# Parliamentary Northern Estate Project

**Key Issues:**

BDP is currently preparing an Environmental Statement to inform a number of linked planning applications required to enable the Northern Estate Project (NEP).

The Northern Estate Site comprises a group of buildings, which have been built independently over a period of three hundred years. As a result, the current arrangement of the buildings has been determined by the passage of history rather than a composed masterplan.

With the exception of Portcullis House, none of the buildings on the site were built or designed with a Parliamentary use in mind. Norman Shaw North, the most significant historic building on the Northern Estate Site, was built in 1890 as New Scotland Yard, and was the first purpose-built police headquarters in the world. Norman Shaw South was developed as an extension to the original police headquarters. The other buildings within the scope of the NEP vary in size and typology from the Georgian townhouses on Parliament Street, to Richmond House which was designed as the Ministry for Health and Social Security in 1982.

The Northern Estate is a historic complex of buildings, all of which are in Parliamentary and Governmental uses.

The sensitive nature of the site has required early engagement with key stakeholders, whilst balancing the potentially significant security implications associated with providing a temporary home for the House of Commons.

**Purpose of the project:**

To enable the Restoration and Renewal of the Palace of Westminster, the Northern Estate will be transformed to provide a temporary new home for the chamber of the House of Commons, and the diverse Parliamentary functions which support the House.

These include Parliamentary committee rooms, modern office accommodation for MPs and their staff, formal and informal meeting spaces, visitor accommodation, as well as various social spaces, catering facilities and general support functions.

These are supported by a variety of security infrastructure and screening spaces, and plant infrastructure. This transformation will affect every part of the Northern Estate Site and will require significant changes to the buildings and the spaces between them, creating a new Parliamentary quarter for the House of Commons.

**Description of the project:**

The need to provide appropriate accommodation to allow the House of Commons to function whilst the Palace of Westminster is closed for restoration requires new Parliamentary facilities to be created on the Northern Estate Site, as well as an overall increase in the amount of office accommodation for MPs and staff.

The Northern Estate Site itself requires refurbishment to bring buildings up to modern environmental standards as well as increase the efficiency of their use. This need requires the refurbishment and redevelopment of a number of buildings on the Northern Estate Site delivering increased environmental performance and improved security, safety and accessibility; and to provide sufficient space for the House of Commons.
EIA Learning Outcomes

**Lessons learnt:**

Work on the EIA is ongoing. The Scoping Opinion was adopted by Westminster City Council in early April 2019.

Our work on preparing the Scoping Report and initial EIA has highlighted the complex interrelationship between heritage and EIA. The number of significant listed buildings on and adjacent to the site means that a number of detailed heritage assessments are being prepared for each building.

An unusual aspect of the EIA is that the NEP is that the project is broken down into a number of planning applications (currently 6) and listed building consent applications for each building. The ES is for the whole project and sits above the planning applications at a masterplan level.

**Lessons learnt continued:**

The EIA covers the whole of the Northern Estate, so we have had to carefully consider the appropriate scope of the ES for it to be of assistance to local planning authority. The ES will be sufficiently detailed to identify all significant environmental impacts, whilst not slavishly repeating all aspects of detailed heritage assessments for listed building consent and other technical planning assessments.

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