project Team at this outset and has been used as a tool to identify and manage impacts, whilst ensuring that significant beneficial impacts are dealt with in the same manner as adverse impacts. It is this that should inform the decision -making process.

1.22 It is worth noting that despite the Proposed Scheme being substantially smaller than the Project for Assessment, the above remains true for both.

EIA Scoping

1.23 In accordance with Regulation 15, Paragraph 1 of the EIA Regulations, a formal request for Scoping Opinions, supported by an EIA Scoping Report (**Appendix 2.1**), was submitted to both BC and RBC on 17th October 2024. Co-ordination of consultees was undertaken by the Councils; consultation responses were coordinated and this helped to avoid conflicts.

1.24 A Scoping Opinion has not been received to date; however, a number of consultation responses have been received and are provided in **Appendix 2.2**. A response to the comments in **Appendix 2.2** are provided in **Appendix 2.3**.

1.25 Further details of the EIA scoping process are provided in **Chapter 2: Approach to EIA**.

Environmental Statement (ES)

- 1.26 The findings of the EIA are presented in this ES, which has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 18, Paragraphs 3 – 5 and Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations as well as the PPG.
- 1.27 The ES is provided in four volumes:
- **Volume 1: Primary Reporting and Supporting Graphics** – providing the main text of the ES, which is divided into Chapters. Each environmental topic is detailed within the respective **Technical Chapters 7 – 18** and considers the Project for Assessment and the Proposed Scheme;
 - **Volume 2: Technical Appendices to the Primary Report** – encompasses a range of technical reports which have informed the technical assessments presented in **Volume 1**. These consider the Project for Assessment and the Proposed Scheme;
 - **Volume 3: Environmental Management Plan** – provides a schedule of primary and tertiary mitigation considered an integral part of the Project for Assessment and/or the Proposed Scheme. It also provides a schedule of secondary mitigation identified through further assessment and reported within **Volume 1**, with reference to the Project for Assessment and/or the Proposed Scheme as required. It is the mitigation associated with the Proposed Scheme which is required to be implemented, as part of the approved plans and planning conditions / obligations; and
 - **Volume 4: Non-Technical Summary** – provides a summary of the ES in a non-technical language to aid communication and understanding of the Project for Assessment, and the EIA process undertaken. Again, where there are different conclusions or mitigation for the Project for Assessment and Proposed Scheme, this is clearly summarised.
- 1.28 The full suite of documents within **Volume 1: Primary Report and Supporting Graphics** and **Volume 2: Technical Appendices to the Primary Report** have been provided in their respective **Contents Page**.
- 1.29 **Appendix 1.1** provides a breakdown of the information required to be included within an ES (as defined by Regulation 18, Paragraphs 3 – 5 and Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations) and where this information is in this ES (including in other Volumes).

Project Team and Their Roles

- 1.30 Regulation 18, Paragraph 5(a) of the EIA Regulations requires an EIA to be prepared by competent experts.
- 1.31 Turley is responsible for the co-ordination and leadership of the EIA process as well as the compilation and procedural review of the constituent parts of the ES (**Table 1.1**). The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) has awarded Turley the EIA Quality Mark in recognition of our technical quality and commitment to improvement in practice.

- 1.32 All technical assessments reported in **Technical Chapters 7 – 18** have been undertaken by a suitably qualified project team (**Table 1.1**, which includes those involved in the EIA Scoping process), inclusive of a thorough technical review to assure technical credibility, followed by a subsequent procedural review by the EIA co-ordination team at Turley.
- 1.33 A statement outlining the relevant expertise / qualifications of the EIA project team involved in the ES is provided in Appendix 2.2 of the EIA Scoping Report (**Appendix 2.1**).

Table 1.1: Project team and their roles in the ES

Team Member	Role
Northern Gateway Development Vehicle LLP	Applicant.
Turley	Planning, Masterplanning, and EIA Consultants Technical consultants for Socio-Economics and Human Health; Built Heritage; and Climate Change.
Tetra Tech	Technical consultant for Transport and Access; Hydrology, Flood Risk and Water Quality; and Ground Conditions and Contamination.
Orion Heritage Limited	Technical consultant for Archaeology.
Redmore Environmental Ltd	Technical consultant for Air Quality.
Sharps Redmore	Technical consultant for Noise and Vibration.
Tyler Grange	Technical consultant for Biodiversity and Landscape and Visual.
Reading Agricultural Consultants Ltd	Technical consultant for Agriculture and Soils.

Application Documents and Plans

- 1.34 The ES is one of the documents submitted alongside the Application for the Proposed Scheme. For a full list of documents and plans and their planning status (i.e. for approval or supporting information), please refer to the **Planning Statement**.
- 1.35 A number of other documents and plans have been submitted for the Application that provide a greater level of detail on how the Proposed Scheme is likely to come forward, or how the Proposed Scheme complies with policy, or provide assessments for environmental topics for which no likely significant effects are considered to arise. However, they do not inform the assessment of likely significant effects and are not connected to the ES.
- 1.36 Where information from these documents has informed the description of the Proposed Scheme (and Project for Assessment) upon which the ES is based, this is clearly stated within **Chapter 4: Development Specification – Project for Assessment** and **Chapter 5: Development Specification – Proposed Scheme**.

- 1.37 The Project for Assessment is based on information detailed within **Chapter 4: Development Specification – Project for Assessment** and supporting EIA Assessment Plans:
- **Figure 4.1:** Project for Assessment – EIA Assessment Plan 1, Uses;
 - **Figure 4.2:** Project for Assessment – EIA Assessment Plan 2, Scale; and
 - **Figure 4.3:** Project for Assessment – EIA Assessment Plan 3, Excavation, Retention and Demolition.
- 1.38 It is this wider comprehensive development which has been assessed.
- 1.39 The description of the Proposed Scheme in isolation, for which planning consent is sought is provided within **Chapter 5: Development Specification – Proposed Scheme** and supporting Parameter Plans:
- **Figure 5.1:** Proposed Scheme – Parameter Plan 1, Uses;
 - **Figure 5.2:** Proposed Scheme – Parameter Plan 2, Scale; and
 - **Figure 5.3:** Proposed Scheme – Parameter Plan 3, Excavation, Retention and Demolition.
- 1.40 The key, supporting technical documents to the ES, contained with **Volume 2: Technical Appendices to the Primary Report** are detailed below:
- **Appendix 1.1:** Information required to be included within an ES;
 - **Appendix 1.2:** Statement of Technical Competence;
 - **Appendix 2.1:** EIA Scoping Report;
 - **Appendix 2.2:** EIA Scoping Opinion Consultee Comments;
 - **Appendix 2.3:** Response to the EIA Scoping Opinion Consultee Comments;
 - **Appendix 2.4:** EIA Briefing Note - Peat;
 - **Appendix 8.1:** Study Area and identification “links for assessment”;
 - **Appendix 8.2:** Baseline Conditions;
 - **Appendix 8.3:** Future Baseline Conditions;
 - **Appendix 8.4:** Assessment of Effects – Operational Stage;
 - **Appendix 8.5:** Net impact assessment of Study Area;
 - **Appendix 8.6:** Quantitative Assessment of Impacts: Comparison 1a;
 - **Appendix 8.7:** Quantitative Assessment of Impacts: Comparison 1b;

- **Appendix 8.8:** Quantitative Assessment of Impacts: Comparison 2a;
- **Appendix 8.9:** Quantitative Assessment of Impacts: Comparison 2b;
- **Appendix 8.10:** Quantitative Assessment of Impacts: Comparison 3a;
- **Appendix 8.11:** Quantitative Assessment of Impacts: Comparison 3b;
- **Appendix 8.12:** Quantitative Assessment of Impacts: Comparison 4a;
- **Appendix 8.13:** Quantitative Assessment of Impacts: Comparison 4b;
- **Appendix 8.14:** Quantitative Assessment of Impacts: Overview of Moderate and Major Significant Effects;
- **Appendix 8.15:** Personal Injury Accident Review;
- **Appendix 9.1:** Noise Technical Report – Proposed Commercial and Industrial Uses;
- **Appendix 9.2:** Noise Technical Report – Road Traffic Noise;
- **Appendix 10.1:** Supporting Information;
- **Appendix 10.2:** Construction Dust Assessment;
- **Appendix 10.3:** Odour Assessment;
- **Appendix 11.1:** Badger Survey Results;
- **Appendix 11.2:** Bat Survey Results;
- **Appendix 11.3:** Bird Survey Results;
- **Appendix 11.4:** Extended Phase 1 UK Habs Survey Results;
- **Appendix 11.5:** Amphibian / GCN Survey Results;
- **Appendix 11.6:** Otter Survey Results;
- **Appendix 11.7:** Reptile Survey Results;
- **Appendix 11.8:** Water Vole Survey Results;
- **Appendix 11.9:** Preliminary Arboricultural Impact Assessment;
- **Appendix 13.1:** Geo-environmental and Geotechnical Desk Study and Coal Mining Risk Assessment Report;
- **Appendix 14.1:** Agricultural Land Classification and Soil Resources Report;
- **Appendix 15.1:** Archaeology Desk Based Assessment;

- **Appendix 16.1:** Heritage Assessment;
- **Appendix 17.1:** Methodology;
- **Appendix 17.2:** LPA Correspondence;
- **Appendix 17.3:** Published Landscape Character Area Extracts;
- **Appendix 17.4:** Photoviewpoints;
- **Appendix 17.5:** Photomontages;
- **Appendix 17.6:** Sensitivity of Receptors;
- **Appendix 17.7:** Landscape Effects;
- **Appendix 17.8:** Visual Effects; and
- **Appendix 19.1:** Air Quality and Landscape and Visual In-Combination Assessment.

References

¹ The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, Statutory Instrument 2017 No.571 as amended by Statutory Instrument 2018 No. 695.

² Greater Manchester Combined Authority (Adopted 21 March 2024) 'Places For Everyone Joint Development Plan Document For Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford And Wigan 2022 To 2039'.

³ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government [Online Tool]. Planning Practice Guidance Environmental Impact Assessment. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/environmental-impact-assessment> [Accessed 21/10/2024].