

E1.1

ES Chapter 1 - Introduction

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**THE CROWN
ESTATE**

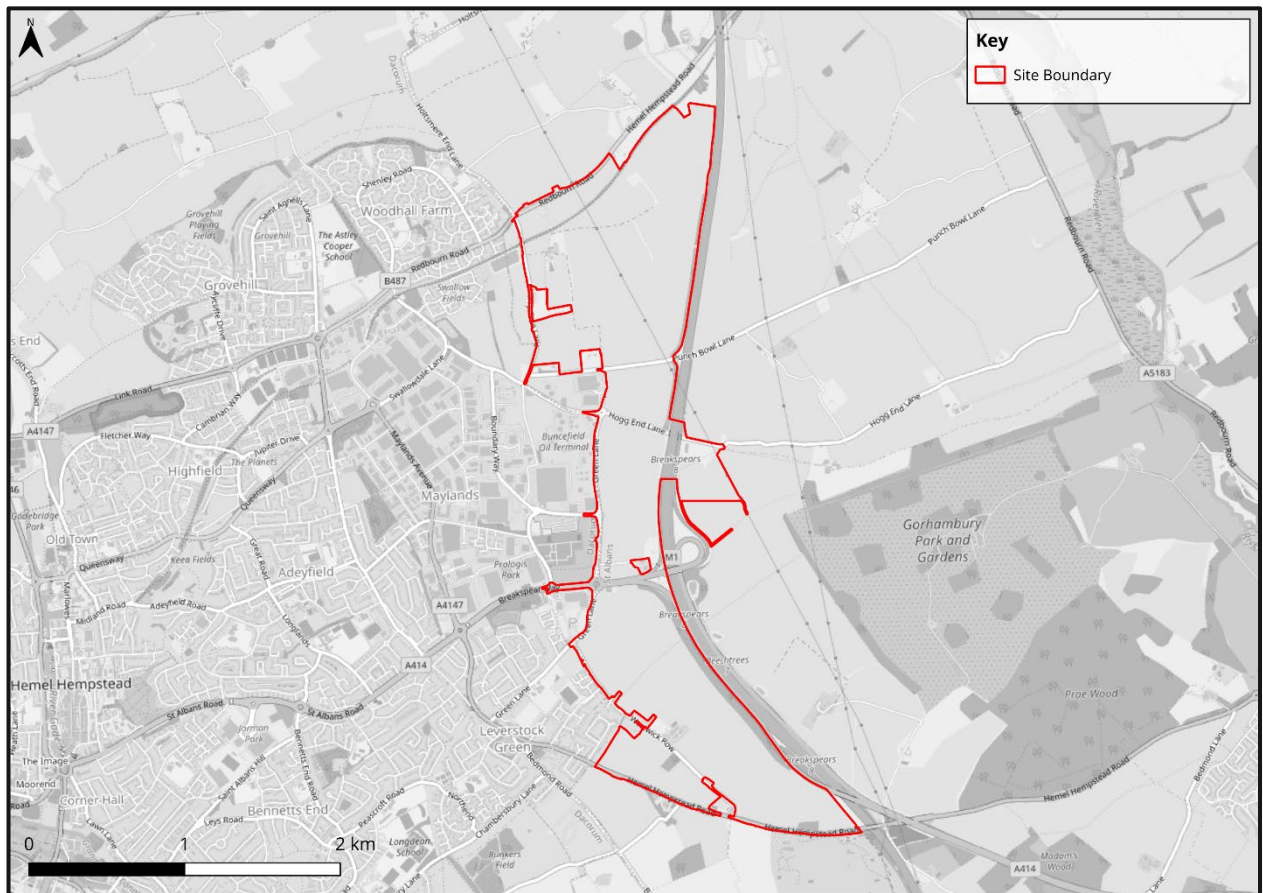
East Hemel

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The Crown Estate (TCE) (hereafter referred to as the 'Applicant') is seeking outline planning consent for the delivery of a mixed-use residential-led development (hereafter referred to as the 'Development') on a 356.8-hectare (ha) area of land located to the east of Hemel Hempstead (hereafter referred to as the 'Site'). The majority of the Site is located within the administrative area of St Albans City & District Council (SADC); however, a small area of the proposed highways and infrastructure works along the western extent of the Site are located within the administrative area of Dacorum Borough Council (DBC). SADC and DBC are therefore the relevant Local Planning Authorities (LPAs).
- 1.1.2 The Applicant is submitting an Outline Planning Application with all matters reserved save for access from the A414 / Green Lane and access from the B487 Hemel Hempstead Road (Redbourn Road). This application will be submitted in duplicate to SADC as the LPA for development falling within the District, and to DBC as the LPA for development falling within the Borough.
- 1.1.3 Further details of the Development are provided in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 5: The Development**.
- 1.1.4 The red line boundary for the Outline Planning Application (the Site) is identified on **Figure 1.1**.

Figure 1.1: Site Boundary Plan



1.1.5 In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (EIA) Regulations 2017¹ (as amended)^{2, 3} (hereafter referred to as the EIA Regulations), this Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared by Avison Young on behalf of the Applicant to accompany the Outline Planning Application to SADC and DBC as the LPAs.

1.2 Site Context

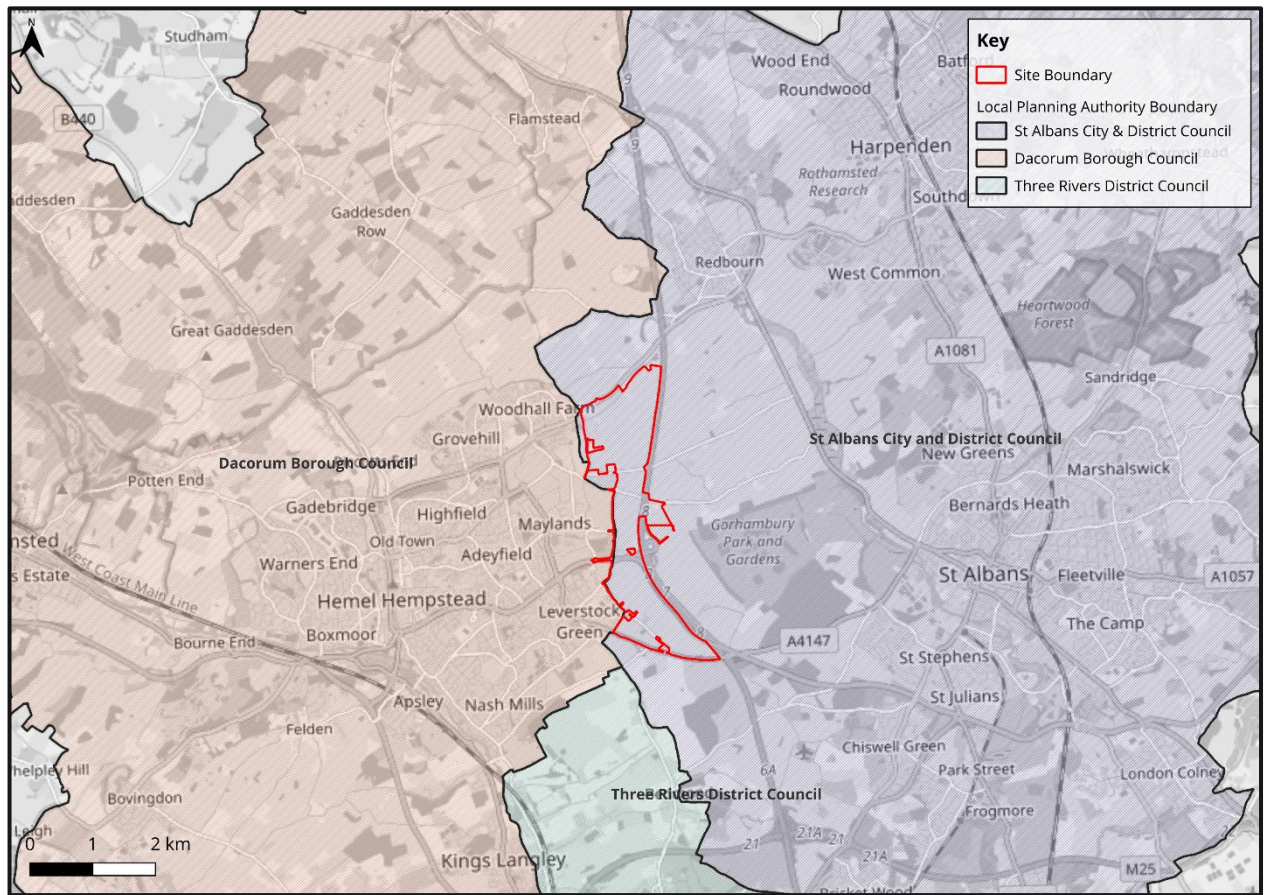
1.2.1 The Site (identified on **Figure 1.1**) is located directly to the east of Hemel Hempstead. The majority of the Site is located within the administrative area of SADC; however a small area of the proposed highways and infrastructure works along the western extent of the Site are located within the administrative area of DBC accounting for approximately 1.3% of the total Site area (identified on **Figure 1.2**). The Site comprises of several irregular shaped agricultural fields, several residential and farm buildings including the Westwick Row Farm equestrian centre, the Nickey Line footpath and cycleway along with several roads including Punchbowl Lane, Hogg End Lane, Cherry Tree Lane, Green Lane and Westwick Row.

¹ HMSO. The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations. 2017.

² HMSO. The Town and Country Planning and Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.

³ HMSO. The Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018.

Figure 1.2: Local Authority Boundaries Plan



1.2.2 The Site is broadly bound by:

- The B487 Hemel Hempstead Road (Redbourn Road) to the north, beyond which is agricultural fields.
- The M1 motorway and Junction 8 to the east, beyond which is agricultural fields and the estate of Gorhambury House.
- The A4147 Hemel Hempstead Road to the south, beyond which is agricultural fields and the Centurion Golf Club.
- The Hemel Hempstead and Maylands industrial estates to the west, as well as the currently under-construction Spencer's Park residential development and the residential areas of Woodhall Farm and Leverstock Green.

1.2.3 A full description of the Site and its surrounding context is provided in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 3: Site Description**.

1.3 Project Background

1.3.1 East Hemel forms part of the Hemel Garden Communities (HGC) Growth Area. The HGC Programme is an ambitious proposal which will transform and grow Hemel Hempstead and create attractive, sustainable new neighbourhoods to its north and east by 2050. Hemel Hempstead was awarded 'Garden Town' status by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government in 2019. The Growth Area includes land within DBC and SADC and will provide 11,000 new homes and 10,000 jobs.

1.3.2 The Applicant began preparing an outline planning application for its land in 2019; the exercise was paused in 2020. In the intervening period, the HGC Concept Framework Plan was prepared to test and inform the emerging policies for the Growth Area within each authority's Local Plan. The Concept Framework Plan is now complete, and is included within the draft SADC Local Plan, which was submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (HCLG) for Independent Examination on 29 November 2024, and in the draft DBC Local Plan, which was submitted to the Secretary of State for HCLG for Independent Examination on 11 March 2025. The Outline Planning Application has been prepared in accordance with this new policy context.

1.4 Legal Framework for the Environmental Statement

1.4.1 The need for EIA is determined by the definitions and criteria provided in Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations, 2017 (the 'EIA Regulations')⁴ as amended⁵. Where development is of a description within Schedule 1 ('Schedule 1 development'), EIA is mandatory. The Development does not meet the requirements of Schedule 1 and, therefore, EIA is not mandatory in this case.

1.4.2 Where development is of a description mentioned in column 1 of the table in Schedule 2 and meets or exceeds one or more of the criteria or thresholds set out in the corresponding Column 2 of the table, or any part of it is located in a sensitive area, it is 'Schedule 2 development'. EIA is required for Schedule 2 development if the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors, such as its nature, size or location, with reference to Schedule 3 'Selection Criteria for Screening Schedule 2 Development'.

1.4.3 The Development is of a type described in Schedule 2, 10(b) of the EIA Regulations. That is:

"10. Infrastructure projects...(b) Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas..."

1.4.4 Furthermore, the Development meets all three applicable thresholds for Schedule 2, 10(b) projects:

"...(i) The development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or (ii) the development includes more than 150 dwellings; or (iii) the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares."

1.4.5 The EIA Regulations define a 'sensitive area' as follows:

- Land notified under section 28(1) (Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981⁶;
- A National Park within the meaning of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949⁷;

⁴ HMSO. The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations. 2017 as amended.

⁵ HMSO. The Town and Country Planning and Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.

⁶ Wildlife and Countryside Act. 1981.

⁷ National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. 1949.

- The Broads⁸;
- A property appearing on the World Heritage List kept under article 11(2) of the 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage⁹;
- A Scheduled Monument within the meaning of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979¹⁰;
- An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (now referred to as National Landscapes) designated as such by an order made by Natural England under section 82(1) (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000¹¹ as confirmed by the Secretary of State; and / or
- A European site¹².

1.4.6 Whilst the Development does not sit wholly or in part in a sensitive area (and therefore does not constitute EIA Development by virtue of its location in a sensitive area), it does meet the criteria to be Schedule 2 development. As such, the Development was considered against the criteria in Schedule 3, which provides guidance as to whether it is development that is likely to have significant environmental effects and therefore require an EIA. The criteria set out in Schedule 3 relate to:

- The characteristics of the development;
- The location of the development; and
- The types and characteristics of the potential impact.

1.4.7 Therefore, the Development is Schedule 2 development and, giving due regard to Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations, and the Applicant recognises the potential for the Development to give rise to significant environmental effects. Accordingly, a formal EIA Screening Opinion (to determine the need (or otherwise) for EIA) was not requested from SADC or DBC and an EIA was undertaken to determine the likely significant environmental effects of the Development and the nature of any mitigation measures required to avoid, reduce, ameliorate and / or offset any significant adverse environmental effects.

1.4.8 The scope of the EIA was formally agreed with SADC and DBC via a request for a formal EIA Scoping Opinion under Regulation 15 of the EIA Regulations. **ES Volume 2, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology** provides further detail regarding the scoping stage of this EIA.

1.4.9 In accordance with the EIA Regulations, this ES reports the findings of the EIA process. As such, the ES sets out:

- The likely significant environmental effects of the Development during the enabling, demolition and construction works (the 'Works');

⁸ Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act. 1988.

⁹ The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. 1972.

¹⁰ Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act. 1979.

¹¹ Countryside and Rights of Way Act. 2000. As amended by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act. 2006.

¹² A European Site refers to a site within the meaning of Regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

- The likely significant environmental effects of the Development following completion of the Works and during the occupation and operation of the Development;
- The likely significant cumulative effects of the Development; and
- Mitigation measures required to avoid, reduce, ameliorate and / or offset any likely significant adverse environmental effects.

1.4.10 The likely significant residual effects of the Development which would occur following implementation of the above mitigation measures.

1.5 Structure of the Environmental Statement

Structure of the Environmental Statement

1.5.1 This ES comprises three Volumes:

- **ES Volume 1 - Non-Technical Summary;**
- **ES Volume 2 - Main Text and Figures** (this document); and
- **ES Volume 3 - Appendices.**

Environmental Statement Volume 1 - Non-Technical Summary

1.5.2 The EIA Regulations require the submission of a summary of the ES in 'non-technical language'. As such, **ES Volume 1** provides a concise summary of the ES without excessive technical detail or scientific language so as to be readily and quickly understood by non-technical experts and members of the public who may not be familiar with EIA. The Non-Technical Summary (NTS) is produced as a separate document to facilitate wider public distribution. The NTS provides a description of the Development and existing environment, the main alternatives considered, the methodologies used to assess effects, the potential environmental and socio-economic effects and any identified required / proposed mitigation measures and the resultant likely significant effects of the Development.

Environmental Statement Volume 2 - Main Text and Figures

1.5.3 **ES Volume 2** (this document) comprises 19 Chapters, which are illustrated throughout by a series of figures.

1.5.4 The 19 Chapters comprise the key findings of the EIA process undertaken in respect of the Development and provide:

- A description of the methodology applied in the EIA (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology**);
- A description of the Site, its environmental context and sensitivity (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 3: Existing Land Uses and Activities**);
- The main alternatives that were reasonably considered by the Applicant and a comparison of their environmental effects (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution**);

- The nature and purpose of the Development (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 5: The Development**); and
- The enabling, demolition and construction processes and timetable (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 6: The Works**).

1.5.5 **ES Volume 2, Chapters 7 to 19**, present the findings of the EIA for the following environmental topics:

- Landscape and Visual Amenity (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Amenity**);
- Ecology and Nature Conservation (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 8: Ecology and Nature Conservation**);
- Heritage and Archaeology (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Heritage and Archaeology**);
- Transport and Access (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Transport and Access**);
- Air Quality (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 11: Air Quality**);
- Noise and Vibration (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration**);
- Agricultural Land Use (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Agricultural Land Use**);
- Water Resources and Flood Risk (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Water Resources and Flood Risk**);
- Climate Change (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 15: Climate Change**);
- Socio-economics (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 16: Socio-economics**);
- Health (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Health**);
- Effect Interactions (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 18: Effect Interactions**); and
- Schedule of Environmental Commitments (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 19: Schedule of Environmental Commitments**).

1.5.6 Within each of the topic assessments in **Volume 2, Chapters 7 to 17** the following information is provided:

- An introduction;
- A methodology of assessment;
- A description of the relevant baseline conditions;
- An assessment of the likely environmental effects of the Development and their significance, taking into account embedded (primary) and tertiary mitigation;
- A description of additional (secondary) mitigation measures and an assessment of the likely residual environmental effects of the Development and their significance;
- An assessment of the likely residual cumulative effects of the Development together with other Cumulative Schemes (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology** for the full list of Cumulative Schemes); and
- Conclusion, summarising the findings of the assessment.

Environmental Statement Volume 3 - Appendices

1.5.7 **ES Volume 3** comprises the detailed supporting data, information and the full text of all relevant technical assessments undertaken as part of the EIA process.

1.6 Project Team and Competency

1.6.1 Regulation 18(5) of the EIA Regulations states:

"In order to ensure the completeness and quality of the ES: (a) the developer must ensure that the ES is prepared by competent experts; and (b) the ES must be accompanied by a statement from the developer outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts."

1.6.2 The EIA was co-ordinated by Avison Young in conjunction with a team of specialist consultants. Avison Young is registered in the UK by the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP) (formerly the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)) as a participant in their EIA Quality Mark Scheme. The Scheme recognises that Avison Young produces ESs in accordance with current best practice standards and contribute to improved practice in the industry. The Applicant's EIA Team and relevant credentials are set out within **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1: The Applicant's EIA Team

Name	Organisation	Project Role	Relevant Qualifications	Statement of Relevant Experience
Patrick Duffy	Avison Young	EIA Project Director	BSc (Hons) MSc Environmental Impact Assessment and Management Member of the Institution of Environmental Sciences (MIES) Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute (MRTPI)	Over 30 years' experience managing, co-ordinating and directing EIAs and preparing ESs for predominantly property and urban regeneration projects.
Kate Tomos	Avison Young	EIA Project Lead	BA (Hons) MA Environmental Impact Assessment and Management Full Member of ISEP Chartered Environmentalist	Over 20 years' experience as an environmental consultant, with considerable experience of managing and coordinating multi-discipline EIAs.
Charles Anderton	Avison Young	EIA Project Coordinator	BSc (Hons) Environmental Management	Three years' experience assisting with the co-ordination of ESs for

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			MSc Environmental Impact Assessment and Management Graduate Member of ISEP	urban-regeneration, residential-led and mixed-use projects.
Frances Austin	Avison Young	EIA Project Assistant	BA (Hons) MSc Environmental Impact Assessment and Management Graduate Member of ISEP	Two years' experience assisting with the co-ordination of ESs for urban-regeneration, residential-led and mixed-use projects.
Patrick Ransom	Avison Young	Lead Socio-economic Consultant	MA Geography MSc Sustainable Development	Over seven years' of experience working in Economic Development and Regeneration with a focus on quantifying and maximising the positive socio-economic impacts of major developments. Patrick has undertaken socio-economic assessments for a range of different schemes and projects around the world.
Julia Sulikowska	Cotswold Archaeology	Lead Heritage and Archaeology Consultant	MA Archaeology Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists	A professional archaeologist with 20 years' experience, and has been involved in the preparation of ES chapters for residential, mixed-use and commercial schemes since 2013.
David Bird	SLR	Lead Transport Consultant	BSc CEng MICE	35 years' experience in development projects including large mixed use schemes. Great majority of such projects have required an ES.
Dan Smyth	Savills	Lead Air Quality Consultant	BSc MSc DIC	Dan is the Joint Head of the Environment and Infrastructure Team at Savills and has 30 years' experience as an air quality specialist for both large and small scale infrastructure, residential and mixed-use projects. Dan is an experienced expert witness in air quality and has also given evidence to both the Built Environment and Environment & Rural Affairs Committees.

Name	Organisation	Project Role	Relevant Qualifications	Statement of Relevant Experience
Gabriela Costa	Expedition Engineering (part of Useful Simple Trust)	Lead Climate Change Consultant	MSc Chartered Engineer (CEng MCIBSE)	Eleven years' experience in sustainability consultancy and four years' experience on overseeing climate mitigation and adaptation and whole life carbon for urban-regeneration, residential-led and mixed-use projects.
Phil Evans	Savills	Lead Noise and Vibration Consultant	BSc (Hons) Geology MSc Acoustics, Vibration and Noise Control Fellow of the Geological Society Fellow of the Institute of Acoustics	Over 30 years' experience as a noise consultant and expert witness including technical input to and co-ordination of EIAs for a wide range of infrastructure and mixed use / residential projects. Was the Project Director for the noise and vibration input to the EIA / ES for the Crossrail project. Some DCO / NSIP experience.
Sam Franklin	Landscape	Lead Agricultural Land Use Consultant	BSc Hons Agriculture PIEMA and MISoilSci Chartered Surveyor and FBIAC MSc Cranfield Uni	25 years' experience undertaking and writing agricultural land use assessments. With over 35 years RICS membership, 25 years membership of IEMA and BIAC and 27 years membership of BSSS.
Marc Jackson	Ramboll (formerly Temple)	Lead Ecology Consultant	BSc (Hons) MRes Science of the Environment Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) Member of CIEEM	Over twenty years professional ecological consultancy experience advising on biodiversity conservation, protected species mitigation and green infrastructure planning.
Samantha Leathers	Gillespies	Lead Landscape and Visual Consultant	MA (Dist.), PG Dip, BSc (Hons) Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute - CMLI Affiliate Member of the ISEP	A Chartered Landscape Architect with over 28 years of experience, Samantha leads Gillespies' Landscape Planning team in the South region. With a background spanning both public and private sectors, Samantha has built up a diverse portfolio across a wide range of project types and scales — from large-scale urban extensions and expansive renewable energy schemes, from regeneration schemes to smaller

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				public realm and open space enhancements.
Tara Barratt	Savills	Lead Health Consultant	BSc (Hons) Geography MSc (DIC) Environmental Technology (specialising in environmental epidemiology) Associate Member of ISEP	8 years' experience coordinating and delivering health impact assessments and population and health ES chapters for a range of major infrastructure projects across the UK, Ireland and in Australia. Tara has helped define and develop best practice through her involvement on all three of IEMA's Health in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Working Group publications: "Health in EIA – A Primer for a Proportionate Approach"; "IEMA Guide to Determining Significance For Human Health In EIA"; and "IEMA Guide to Effective Scoping of Human Health in EIA".
Fred Labbé	Expedition Engineering (part of Useful Simple Trust)	Lead Flood Risk Consultant	MEng (Hons) MSc (Hons) Environmental Design / Architecture Eurlng (Chartered Engineer) ITER (France)	25 years of experience in sustainable water management and design including writing EIA Scoping Reports and ES chapters.

1.7 Environmental Statement Availability and Comments

1.7.1 The Non-Technical Summary, ES and Appendices are available for viewing on the online planning application websites for SADC¹³ and DBC¹⁴. Further copies of the Non-Technical Summary, ES and Appendices are available on CD or pen drive at a cost of £25 from Avison Young. Comments on the planning application and ES may be made online via SADC's and DBC's planning application websites as noted above, or should be addressed to the Planning Officers as detailed below. Contact details are as follows:

¹³ SADC (2025) Online Planning Portal. Available at: <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/view-and-track-planning-applications>

¹⁴ DBC (2025) Online Planning Portal. Available at: <https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/planning-development/planning-applications/search-comment-planning-applications>

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