4. Approach to preparing the Environmental Statement

4.1 The Environmental Impact Assessment process

4.1.1 The preparation of the Environmental Statement (ES) is one of the key stages in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, as it brings together information about any significant environmental effects, which North Somerset Council (NSC) will use to inform its decision about whether the Proposed Development should be consented.

4.1.2 An overview of the process is provided in **Appendix 1A**.

4.1.3 This ES has been prepared utilising best practice guidance and industry standards. As indicated in **Chapter 1: Introduction**, specifically **Section 1.5**, Wood is registered with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)'s EIA Quality Mark Scheme. This scheme allows organisations to make a commitment to providing excellence in their EIA activities and have this commitment independently reviewed.

4.2 EIA terminology

Impacts and effects

4.2.1 In some ESs, the terms 'impacts' and 'effects' are used interchangeably, whilst in others they are given different meanings. Some use 'impact' to mean the cause of an 'effect', whilst others use the converse meaning. This variety of definitions has led to a great deal of confusion over the terms, both among the authors and the readers of ESs.

4.2.2 The convention used in this ES is to use 'impacts' only within the context of the term EIA, which describes the process from scoping through ES preparation to subsequent monitoring and other work. Otherwise, this document uses the word 'effects' when describing the environmental consequences of the Proposed Development. For example, such effects may come about as a result of the following:

- Physical activities that would take place if the development were to proceed (e.g. vehicle movements during construction operations); or
- Environmental changes that are predicted to occur as a result of these physical activities (e.g. loss of vegetation prior to the start of construction work or an increase in noise levels). In some cases, one change causes another change, which in turn results in an environmental effect.

4.2.3 The predicted environmental effects are the consequences of the environmental changes for specific environmental receptors. For example, with respect to bats, the loss of roosting sites or foraging areas could affect the bats' population size; with regard to people, an increase in noise levels could affect people's amenity.

4.2.4 This ES is concerned with assessing the significance of the environmental effects of the Proposed Development, rather than the activities or changes that cause them. However, this requires these activities to be understood and the resultant changes identified and quantified, often based on predictive assessment work.

Spatial and temporal scope

4.2.5 Spatial scope is the area over which changes to the environment are predicted to occur as a consequence of the Proposed Development. In practice, an EIA should focus on those areas where these effects are likely to be significant.

4.2.6 For the purposes of this ES, the spatial scope varies between environmental topics and is therefore described in each of the topic chapters (**Chapters 6-17**). For example, the spatial effects of a development on landscape and visual amenity will probably cover a much greater area to the effects on groundwater.

4.2.7 The temporal scope covers the time period over which changes to the environment and the resultant effects are predicted to occur; they are typically defined as either being temporary or permanent.

4.3 EIA scoping

4.3.1 Scoping involves identifying the following:

- The people and environmental resources (collectively known as 'receptors') that could be significantly affected by the Proposed Development;
- What aspects of the Proposed Development those receptors might be affected by; and
- The work required to take forward the assessment of these potential likely significant effects.

4.3.2 Our approach involves scoping being initiated at the outset of the work on the EIA, with initial conclusions about potentially significant effects of the development being set out in the Scoping Report (**Appendix 1A**). The preparation of the Scoping Report was informed by the legislative and policy context relevant to the Proposed Development. It is also informed by the simple rule that, to be significant, an effect must be of sufficient importance that it should influence the process of decision-making about whether or not consent should be granted for the Proposed Development or an element of it. In this ES, this is referred to as the 'significance test'.

4.3.3 At the scoping stage, conclusions drawn utilising the significance test are based upon professional judgement, with reference to the Proposed Development description and drawing upon, as appropriate, available information about:

- The magnitude and other characteristics of the potential changes that are expected to be caused by the Proposed Development;
- The sensitivity of receptors to these changes;
- The value of receptors; and
- The effects of these changes on relevant receptors.

4.3.4 If the information that is available during scoping does not enable a robust conclusion to be reached that a potential effect is not likely to be significant, the effect is taken forward for further assessment.

4.3.5 The Scoping Report (**Appendix 1A**) sets out what has been identified to be the potentially significant environmental effects for consideration in the ES and the approach to undertaking the assessments. It recommended that the following topics were 'scoped-in' to the assessment: Traffic and Transport; Noise and Vibration; Air Quality; Landscape and Visual; Land Quality; Biodiversity; Surface Water and Flood Risk; Groundwater; Historic Environment; Socio-economic; Human Health; Climate; and Carbon and Other Greenhouse Gases.

4.3.6 Alongside this, it identified that the Proposed Development was unlikely to cause significant changes to the risks associated with major accidents and disasters and as such recommended that this was scoped out of the EIA (refer to **Appendix 1A** for further information on what was proposed to be scoped in and out).

4.3.7 The Scoping Report (**Appendix 1A**) was submitted for comment to the determining authority, NSC, and statutory consultees (refer to **Section 4.4**) on 20 June 2018. The NSC Scoping Opinion was adopted on 6 August 2018 and is available on the NSC planning portal and included as **Appendix 1B**. The ES has been based on the scoping opinion adopted, as per the requirement in Regulation 18(4)(a) of the EIA Regulations.

4.3.8 Subsequent to the issue of the Scoping Report (**Appendix 1A**), the scope of the assessment has been progressively refined in response to comments from the determining authority and from consultees (refer to **Section 4.4**), together with environmental information that has been obtained from survey or assessment work carried out as part of the EIA, and the evolution of the development proposals. Consultation, through meetings, correspondence and discussions with statutory and non-statutory consultees has taken place throughout the preparation of this ES.

4.3.9 The environmental topic chapters (**Chapters 6-17**) detail the final scope of the assessment in relation to effects assessed as potentially significant, which therefore require an in-depth detailed assessment. In some cases, effects that could be scoped-out (because they are considered not likely to be significant) have been scoped-in because further information is required to justify and explain this. All other effects (i.e. that are not referred to in the environmental topic chapters) are not likely to be significant.

4.4 Consultation

4.4.1 The purpose of consultations (via meetings, telephones and correspondence) was to agree the assessment methodologies for technical studies and identify any sensitivities or concerns associated with the Proposed Development. Such sensitivities may need to be considered and incorporated into the design process and assessment of the EIA.

4.4.2 The scope of the detailed assessment is based on the Scoping Opinion (**Appendix 1B**). Engagement with the following parties has contributed to the evolution of the scope:

- Relevant environmental officers from NSC;
- Backwell Parish Council;
- Wrington Parish Council;
- Cleeve Parish Council;
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Environment Agency (EA);
- Natural England (NE);
- Highways England;
- Wessex Water; and
- Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership.

4.4.3 Numerous other bodies have additionally responded in writing as part of the non-statutory and statutory consultation. Comments from these bodies is provided within the Consultation Report

that accompanies the planning application. Where comments are relevant to the EIA, this is identified in the applicable technical chapter (**Chapters 6-17**) of this ES.

4.5 Overview of assessment methodology

Introduction

4.5.1 All the topic assessments presented in the ES have been undertaken on the basis of the description of the Proposed Development, as set out in **Chapter 2: Description of the Proposed Development**.

4.5.2 For each topic, the assessment of likely significant effects has been undertaken by competent experts with relevant specialist skills (refer to **Appendix 1C**), drawing on their experience of working on other development projects, good practice in EIA and on relevant published information. For some topics, use has been made of modelling or other methodologies, as appropriate.

4.5.3 With a few exceptions, each topic chapter follows a common format, as outlined below:

1. Introduction
2. Limitations of this assessment
3. Relevant legislation, planning policy, technical guidance
4. Data gathering methodology
5. Overall baseline (where appropriate), with the detailed baseline being set out under Sub section 10 below
6. Consultation
7. Scope of the assessment
8. Environmental measures embedded into the development proposals
9. Assessment methodology
10. Assessment of effects - this sub-section excludes cumulative effects and deals separately with each receptor or category of receptors that could be significantly affected. The assessment is made against the predicted future baseline. Where this approach is deviated from it is explained within the relevant topic chapter (refer to **Section 4.6**)
11. Consideration of optional additional mitigation
12. Conclusions of significance evaluation
13. Implementation of environmental measures and monitoring
14. References

4.6 Identification of baseline conditions

4.6.1 As the various elements of the Proposed Development would be built over a period of eight years, commencing in late 2019 and operating indefinitely, it cannot be assumed that the baseline conditions in the absence of the Proposed Development, would be the same as the current baseline.

4.6.2 To determine the baseline conditions that should be used for the assessment of the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development, it is necessary to define the current baseline conditions and subsequently decide whether these conditions are likely to change by the 'assessment years' that are selected for the construction and operation of the Proposed Development. If this future baseline is more likely to occur than the current baseline, the future baseline is used for the assessment of likely significant effects. However, in many cases it will be concluded that the current baseline is just as likely, or even more likely, to occur in the assessment years than would be the case with any future baseline conditions.

4.6.3 In this case, the future baseline incorporates any ongoing developments at Bristol Airport associated with the 10mppa application and any development that falls under the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) which commence construction prior to November 2018. Details of these developments are within **Table 2.1** and **Table 2.2** in **Chapter 2: Description of the Proposed Development**. Descriptions and time frames are detailed within **Chapter 2: Description of the Proposed Development**.

4.6.4 The current baseline is determined for the 'Study Area' for each environmental topic by a combination of desk-based research, including consultation with the relevant statutory and non-statutory authorities, together with field survey work (where required).

4.6.5 In its simplest form, the Study Area is likely to comprise the site of the Proposed Development. However, for many developments, the Study Area is also likely to include land outside the site, especially where the effects of the Proposed Development are likely to extend beyond such geographical limits to reflect 'Zones of Influence' (ZoIs), where the Proposed Development could affect off-site areas.

4.6.6 Details of the relevant ZoIs are discussed in the baseline section of each environmental topic chapter (**Chapters 6-17**). These chapters also explain the basis for defining the future baseline conditions, where appropriate. This is based on the following:

- Information gathered about the existing environmental conditions;
- Changes that can be predicted based on reasonable assumptions and modelling calculations, e.g. the application of traffic growth factors based on relevant guidance;
- Information relating to other likely and predictable changes, e.g. climate change, which could affect current prevailing environmental conditions; and
- Information about other relevant developments (i.e. components of the 10 mppa development and any GPDO commencing construction prior to November 2018), including the nature of the development proposals, their likely timing and their location relative to the Proposed Development.

4.7 Overview to approach to significance evaluation methodology

Introduction

4.7.1 A requirement of an ES is to outline conclusions that have been reached about the likely significant environmental effects that it is predicted will result from the Proposed Development. Reaching a conclusion about which effects, if any, are likely to be significant is the culmination of an iterative process that involves the following stages:

- Identifying those effects that could be likely to be significant (refer to **Section 4.3**);

- Assessing the effects of the Proposed Development against the baseline (current or future, as appropriate); and
- Concluding whether these resultant effects are likely to be significant

4.7.2 **Chapters 6 - 17** describe the approaches that have been used, in relation to the stages outlined in paragraph 4.7.1, for each environmental topic within this ES.

Identification of likely significant effects

4.7.3 To inform the identification of likely significant effects during the early stages of the assessment process, information pertaining to current and intended future operation and construction plans at Bristol Airport was considered.

4.7.4 As proposals evolved, further detail concerning construction and operational activities became available. This enabled the assessment of potential environmental changes caused by the Proposed Development to be refined, including their spatial extent and other characteristics (e.g. their magnitude, frequency etc.).

4.7.5 The identification of receptors under consideration within the assessments draws upon available information on environmental changes. In some cases, this can be translated into ZoIs outside of which the environmental changes are predicted to be sufficiently small that receptors are not likely to be significantly affected. In addition, for some environmental topics (e.g. biodiversity and historic environment), a valuation is undertaken to define those receptors that are of sufficient importance or value that they could be significantly affected. Only those receptors that are of sufficient importance or value and that are located within the defined ZoIs where effects could be significant, are taken forward for further assessment.

4.7.6 The technical assessments, undertaken in **Chapters 6 - 17**, describe how environmental changes and resulting effects are assessed, together with the topic specific approaches that have been used to identify the receptors affected by the Proposed Development.

Types of effects

4.7.7 Paragraph 5 of Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations states:

"The description of the likely significant effects on the factors specified in regulation 4(2) should cover the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development."

4.7.8 This ES considers these types of effects, where appropriate and deemed relevant to the environmental topic chapter. Cumulative effects are discussed in **Section 4.8**.

Direct effects

4.7.9 Direct effects are those that result directly from the Proposed Development. For example, where a machine disturbs an area of habitat; the associated physical activity could result in a change to the receptor (i.e. the habitat).

Indirect and secondary effects

4.7.10 Indirect and secondary effects are those that result from consequential change caused by the Proposed Development. As such they would normally occur later in time or at locations farther away than where direct effects may occur. An example would be where water pipes are damaged as a result of the development, and the consequences of that damage is flood risk to receptors.

Transboundary effects

4.7.11 Transboundary effects are those that would affect the environment in another state within the European Economic Area (EEA). Unless these effects are considered significant, they are not reported within the topic chapters (**Chapter 6-17**) of this ES.

Temporal effects

4.7.12 As discussed in **Section 4.3**, temporal effects are typically defined as being permanent or temporary as follows:

- Permanent - these are effects that will remain even when the Proposed Development is complete, although these effects may be caused by environmental changes that are permanent or temporary. For example, an excavator that is temporarily driven over an area of valuable habitat could cause so much damage that the effect on this vegetation would be permanent; and
- Temporary – these are effects that are related to environmental changes associated with a particular activity and the effects will cease when that activity finishes.

Significance evaluation

Overview

4.7.13 Receptors that could be significantly affected as a result of the Proposed Development are identified in the topic chapters (**Chapters 6-17**). The adopted approach to determine whether effects on receptors is significant is to apply a combination of professional judgement and a topic-specific significance evaluation methodology that draws upon the results of the assessment.

4.7.14 In applying this approach to significance evaluation, it is necessary to ensure that there is consistency between each environmental topic in the level at which effects are considered to be significant. Therefore, it is inappropriate for the assessment of one topic to conclude that minor effects are significant, when, for another topic, only comparatively major effects are significant.

4.7.15 Conclusions about significance are arrived at using the following: professional judgement; available information on the magnitude and other characteristics of potential changes expected to be caused by the Proposed Development; receptors' sensitivity to these changes; the value of the receptor; and the effects of these changes on relevant receptors.

4.7.16 For some environmental topics, published guidance is available with regard to significance evaluation. Where such guidance exists, even if in draft, it has been utilised to inform the development of the significance evaluation methodologies contained within this ES. This is applicable to the following environmental topics:

- **Chapter 9: Landscape and Visual**, which uses *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3*[1];
- **Chapter 11: Biodiversity**, which uses *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal*[2]; and *North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area*

[1] Landscape Institute and IEMA (2013). Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3), Routledge.
[2] CIEEM (2016). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland, [online]. Available at: https://www.cieem.net/data/files/Publications/EcIA_Guidelines_Terrestrial_Freshwater_and_Coastal_Jan_2016.pdf [Checked 26/07/2018].

of Conservation (SAC) Guidance on Development Supplementary Planning Document[3]; and

- **Chapter 14: Historic Environment**, which uses *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)*[4].

4.7.17 Where guidance is not available, methodologies have been developed by technical specialists drawing upon previous experience of significance evaluation in EIA.

Evaluation matrices

4.7.18 Significance evaluation involves combining information about the sensitivity, importance or value of a receptor, and the magnitude and other characteristics of the changes that affect the receptor. The approach to using this information for significance evaluation is outlined below.

Receptor sensitivity, importance, or value

4.7.19 The sensitivity or value of a receptor is largely a product of the importance of an asset, as informed by legislation and policy and as qualified by professional judgement. For example, receptors for landscape, biodiversity or the historic environment may be defined as being of international or national importance. However, lower value resources may still be defined as sensitive or important at a county or district level. For each environmental topic, it is necessary to provide a detailed rationale that explains how the assessment of sensitivity, importance or value has been derived.

4.7.20 The use of a location or physical element that may be representative of receptors, e.g. human beings, would also play a part in its classification in terms of sensitivity, importance, or value. For example, when considering effects on the amenity of a human population, a location used for recreational purposes may be more valued and therefore more sensitive to change than a place of work.

Magnitude of change

4.7.21 The magnitude of change affecting a receptor is identified on a scale from very low to very high. As with receptor sensitivity and value, a rationale is provided in each topic chapter (**Chapters 6-17**) that explains how the categories of environmental change are defined. For certain topics, the magnitude of change is assessed in accordance with guidance on what levels of change are considered to be acceptable (e.g. for air quality or noise) and based on numerical parameters. For other changes, professional judgement is used to determine the magnitude of change, using descriptive terms.

Determination of significance

4.7.22 The significance of effects is determined with reference to the nature of the development, the receptors that could be significantly affected and their sensitivity, importance or value, together with the magnitudes of environmental change that are likely to occur.

4.7.23 Other than for environmental topics where significance evaluation does not involve the use of matrices, sensitivity/value and the characteristics of environmental changes can be combined using a matrix (refer to **Table 4.1**). In addition, professional judgement is applied since, for certain

[3] North Somerset Council (2018). North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Guidance on Development: Supplementary Planning Document, [online]. Available at: https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/North-Somerset-and-Mendip-Bats-SAC-guidance-supplementary-planning-document.pdf [Checked 26/07/2018]

[4] Historic England (2015). The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advise in Planning Note 3 (second edition), [online]. Available at: https://www.spab.org.uk/sites/default/files/images/MillsSection/Planning_Download_The_Setting_of_Heritage_Assets.pdf [Checked 26/07/2018].

environmental topics, the distinction between the sensitivities or magnitudes of change may not be clearly defined. Consequently, the resulting assessment conclusions explain how professional judgement has been applied to arrive at the level of effect.

4.7.24 Variations to this approach, which may be applicable to specific environmental topics, are detailed in the relevant 'Significance evaluation methodology' sub-section contained in each environmental topic chapter (**Chapters 6-17**).

4.7.25 Definitions of how matrix categories are derived for each topic are also outlined in the relevant environmental topic chapter (**Chapters 6-17**), along with an explanation of receptor sensitivity, magnitude of change and levels of effect that are considered significant under the EIA Regulations.

4.7.26 Within the matrix that is used in most significance evaluation exercises, reference is made to:

- Major effects, which will always be determined as being significant in EIA terms;
- Moderate effects which are likely to be significant, although there may be circumstances where such effects are considered not significant on the basis of professional judgement; and
- Minor or negligible effects, which will always be determined as not significant.

Table 4.1 Significance evaluation matrix

		Magnitude of change				
		Very high	**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Very low**
Sensitivity/importance/value	**Very high**	Major (Significant)	Major (Significant)	Major (Significant)	Major (Significant)	Moderate (Probably significant)
	High	Major (Significant)	Major (Significant)	Major (Significant)	Moderate (Probably significant)	Minor (Not significant)
	Medium	Major (Significant)	Major (Significant)	Moderate (Probably significant)	Minor (Not significant)	Negligible (Not significant)
	Low	Major (Significant)	Moderate (Probably significant)	Minor (Not significant)	Negligible (Not significant)	Negligible (Not significant)
	Very Low	Moderate (Probably significant)	Minor (Not significant)	Negligible (Not significant)	Negligible (Not significant)	Negligible (Not significant)

Note: Significant effects are those identified as 'Major'. 'Moderate' effects would normally be deemed to be significant. However, there may be some exceptions, depending on the environmental topic and the application of professional judgment.

4.8 Assessment of cumulative effects

Introduction

4.8.1 Two types of cumulative effects assessment (CEA) are assessed within this ES, as outlined in paragraphs 4.8.3 – 4.8.10 (i.e. inter-project and inter-related effects).

4.8.2 Further details regarding the methodology undertaken for the CEA is provided **in Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects Assessment**.

Inter-project effects

4.8.3 For each environmental topic within this ES, an assessment is undertaken of how the environmental effects resulting from the Proposed Development, could combine with the same topic-related effects generated by other developments to affect a common receptor. To do this, it is important to first identify which other developments need to be included in the CEA under each environmental topic assessment.

4.8.4 The starting point for this is to determine the ZoIs from the Proposed Development for each receptor that could be significantly affected under each environmental topic. In this context, although specifically intended for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIPs), PINS Advice Note 17[5] provides an appropriate basis for identifying other developments that should be considered in the CEA.

4.8.5 This involves first acknowledging that the availability of information necessary to conduct a CEA will partly depend on the prevailing status of the relevant developments. This concept then groups the relevant developments into tiers, which reflect the likely degree of certainty attached to each development, with Tier 1 being the most certain and Tier 3 the least certain. This is illustrated in **Table 4.2**, a modified version of Table 3 in Advice Note 17[5] to reflect that it is being applied to a *Town and Country Planning Act 1990* application.

Table 4.2 Developments to be considered in the CEA

Hierarchy of other developments	Certainty of other developments	
Tier 1	Under construction*.	 **Decreasing level of detail likely to be available**
	Permitted application(s), whether under the *Planning Act 2008* or other regimes, but not yet implemented.	
Tier 2	Projects on the Planning Inspectorate's Programme of Projects, and/or where a planning application has been received by a relevant local planning authority, and where a scoping report has been submitted.	
Tier 3	Projects on the Planning Inspectorate's Programme of Projects, and/or the subject of pre-application discussion with a relevant LPA, where a scoping report has not been submitted.	
	Identified in the relevant Development Plan (and emerging Development Plans - with appropriate weight being given as they move closer to adoption) recognising that much information on any relevant proposals will be limited.	
	Identified in other plans and programmes (as appropriate) which set the framework for future development consents/approvals, where such development is reasonably likely to come forward.	

* Where other projects are expected to be completed before construction of the Proposed Development, and the effects of those projects are fully determined, effects arising from them are considered as part of the future baseline and therefore as part of the assessment of both the construction and operational phases. This ES will therefore distinguish between projects forming part of the baseline and those in the CEA (refer to paragraph 4.6.3 for those projects forming part of the future baseline and Chapter 18: Cumulative

[5] The Planning Inspectorate (2015). Advice note seventeen: Cumulative effects assessment relevant to nationally significant infrastructure projects, [online]. Available at https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Advice-note-17V4.pdf [Checked 26/07/2018].

Effects Assessment for the list of developments considered).

4.8.6 In the context of the Proposed Development, other developments that have been included for cumulative assessment are from all three tiers in **Table 4.2** (refer to **Appendix 18A** for the short list of developments considered within this ES). Therefore, such developments, where they are located within the ZoI for a given environmental topic, have been subject to CEA.

Inter-related effects

4.8.7 Inter-related effects assessments involve assessing whether any of the individual environmental topic effects resulting from the Proposed Development, which are not significant in their own right, could combine to create effects that are significant.

4.8.8 There are two types of inter-related effects, these being:

- Combined effects: consideration as to whether any of the individual effects of the Proposed Development would combine to create a cumulative effect (i.e. within a single topic); and
- Interactive effects: consideration of the effects of different activities from the Proposed Development on a specific receptor (i.e. different topics).

4.8.9 The first step is to identify the environmental topics that have common receptors, and then to consider whether the topic effects on any common receptors are likely to combine. One type of receptors that could fall into this category are those pertaining to the amenity of the relevant human population. For example, the occupants of a residential property in close proximity to the Proposed Development might be subject to adverse effects in terms of noise, vibration, air quality, traffic, as well as with regard to visual amenity, or any combination thereof, each of which, when assessed individually, is not significant in EIA terms, but when assessed cumulatively, the effects are judged to be significant.

4.8.10 This cumulative assessment involves different environmental topic assessments that cannot be combined, the outcome of this CEA will be reliant on the application of professional judgement from, potentially, several different technical specialists. Further details on the specific approach are given in **Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects Assessment**.

4.9 Limitations and assumptions

4.9.1 The key assumptions and limitations associated with conducting this EIA are outlined below. Assumptions and limitations specific to each environmental topic are identified in the appropriate chapter (**Chapters 6-17**).

4.9.2 Baseline conditions have been established from a variety of sources, including historical data, but due to the dynamic nature of certain aspects of the environment, conditions will change during the construction and operation of the Proposed Development.

4.9.3 The key limitations and assumptions are as follows:

- Information received from third parties is complete and up to date;
- The design, construction and completed stages of the Proposed Development will satisfy minimum environmental standards, consistent with contemporary legislation, practice and knowledge;
- Conditions will be imposed on the Planning Permission that would secure appropriate measures to control construction methods for the site preparation and earthworks; and

- Likely significant environmental effects have been assessed on the basis of the defined description of the Proposed Development, set out in **Chapter 2: Description of the Proposed Development**.