

3 EIA TECHNICAL ENGAGEMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the EIA Technical engagement process is to assist in identifying key environmental issues at an early stage, to help determine which elements of the Proposed Development are likely to result in significant effects on the environment and to establish the extent of survey and assessment required for the EIA. Public Consultation is also a key element of the EIA process.

As outlined within Section 1.3.2, an EIA Screening Opinion was provided by the Council on 4th November 2020, confirming that the Proposed Development comprised EIA Development and that an ES should accompany any planning application for the Development.

This Chapter includes the following elements:

- Pre-application advice request and ongoing engagement;
- Scoping;
- Further Technical Consultation; and
- Public Consultation.

This Chapter is supported by the following Technical Appendices, which have been completed following requests for further information during the consultation process. These can be found in Volume 3, Technical Appendices:

- Technical Appendix 3.1: Social, Health and Wellbeing Impacts Technical Note; and
- Technical Appendix 3.2: Checklist for Planning and Health (Nottinghamshire Rapid Health Impact Assessment Matrix).

3.2 EIA SPECIFIC ENGAGEMENT

Engagement has formed an essential part of the EIA. The EIA team and the Applicant have contacted a number of interested parties over the course of the project to determine their views on the Proposed Development and assessment methodology, and to collect baseline information. This engagement has principally been undertaken within the following key stages:

- Pre-scoping – procuring initial feedback on the Proposed Development and agreeing extent of consultation;
- Scoping – outlining EIA methodology and documentation of key issues;
- Technical Consultation – gathering baseline information from relevant organisations and confirming survey methodologies outwith the formal Scoping process; and
- Public Consultation - Informing site design including in person consultation events, a publicly accessible website, communication with local communities and consideration of baseline information.

Further details on each stage are included in the following subsections.

3.2.1 Pre-Application Advice Request and Ongoing Engagement

Following initial feasibility and preliminary environmental surveys, consultation was commenced with Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC). Formal pre-application advice was received in March 2021, and since then ongoing engagement has been undertaken with the Council. The primary purpose of the pre-application consultation was to introduce the Proposed Development and to agree the approach to scoping, including agreement on the consultees to be contacted as part of the scoping exercise.

3.2.2 Scoping

The aim of the Scoping process is to identify key environmental issues at an early stage, to determine which elements of the Proposed Development are likely to cause significant environmental effects and identify issues that can be 'scoped out' of the assessment. This established the environmental topics and methodologies for assessment and the level of detail required for the preparation of the ES.

An EIA Scoping Report and request for Scoping Opinion was submitted to NCC in September 2022 for the Extraction of Pulverised Fuel Ash (PFA). The Scoping Report described the Proposed Development, the proposed EIA methodology, and the key issues to be addressed. The document was also sent to a range of consultees by NCC. The Scoping Report is provided as **Appendix 1.1**

The Scoping Opinion was issued by NCC and received in November 2022. A copy of the Scoping Opinion is provided in **Appendix 1.2**.

Table 3.1 provides an overview of the issues raised by the consultees at the scoping stage. The details of the individual responses received during the EIA, including at the scoping stage, are set out in the relevant technical chapters. Where appropriate, reference is provided as to where the comments have been addressed within this ES.

Table 3.1: Scoping Responses

Consultee	Landscapes and Visual Impact Assessment	Ecology and Ornithology	Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Flood Risk	Ground Conditions and Contamination	Cultural Heritage and Archeology	Noise	Air Quality	Traffic and Transport	Climate Change and Sustainability	Interaction and Accumulation of Effects	Policy
Nottinghamshire County Council						x	x	x	x	x	x
Via East Midlands	x										
Environment Agency			x								
Historic England					x						
Natural England		x									
Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust		x									

The following topics were scoped out of the ES:

- Waste;
- Major accidents and disasters;
- Human Health (scoped out as a separate chapter, to be addressed in topic chapters as appropriate e.g., Air Quality, and in the Checklist for Planning and Health in **Appendix 3.2**); and

- Socio-economics (scoped out as a separate chapter, however a social, health and wellbeing impact note is provided as **Appendix 3.1**, as requested by the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust).

3.2.3 Further Technical Consultation

Throughout the assessment and design of the Proposed Development, additional consultation has been completed where necessary for technical disciplines. This is discussed in detail within each chapter of the ES, and is summarised below.

3.2.3.1 Ecology and Ornithology

Consultation was completed with key consultees during the baseline studies. This included meeting with Natural England, the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, and Nottinghamshire County Council. The aim of this consultation was to discuss the key concerns of the consultees in terms of impacts of the Proposed Development, the scope of the baseline surveys to be completed, and provide advice regarding what should be included within the Outline Restoration Plan.

3.2.3.2 Hydrology

The Environment Agency (EA) was consulted following the pre-application advice request, in order to determine what the EA would like to be consulted on as the application progresses. It was determined that appropriate assessment of the impacts of the Proposed Development on drainage, runoff, groundwater, and water quality would be required, and they raised the requirement of an Environmental permit for any water discharge activities.

3.2.4 Public consultation

A Statement of Community Involvement has been produced for the Proposed Development and is included within the Application¹. Reference should be made to this for a full understanding of the public engagement exercise and outcomes, the salient details of which are discussed below.

Public consultation is a key component to the EIA process and the Applicant consulted the members of the local community through various meetings and events:

- Live Webinar, 4th October 2022;
- Two in-person events, one within Sutton-Cum-Lound and one within Lound, 6th and 10th October 2022 respectively; and
- Attendance at Lound Parish Council meeting, 25th October 2022.

The aim of the public consultation events was to provide information regarding the Proposed Development and to invite comments to ensure that local community considerations were considered. These events provided members of the public the opportunity to interact with representatives of the Applicant and the EIA team, learn more about the Proposed Development and preliminary findings of the EIA, and provide comment on the Proposed Development.

To identify the community stakeholders, a zone of theoretical visibility was used to determine the potential visual impacts of the Proposed Development. An area approximately 2km from the Site border was selected and extended to include the villages of Lound, Sutton-cum-Lound, Barnaby Moor and Tiln. This resulted in 709 residential and business Properties.

Attendees were also invited to complete a short survey providing feedback on the Proposed Development either by speaking with the Applicant and their representatives during the exhibition or by telephone, email, or by postal address.

A dedicated project website was also launched in late September 2022 to coincide with the pre-application public consultation period: www.retfordcep.co.uk

The phone line and website were monitored daily until the application submission date.

The main areas of feedback and comment related to:

- Local Ecology and wildlife
- Restoration Proposals
- Carbon Impact
- Visual Impacts
- Traffic and Transportation
- Access
- Community and recreation
- Noise
- Health
- General queries about PFA
- Consultation process
- Siting of the Proposed Development

Each comment received was addressed and a formal response issued.

ⁱ Retford Circular Economy Project, SCI, Counter Context, February 2022