EIA Quality Mark Case Study

Land West of Westerfield Road, Ipswich

Key Issues –

*Environmental Statements must provide a description of the likely significant effects of the development, including a description of the forecasting methods used (Schedule 4, Part 1 (4) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011.*

EIA requires up to date assessment to inform robust decision making. In some cases, older but still reliable data (such as archaeological investigations) may be available to inform assessment. The practical and costs implications of re-surveying mean that opportunities to re-use information should be considered. In this example, this application followed a previous application in 2009 and sought to make use of existing data in a robust and transparent way.

This case study demonstrates how existing data was re-assessed to provide a robust and up-to-date assessment of potential impacts.

Purpose of the project

A residential led urban extension to Ipswich on behalf of CBRE Global Investors and Mersea Homes. The site forms the first phase of a proposed Garden Suburb promoted by Ipswich Borough Council. The site itself is broadly unconstrained, but a previous planning application had included a wide range of topics in the EIA.

Description of the project

A hybrid planning application for up to 815 homes, district centre and supporting facilities including primary school. The site extends to around 43 hectares and is currently agricultural land. The site is allocated for development under the current Ipswich Core Strategy, with further phases of development proposed for adjacent land through the emerging Core Strategy review.
Lessons learnt

*Environmental Statements must provide a description of the likely significant effects of the development, including a description of the forecasting methods used. To enable robust decisions making, EIA should incorporate up-to-date assessment of impacts. In this case, older information was effectively used by undertaking a re-appraisal of data in the current policy and legislative context:*

This site had been subject to a planning application five years previously. The availability of existing data was considered during the scoping of the application and used to inform decisions about commissioning new surveys.

Lessons learnt cont. -

In the case of intrusive ground investigations and intrusive archaeological investigations, previous investigations had been thorough and on-site conditions (such as the use and management of land) were unchanged. The policy context for decision making had however evolved, with new reference criteria and guidelines for assessment.

New assessments were undertaken, setting the existing survey data into the current policy context, thereby providing a robust and up-to-date basis for identifying the potential impacts of the proposed development.

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