The proposed development is considered an urban development project and falls within Schedule 2 (paragraph 2, 10(b)) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 (as amended) by virtue of measuring greater than 1 hectare in development area, exceeding 150 dwellings and having an overall site area greater than 5 hectares. For such developments, EIA is required in situations where development is likely to have significant impacts on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location. In this case, the proposal would cover an area of approximately 53 hectares of currently agricultural land, a size deemed likely to give rise to likely significant environmental impacts and therefore an EIA.
Lessons learnt:

The potential for a technical area to cause ‘environmental issues’ would not on its own be sufficient reason for inclusion within an ES.

The ES should be reserved only for those environmental considerations upon which the proposals would be likely to cause ‘significant environmental impacts’.

The importance of providing sufficient information to the Local Planning Authority in order for them to determine what environmental considerations should be included within the ES or which technical areas should be scoped out is important.