

Northfleet Harbourside

Environmental Statement Volume 1
Environmental Statement Main Report



Northfleet
Harbourside



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Chapter 1: Introduction

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Environmental Statement ('ES') has been prepared on behalf of Northfleet Central 1 Limited (hereinafter referred to as the 'Applicant') in accordance with the statutory procedures set out in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017¹ (the 'EIA Regulations').
- 1.2 The Applicant is seeking outline planning permission for the proposed redevelopment of an area of land ('the site'), currently comprising predominantly industrial uses (including aggregate works) and Ebbsfleet United Football Club. Bounded by the River Thames to the north-east; industrial land to the west, south and north (including the Seacon Terminal); Botany Marshes to the north-west; and residential land to the south-east and west, the site covers a total area of 19 hectares (ha) and falls within the administrative boundary of Gravesham Borough Council (GBC).
- 1.3 The Applicant is seeking permission for the 'Proposed Development', which comprises:
- "Outline planning application with all matters reserved, except for the primary means of access, for a mixed-use redevelopment involving the demolition of existing buildings and structures including site preparation / remediation works, and the development of residential units (Use Class C3), Use Class E floorspace including floorspace for retail, food and beverage, office floorspace and flexible Class E floorspace, floorspace for a new multi-use stadium with associated business and leisure facilities, floorspace for a hotel (Use Class C1), floorspace for community uses (Use Class F2) and other sui generis uses, delivery of open space and the realignment of the A226 Galley Hill Road / Stonebridge Road with hard / soft landscaping, car and cycle parking, highways works, infrastructure works, ancillary and associated works".*
- 1.4 Full details are submitted with regards to primary means of access into and out of the site via the A226 (to the south), B2175, Grove Road, Galley Hill Road (A226), Northfleet Industrial Estate, Lower Road and Seacon Terminals (as illustrated in the Highway Access Parameter Plan and shown in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: The Proposed Development**), with details of layout, scale, appearance, and landscaping of the Proposed Development being reserved. The Proposed Development will be delivered in phases, whereby for the purposes of this EIA, it is assumed that the Proposed Development will come forward in two main phases – 'Phase 1' comprises the delivery of Plots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19; and 'Phase 2' comprises the delivery of Plots 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Further details of the Proposed Development are presented within **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: The Proposed Development**.
- 1.5 **Figure 1.1** illustrates the location of the site and **Figure 1.2** presents the planning application red line boundary. **Figure 1.3** illustrates the Proposed Development plot boundaries.
- 1.6 Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') is a process carried out which examines the available environmental information to ensure that the likely significant environmental effects of certain projects are identified and assessed before a decision is taken on whether a project is granted planning permission. This process allows environmental issues to be identified at an early stage and projects can then be designed to avoid or to minimise adverse environmental effects, and appropriate mitigation and monitoring can be implemented.
- 1.7 Given the scale and nature of the Proposed Development and therefore the potential for likely significant environmental effects, an EIA has been undertaken, which has been reported upon within this ES.
- 1.8 In accordance with the EIA Regulations (see section 'The Legislative Requirements for an EIA' of this ES chapter), this ES describes the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development during the demolition and construction phases and on subsequent completion and operation.

Figure 1.1 Site Location²



¹ Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO) 2017. The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (amended in 2018 and 2020).

² Indicative site boundary shown for the purposes of illustrating the location of the site

Figure 1.2 Red Line Planning Application Boundary



Figure 1.3 Proposed Development Plot Boundaries³



³ Parameter Plan – Plots Plan (Drawing Reference: NFH-UNS-MAST-DR-1004).

SITE INFORMATION

- 1.9** The following section presents a summary of the location of the site, existing site conditions and existing site context. A description of the key features and designations associated with the site and surrounding environment are discussed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Alternatives and Design Evolution**. Further detail describing the existing baseline context is presented within **ES Volume 1, Chapters 6 to 15**, insofar as there are particular features of relevance to the various topic chapters, as well as the supporting environmental reports presented within **ES Volume 2** and **ES Volume 3**.
- 1.10** The site is 19ha in size (approximately 47 acres), centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference: TQ 61457 75002, within the administrative boundary of GBC. While fully within the GBC boundary, the site immediately adjoins the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation administrative boundary to the east and west and the Dartford Borough Council administrative boundary to the west.
- 1.11** The site is currently occupied by Ebbsfleet United Football Stadium (which has a current capacity of 4,769, of which 2,179 are seated), industrial land uses including active aggregates/concrete handling and processing sites operated by Aggregate Industries and Brett Aggregates, smaller industrial units, a (Shell) petrol station, and four residential houses (64-67 Stonebridge Road). The A226 (Stonebridge Road) runs through the site, as well as Lower Road and a number of smaller roads within the industrial estate. Open spaces on-site are largely covered by concrete surfacing and areas of hardstanding. There is little to no amenity landscaping on site.
- 1.12** Adjacent to the northern extent of the site is Seacon Terminal which provides handling and storage of construction project material and forest material (including timber, paper and woodpulp). Further to the north, but outside of the site, lies Swanscombe Peninsula, which is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This site has been designated in recognition of its national importance for plants, geology, birds and invertebrates⁴. Also just located outside of the site (to the north-east) is existing wharf infrastructure (a jetty) which extends into the River Thames.
- 1.13** The River Thames borders the site to the north-east and along the eastern boundary of the site lies Robin's Creek; a tidal creek which links the Ebbsfleet river (culverted beneath the site), to the River Thames. It should be noted that the existing Thames river wall (the flood defence asset) and the retaining wall at Robin's Creek are not located within the site, and sit outside of the planning application redline boundary.
- 1.14** Northfleet Train Station and Ebbsfleet International Train station, along with railway infrastructure, are located to the south-east of the site. These stations provide Southeastern train services to London and the surrounding area, with Ebbsfleet International providing Eurostar services to Paris, and commencing in 2023, Brussels.
- 1.15** Adjacent to the western of land boundary along Taunton Road, Robinson Way and Black Eagle Drive lies residential dwellings. Beyond these residential properties and the railway infrastructure, to the west of the site, lies green space and the village of Swanscombe.
- 1.16** **Figure 1.4**⁵ shows the site and its surroundings in their existing condition.

PLANNING HISTORY

- 1.17** The site has been subject to numerous previous planning applications⁶ which have been received and/or determined by GBC in the last five years, as detailed within **Table 1.1**.
- 1.18** No other planning applications or consents are known for the site. Relevant planning applications outside of the site boundary are considered within the cumulative impact assessment, as discussed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology**.

Figure 1.4 The Existing Site

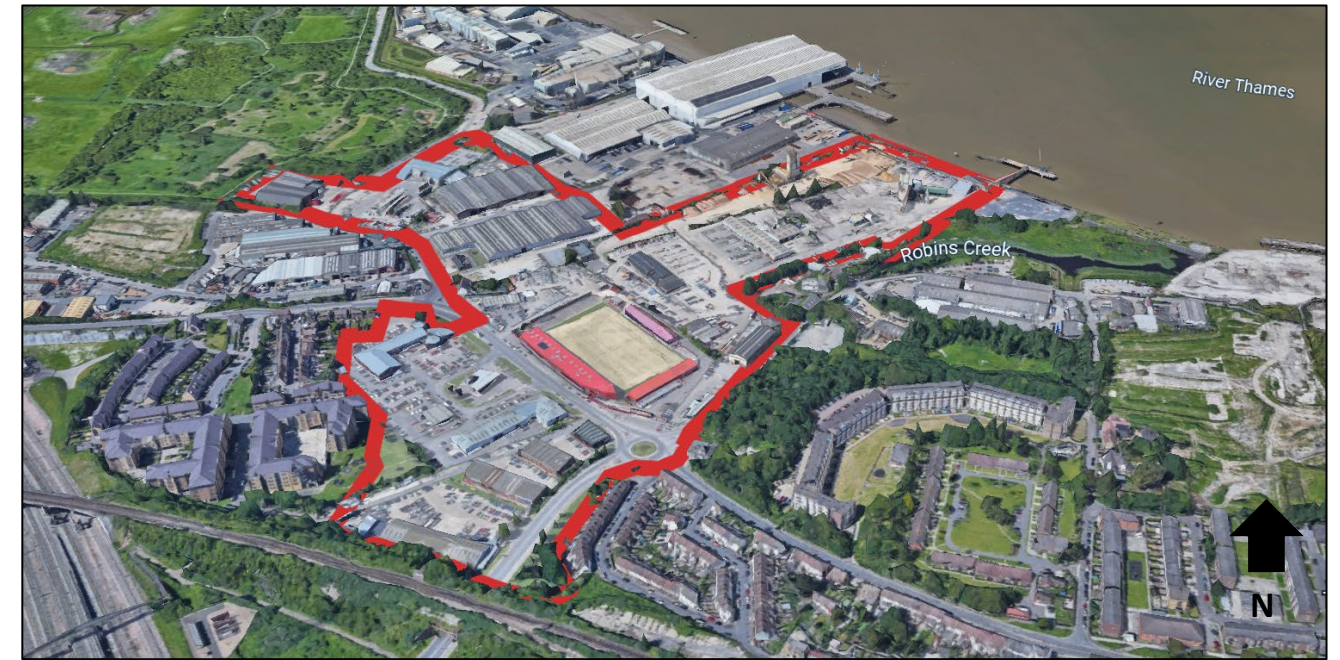


Table 1.1 Site Planning History

Application Reference	Address	Determination Date	Description of Development	Decision
20220681	Jackson Family Holdings Ltd Unit K6 Northfleet Industrial Estate Lower Road Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9BL	Pending Consideration	Change of use of building to a mixed warehouse and office use together with erection of first and second floor extension and construction of a multi level car park, together with associated earthworks and drainage	Pending Consideration
20220475	Telecommunications Mast Stonebridge Road Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9BJ	22 June 2022	Application for determination pursuant to Part 16 Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, as amended, as to whether prior approval is required for proposed telecommunications installation for a 20m high slim line phase 8 monopole c/w wraparound cabinet at base, three additional ancillary equipment cabinets and associated ancillary works.	Prior approval not required
20220349	Unit K7 Northfleet Industrial Estate Lower Road Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9BL	Pending Consideration	Change of use from an empty unused warehouse unit into a food manufacturing unit with Internal configurations within the Class E use to the existing premises.	Pending Consideration
20200625	Shuttleworth Road Ltd Unit K7 Northfleet Industrial Estate Lower Road Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9BL	22 Oct 2020	Application for Lawful Development Certificate in respect of a proposed division of the unit into two units.	Certificate Granted
20201198	Unit 5 Robins Wharf Grove Road Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9AX	14 Jan 2021	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the continued use as B2 motor vehicle repairs workshop.	Certificate Granted

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/swanscombe-peninsula-confirmed-as-site-of-special-scientific-interest>

⁵ Image obtained from Google Earth (2022)

⁶ Note, this doesn't include the Request for EIA Scoping Opinion (Application Ref. 20220852) in relation to the Proposed Development. The EIA Scoping Opinion is discussed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology**.

Application Reference	Address	Determination Date	Description of Development	Decision
20181265	Keyline Builders Merchants Ltd Robins Wharf Grove Road Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9AX	06 Mar 2019	Reorganisation of site to include open storage, racking systems, designated parking and loading areas.	Permitted
20210505	Ebbsfleet United Football Club Kuflink Stadium Stonebridge Road Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9GN	21 Apr 2021	Application for a non-material amendment to planning permission reference number 20170221 to allow wording of conditions 14 and 37 to change from pre-commencement to the following trigger points: Condition 14 to be changed from pre-commencement to no development shall commence other than above slab level demolition; Condition 37 to be changed from pre-commencement to allow the demolition of buildings B13 (Gents toilets) and B14a (Storage room off the turnstiles).	Approval of Non-material amendment
20200853	Ebbsfleet United Football Club Kuflink Stadium Stonebridge Road Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9GN	17 Sep 2020	Application for Additional Environmental Approval for planning permission reference number 20170221 for the demolition of the Plough End Stand and ancillary buildings and erection of a replacement Stand (Phase 1B), integrated 55-bedroom hotel together with new access, parking and ancillary facilities.	Application Permitted
20190355	Costa Coffee Unit 3 Eagle House Eagle Way Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9BJ	04 Jul 2019	Application for the removal of condition 1 attached to planning permission reference number 20150034 for the change of use of existing warehouse to a mixed use A1/A3 coffee shop and an A1 sandwich shop; to allow the continued use as A1/A3.	Application Permitted
20190328	Snap Fitness Ltd Unit 1 Eagle House Eagle Way Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9BJ	26 Jun 2019	Application for the removal of condition 1 attached to planning permission reference number 20140529 for the change of use of premises from a car showroom to Class D2 24 hour gym incorporating replacement of roller shutters on the side (north-west & south east) elevations with glazed panels and an emergency exit door; to allow the continued use as 24 hour gym.	Application Permitted
20180154	Sian Formwork Adjacent To 67 Stonebridge Road Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9BA	15 Nov 2018	Retention of 3,000mm high perimeter security fencing.	Permitted
20180528	Swale Motors Ltd Stonebridge Road Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9BJ	05 Jul 2018	Re-provision of parking with associated infrastructure improvements.	Permitted

THE LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR AN EIA

- 1.19** Applications for development which fall within the scope of the EIA Regulations are termed 'EIA Applications'.
- 1.20** The requirement for an EIA is based on the likelihood of significant environmental effects arising from a proposed development; and the requirement is either mandatory or conditional depending on the classification of the development project. EIA Applications are divided into Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 applications under the EIA Regulations.
- 1.21** Schedule 1 developments constitute those that are likely to have significant effects on the environment, such as major chemical or petrochemical projects and construction of ground or air transport infrastructure (e.g., road, railways and airports), and for which EIA is mandatory. For all other developments which fall under Schedule 2, the need for an EIA is determined based on set criteria as follows:

- It is within one of the classes of development stated in Schedule 2; AND
- EITHER it exceeds the applicable threshold criteria for that class of development in Schedule 2; OR it is to be carried out in part or all of a 'sensitive area' (as defined by the EIA Regulations); OR It is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location.

1.22 Schedule 2 Part 10(b) of the EIA Regulations states that for "urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas", the thresholds which determine the need for a development to be screened for the potential for environmental effects comprise:

"(i) the development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwelling / house development; OR

(ii) the development includes more than 150 dwellings, OR

(iii) the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares".

1.23 Based on the above, the Proposed Development exceeds these relevant thresholds, and taking into account the scale and nature of the development proposed and the surrounding area (potentially sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the site), it is considered that there is the potential for significant environmental effects to arise. As such, the Proposed Development is considered to constitute Schedule 2 development' under the EIA Regulations.

1.24 On this basis, the Applicant has undertaken an EIA and prepared an ES (this document) to support the planning application for the Proposed Development.

Location of Information within the ES

1.25 Regulation 18(3) of the EIA Regulations specifies the information that is reasonably required to assess the environmental effects of the development and which an applicant can, having regard in particular to current knowledge and methods of assessment, reasonably be required to compile.

1.26 Regulation 18(3) of the EIA Regulations provides that "an environmental statement is a statement which includes at least -

(a) a description of the proposed development comprising information on the site, design, size and other relevant features of the development;

(b) a description of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment;

(c) a description of any features of the proposed development, or measures envisaged in order to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment;

(d) a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, taking into account the effects of the development on the environment;

(e) a non-technical summary of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (d); and

(f) any additional information specified in Schedule 4 relevant to the specific characteristics of the particular development or type of development and to the environmental features likely to be significantly affected."

1.27 The information required by Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations and its location within this ES is presented in **ES Volume 3, Appendix: Introduction – Annex 2.**

Competent Experts and Relevant Experience

1.28 This EIA has been carried out by Trium Environmental Consulting LLP ('Trium') and several technical specialists. Regulation 18(5) of the EIA Regulations require that to ensure the completeness and quality of the ES: '(a) the developer must ensure that the environmental statement is prepared by competent experts' and '(b) the environmental statement must be accompanied by a statement from the developer outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts' to ensure the completeness and quality of the ES. In accordance with this requirement, the following statement is provided:

"Trium is an environmental consultancy specialising in urban regeneration and property development projects in the United Kingdom (UK). Trium's Partners and Employees have extensive experience in managing the

environmental issues and impacts surrounding large scale, high profile urban regeneration development projects. The Partners and Employees of Trium have, over the course of their careers to date (including with former employers), project directed, managed or contributed to over 400 EIAs within the retail, residential, leisure, commercial, cultural, infrastructure, logistics and industrial sectors. Trium's lead EIA practitioner for this project has over 20 years' EIA experience of managing EIAs within the UK".

- 1.29 A statement of expertise and competence for Trium's EIA coordination team and the technical specialists is presented within **ES Volume 2, Appendix: Introduction – Annex 1**.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT STRUCTURE

- 1.30 The ES forms a key document of the planning application. For a full list of deliverables included within the planning application, see the Planning Statement.
- 1.31 This volume (**ES Volume 1**) is the main body of the ES and is divided into a number of background and technical chapters supported with figures and tabular information for clarity of reading. A complete set of appendices are provided for reference and are contained within **ES Volume 3**, including a Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations (refer to **ES Volume 3, Appendix: Introduction – Annex 3**). These comprise background data, tables, figures and surveys (refer to **ES Volume 1, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology** of this ES for further details).
- 1.32 An EIA Scoping Report was prepared and submitted to GBC on the 11th August 2022 requesting a Scoping Opinion from GBC. A copy of the EIA Scoping Report is provided in **ES Volume 3, Appendix: EIA Methodology – Annex 1**. A Scoping Opinion was received on the 16th September 2022, as provided in **ES Volume 3, Appendix: EIA Methodology – Annex 2**. It should be noted that the scope and structure of the Environmental Statement has been informed by the EIA Scoping Opinion, as discussed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology**.

Environmental Statement

- 1.33 The ES comprises three technical volumes:
- **ES Volume 1: Main Report** – a document which forms the main body of the ES and which comprises of the following non-technical and technical chapters:
 - Chapter 1. Introduction
 - Chapter 2. EIA Methodology;
 - Chapter 3. Alternatives and Design Evolution;
 - Chapter 4. The Proposed Development;
 - Chapter 5. Demolition and Construction;
 - Chapter 6. Socio-Economics and Health;
 - Chapter 7. Traffic and Transport;
 - Chapter 8. Air Quality;
 - Chapter 9. Noise and Vibration;
 - Chapter 10. Daylight, Sunlight, Overshadowing, Solar Glare and Light Intrusion;
 - Chapter 11. Wind Microclimate;
 - Chapter 12. Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Assessment;
 - Chapter 13. Archaeology;
 - Chapter 14. Ecology and Biodiversity;
 - Chapter 15. Water Resources, Flood Risk, Drainage and Ground Conditions;
 - Chapter 16: Effect Interactions;
 - Chapter 17: Likely Significant Effects and Conclusions; and
 - Chapter 18: Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Schedule.

- **ES Volume 2: Townscape, Visual and Built Heritage Impact Assessment** – a separate Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA), including a Built Heritage Statement appended to the TVIA, which is accompanied by a full set of Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs);
- **ES Volume 3: Technical Appendices** – comprises background data, technical reports, tables, figures and surveys. The following appendices are included:

- Appendix: Introduction;
- Appendix: EIA Methodology;
- Appendix: Demolition and Construction;
- Appendix: Socio-Economics and Health;
- Appendix: Traffic and Transport;
- Appendix: Air Quality;
- Appendix: Noise and Vibration;
- Appendix: Daylight, Sunlight, Overshadowing, Solar Glare and Light Intrusion;
- Appendix: Wind Microclimate;
- Appendix: Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Assessment;
- Appendix: Archaeology;
- Appendix: Ecology and Biodiversity;
- Appendix: Water Resources, Flood Risk, Drainage and Ground Conditions; and
- Appendix: Outline Operational Waste Management and Recycling Management Strategy.

- **ES Non-Technical Summary ('NTS')** - a separate document providing a concise description of the Proposed Development, the alternatives considered, any identified mitigation measures and the likely significant environmental and socio-economic effects.

Non-Technical Summary

- 1.34 An NTS document has been prepared and comprises part of the ES, providing a concise summary of the ES written in non-technical language. The NTS presents a summary of the Proposed Development, the design evolution of the Proposed Development, the residual likely significant environmental and socio-economic effects of the Proposed Development both in isolation and cumulatively with relevant surrounding schemes, and any identified mitigation measures.

ES AVAILABILITY AND COMMENTS

- 1.35 The ES is available for viewing on the GBC's Planning Portal. The GBC's Planning Portal can be accessed by using the following link:
<https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/planning/view-comment-planning-application>
- 1.36 Comments on the planning application can be provided online via the LPA's Planning Portal, via email to planning.reps@gravesham.gov.uk (quoting the application number), or can be forwarded to the address below:
 Planning Admin, Civic Centre, Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1AU
- 1.37 Electronic Copies of the ES and NTS and can be provided via a downloadable file provided by email. Printed copies of the NTS are available free of charge. Printed copies of the ES Volume 1, 2 and 3 would incur a printing and postage charge. For further details please contact hello@triumenv.co.uk with reference in email header to "Environmental Statement Request – Northfleet Harbourside" or Tel: +44 (0) 203 887 7118.