

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This draft Environmental Statement has been prepared to inform the statutory Consultation being undertaken by 'Roxhill (Junction 15) Limited' (referred to as 'Roxhill' or 'the applicant') on its proposal to build a strategic rail freight interchange on land to the west of Junction 15 of the M1 motorway. The Proposed Development is referred to as 'Northampton Gateway'.
- 1.2 The proposed development comprises:
- An intermodal freight terminal including container storage and HGV parking, rail sidings to serve individual warehouses, and with the capability to also provide a 'rapid rail freight' facility as part of the intermodal freight terminal;
 - Up to 468,000 sq m (approximately 5 million sq ft) (gross internal area) of warehousing and ancillary buildings, with additional floorspace provided in the form of mezzanines;
 - New road infrastructure and works to the existing road network, including the provision of a new access and associated works to the A508, a new bypass to the village of Roade, improvements to Junction 15 and to J15A of the M1 motorway, the A45, and other highway improvements at junctions on the local highway network;
 - Strategic landscaping and tree planting, including diverted public rights of way;
 - Earthworks and demolition of existing structures on the SRFI site.
- 1.3 A detailed description of the proposed development is provided in Chapter 2.
- 1.4 The development comprises a "nationally significant infrastructure project" (NSIP) which will be the subject of an application to the Planning Inspectorate for a Development Consent Order. Following the submission of an application, it will be examined by the Inspectorate and ultimately decided by the Secretary of State for Transport. Further details of the process can be obtained on the Planning Inspectorate's website (<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>).
- 1.5 The proposed development is subject to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process. Part of that assessment is the production of an Environmental Statement (ES) which will be submitted with the application. This draft ES comprises drafts of the separate chapters to coincide with the consultation process being held from 9th October 2017 until 24th November 2017. This draft ES provides information regarding baseline (existing) environmental conditions, the nature of anticipated impacts, indications of the likely significant environmental effects, and about the effects of proposed mitigation measures where available at this time.
- 1.6 This Environmental Statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 (as amended). The regulations were revoked and replaced by new regulations in 2017 however the transitional arrangements within the new regulations apply and, since a Scoping Opinion was obtained in advance of the commencement of the new regulations, this ES has continued to be prepared in compliance with the 2009 regulations.

- 1.7 Some detailed aspects of the work to inform the application is ongoing and so some aspects of the draft ES is 'work in progress', but is considered sufficiently well progressed to help inform the consultation process by enabling a good understanding of the likely impacts of the proposed development. If there are changes made to the development proposals as a result of the consultation process these changes will be reflected in the final work to progress and complete the ES.
- 1.8 The aim of the proposal is to respond to the need for Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges identified by the Government, and to respond to an identified commercial need/demand for SRFI's including rail-served warehousing. The scheme is intended to generate significant economic advantages for the region as well as local communities, whilst managing environmental effects and delivering an extensive package of highway, landscape and other benefits..

Scope and Content of the Environmental Statement

- 1.9 A scoping opinion was received from the Planning Inspectorate, and this has informed the scope of the emerging ES. The topic areas to be covered in the ES are:
- Description of Development
 - Socio-economic aspects
 - Landscape and visual effects
 - Ecology and nature conservation
 - Geology, soil and groundwater
 - Water resources and drainage
 - Noise and Vibration
 - Air quality
 - Cultural heritage
 - Lighting
 - Transportation
 - Agricultural land quality
 - Waste
 - Cumulative effects
- 1.10 A non-technical summary will be prepared to accompany the final ES. In advance of that, a 'Short Document' summary of the proposed development has also been prepared as part of the statutory (October 2017) consultation process.
- 1.11 An assessment of each topic and its associated impacts has been prepared and presented within the ES. Assessment methodology for each topic area broadly involves the following stages:
- Description of existing baseline environmental conditions formulated by site visits, surveys and collected information.
 - Introduction and adoption of appropriate criteria and conjecturing methods to enable the significance of change to the environment to be assessed.

- 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.

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