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## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1.1 Gallagher Estates (the “Applicants”) are submitting an Outline Planning Application (OPA) for a residential-led urban extension (the “Proposed Development”) on land east of Bloxham Road (A361) and south of Salt Way, Banbury (the “Application Site” or “Site”). The formal description of the Proposed Development is set out in Chapter 2.
- 1.1.2 The Application Site lies within the administrative boundary of Cherwell District Council (CDC). The location of the Site and alignment of the OPA boundary is shown in **Appendix 1.1**.
- 1.1.3 This Environmental Statement (ES) reports the findings of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the Proposed Development. EIA is a process whereby the environmental effects of a proposed development are rigorously assessed. It enables potentially “significant” environmental effects to be identified and appropriate mitigation measures to be proposed, removing or minimising potential adverse effects.
- 1.1.4 The purpose of this opening chapter of the ES is to outline the background to the proposals, explain the scope of the ES and set out its structure.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND

### Outline Planning Application

1.2.1 This ES forms part of the OPA for the Proposed Development, which includes a number of other items:

- application form and certificates;
- application plans (the Site Location Plan, the Development Framework Plan and Proposed Access Plans);
- a Design and Access Statement;
- a Statement of Community Involvement;
- a Planning Statement (incorporating draft Heads of Terms for a Section 106 Agreement, an Open Space Assessment and details of affordable housing provision);
- a Transport Assessment (**appendix 5.1 of the ES**);
- a Travel Plan (**appendix 5.2 of the ES**);
- an Arboricultural Survey and Assessment (**appendix 9.12 of the ES**);
- a Flood Risk Assessment (**appendix 12.1 of the ES**); and
- a Phase 1 Geo-environmental Desk Study (**appendix 13.1 of the ES**).

### Summary Policy Context

1.2.2 The OPA is submitted in the context of the Government's promotion of growth and development within its *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF). The NPPF stipulates a presumption in favour of sustainable development as the "golden thread" running through the planning system. The NPPF urges local planning authorities to plan for and react positively to development proposals that demonstrate economic, social and environmental sustainability.

1.2.3 It is within this positive national policy context for growth and development that this OPA for a residential-led urban extension to Banbury is submitted. The potential for development to the south west of Banbury is also identified in the emerging local planning policy, providing a supportive local context within which to deliver the Proposed Development.

1.2.4 Further details of the planning policy context for the Proposed Development are set out in Chapter 3.

**1.3 THE EIA PROCESS****Need for an EIA**

1.3.1 The *Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011* (the “EIA Regulations”) require that any proposed development falling within the description of a “Schedule 2 development” within the meaning of the Regulations will be required to be subject to EIA where such development is likely to have “significant” effects on the environment, by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location (as screened under Schedule 3).

1.3.2 The Proposed Development is deemed to be EIA development under part 10(b) of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations and falls within the “urban development projects” category. An EIA to consider the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development has therefore been undertaken.

**Competence**

1.3.3 David Lock Associates (DLA) are the editor in chief of this document and authors of specific chapters, as identified below. DLA are members of The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA). This is a not-for-profit membership organisation established to promote best practice standards in environmental management, auditing and assessment. As the premier body in this field, the Institute offers unrivalled ongoing support to environmental professionals and aims to promote sustainability through improved environmental practice and performance.

**Approach**

1.3.4 In line with IEMA best practice, the EIA has been an integral part of the design of the Proposed Development, with the principal aim to reduce the severity of significant adverse environmental effects or even, wherever possible, to remove them through the design process. Such mitigation is referred to as inherent or design mitigation. In assessing the environmental impacts of the Proposed Development, full account has been taken of both its construction and operational/post completion stages.

## 1.3.5 The EIA process has included:

- I. an initial data trawl for Site designations and constraints;
- II. environmental work conducted during the process of selection of the land uses within the Proposed Development;
- III. discussions with landowners;
- IV. study of the relevant Ordnance Survey mapping, including historical mapping;
- V. identification of sensitive receptors and resources;
- VI. liaison with utility providers;
- VII. liaison with statutory consultees;
- VIII. impact identification;
- IX. liaison with Cherwell District Council;
- X. liaison with other stakeholders as identified in the Statement of Community Involvement;
- XI. refinement of mitigation proposals; and
- XII. identification and reporting of any residual significant effects.

**Methodology and Terminology**

1.3.6 The significance of particular effects of the Proposed Development is determined by the interaction between the magnitude of those effects and the sensitivity of the receptors affected. Four levels of significance are identified across the ES: “major”, “moderate”, “minor” and “negligible”. Any beneficial effects are noted, as well as adverse ones. Where any temporary, short- or medium-term, indirect, secondary or interactive effects are predicted, these too are recorded. All assessments of the significance of effects take account of proposed mitigation measures, although any significant potential effects in the absence of such measures are also identified. The terms “effect” and “impact” are used interchangeably.

**Limitations**

- 1.3.7 The EIA considers the likely effects of the Proposed Development using a combination of current knowledge of the Site and its context; and desktop and survey investigations. Requests for information have been made to other parties who may hold relevant data pertinent to the assessment. Appropriate regard has been had to relevant national and local planning policy; and relevant legislation, guidance and best practice.
- 1.3.8 Every reasonable effort has been made to obtain data concerning the existing baseline conditions and to accurately predict the effects of the Proposed Development. Known deficiencies, or where it has been necessary to make assumptions, are documented within individual topic chapters. For some topics, there are no commonly accepted methodologies for assessing impacts (such as in the case of socio-economic effects). In these cases, professional judgement and experience have been applied to inform the EIA.
- 1.3.9 Assumptions adopted are often of importance to environmental assessments. Typically these assumptions are implicit, being largely dependent upon expert judgement. The approach adopted in the EIA is one of making assumptions explicit wherever possible in order that they may be understood and critically evaluated by external parties. This is particularly true of construction impacts, where assessments are based on broad assumptions made in advance of agreement and approval of specific construction programmes and methods. In such cases, the worst-case scenario has generally been tested.

**1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE ES**

1.4.1 This ES has been compiled by David Lock Associates, drawing together contributions from a number of specialist consultancies as relevant to each topic chapter.

1.4.2 The ES includes chapters on each topic identified as potentially being significantly affected by the Proposed Development. Chapters are supported by figures and technical appendices. The ES is structured as follows:

- Volume 1: comprises the main text of the ES; and
- Volume 2: contains the figures and appendices as referred to in Volume 1.

1.4.3 A Non-Technical Summary presents the principal findings of the EIA in non-technical language to make the findings readily accessible to members of the public.

1.4.4 Volume 1 of the ES (this document) is structured as set out below:

**Table 1.1: ES chapters and authors**

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Author</b>
Chapter 1	Introduction	David Lock Associates
Chapter 2	The Site and the Proposed Development	David Lock Associates
Chapter 3	Planning Policy Overview	David Lock Associates
Chapter 4	Socio-Economic Impacts	David Lock Associates
Chapter 5	Transport (including TA Appendix 5.1 and Travel Plan Appendix 5.2)	JUBB Consulting Ltd
Chapter 6	Air Quality	Wardell Armstrong LLP
Chapter 7	Noise and Vibration	Wardell Armstrong LLP
Chapter 8	Landscape and Visual Impact (including Green Infrastructure Strategy (Appendix 8.1))	SLR Consulting Ltd
Chapter 9	Ecology and Biodiversity (including Arboricultural Assessment (Appendix 9.12))	Wardell Armstrong LLP
Chapter 10	Historic Environment	Cotswold Archaeology Ltd
Chapter 11	Agriculture and Soil Resources	Wardell Armstrong LLP
Chapter 12	Water Resources (including FRA Appendix 12.1)	Wardell Armstrong LLP



**Outline Planning Application****Gallagher Estates**

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Author</b>
Chapter 13	Ground Conditions (including Phase 1 Geo-environmental Desk Study Appendix 13.1)	Wardell Armstrong LLP
Chapter 14	Waste and Utilities	Wardell Armstrong LLP
Chapter 15	Conclusion and Cumulative Impacts	David Lock Associates

1.4.5 The individual topic chapters in Volume 1 (chapters 4 to 14 specifically) are structured as follows:

- Introduction – identifying the topic under consideration;
- Assessment Methodology – setting out the scope and method of the assessment, and identifying the criteria used to assess the significance of the effects of the Proposed Development;
- Relevant Policy – summarising policy, legislation and guidance relating specifically to the topic under consideration;
- Baseline Conditions – providing a description of the baseline conditions pertinent to that topic;
- Potential Effects – identifying likely significant effects in the absence of mitigation measures, during both the construction and operational/occupation stages of the Proposed Development;
- Mitigation Measures – proposing any measures which are necessary to avoid or reduce any significant potential adverse effects, beyond the measures inherent within the Proposed Development; and
- Residual Effects – identifying any residual effects of the Proposed Development, taking account of the mitigation measures proposed and assessing the significance of those residual effects.

## 1.5 AVAILABILITY OF THE DOCUMENT

1.5.1 The timetable for consultation on the OPA including the ES will be determined by CDC. Further information on that consultation can be obtained from CDC.

1.5.2 The ES will be available to view on the Planning section of the CDC website ([www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk)).

1.5.3 Copies of the ES can be purchased from David Lock Associates at the address below:

David Lock Associates  
50 North Thirteenth Street  
Central Milton Keynes  
MK9 3BP

1.5.4 The ES is priced as follows:

- CD of the full ES: free of charge
- Hard copy of the Non-Technical Summary: free of charge
- Hard Copy of Volume 1: £80.00
- Hard Copy of Volume 2: £250.00