### Key Issues –
The main specific issues relating to the proposed Development from the EIA process were:

- Gaining constructive local opinion on the proposed iterative designs and local information;
- Continuity of planning officers through the process;
- Visual and landscape character effects, particularly in respect to visual amenity;
- The presence of valued ecological resources; and
- The presence of on-site constraints such as watercourses, utility services, telecommunication links and archaeological features for example.
- Negotiating access to the wind farm from a major highway.

### Purpose of the project
The purpose of the project was to have regard for the local environment and provide beneficial effects through the contribution of the Development to national and regional targets for renewable energy, which constitute part of the national efforts to address and mitigate the effects of climate change.

### Description of the project
A wind farm with a generating capacity of 18MW (9 turbines); located to the north of Churchover, Rugby. A proposed maximum tip height of 126.5m above ground level; ancillary equipment; and on site infrastructure with an operational period of 25 years. Construction was programmed to take 10 months. The proposed site was agricultural, mainly arable or grazing with the River Swift running through the site. In the local area there were a number of isolated properties and villages with views of the site.
Lessons learnt
Of the specific issues raised during the EIA process a number of lessons were learnt:

- Canvassing opinion earlier on in the process is vital; although people may not be in support of a particular scheme, they can still provide valuable information about the local environment which can in turn improve the design of a development.
- Often significant local effects are unavoidable due to the nature and scale of the proposals, therefore balancing all the direct and more tangible environmental impacts against the indirect ones is an important skill for an assessor.
- It is not just about assessing the negative impacts.
- There are excellent opportunities for ecological enhancement in terms of habitat connectivity.
- Meeting a range of different consultees on site rather than in offices was constructive and provided useful information.

Lessons learnt cont. -

These types of issues are routinely encountered by assessors when investigating a proposed Development; but finding the opportunities for positive and effective mitigation and enhancement is the key to developments’ sustainability.

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