### Purpose of the project

The site is part of a wider area of land which forms a draft site allocation in Harrogate Borough Council’s (HBC) emerging Site and Policies Development Plan Document.

### Description of the project

The Bluecoat Park proposals are for residential development comprising approximately 450 homes, mixed use local centre, land for a primary school, village green, open space and associated infrastructure.

The site is situated on the western edge of Harrogate, approximately 1.7 miles from the town centre. The site comprises c.28ha of predominantly agricultural land and includes some small agricultural buildings (all of no architectural merit).

### Key Issues

In July 2013, an outline planning application (with all matters reserved except access) was submitted for the development and was supported by an Environmental Statement (ES). Land outside the application site but within the draft site allocation was included within the cumulative assessment.

At the request of North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC), a further cumulative assessment scenario was undertaken which considers the traffic impact of the Bluecoat Park application proposals alongside six other proposed residential and employment allocations within Harrogate.
Lessons learnt

The value of agreeing a list of cumulative sites for assessment at an early stage of the EIA process became evident. The District and County Councils were largely concerned about the cumulative impact on the local highway network of the proposals combined with other large scale planning applications around the town. As such a number of these sites were included within the cumulative assessment.

The Environmental Statement was subject to a robust and comprehensive scoping request to Harrogate Borough Council. This was important as it ensured a range of issues were identified at an early stage which, allowed baseline work to progress smoothly.

Each chapter of the ES followed an identical structure with but customised methodology which ensured that each of the topic assessments were undertaken in a consistent manner.

Lessons learnt cont. -

Landscape mitigation was incorporated into the scheme at an early stage through ‘mitigation by design’. This resulted in the landscape mitigation section simply identifying the landscape design features that had been incorporated into the design. Early engagement with landscape masterplanning was considered a crucial pillar in achieving a sustainable scheme.

Given the complex nature of the ES and the importance to engage with the local community and stakeholders, the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) became a critical document. This was produced following best practice guidelines and followed a highly accessible format with a focus on the use of straight forward language.

Contact details

Luke Challenger
Nexus Planning
01932 837 850
L.Challenger@Nexusplanning.co.uk

For access to more EIA case studies and hundreds of non-technical summaries of Environmental Statements visit: www.iema.net/qmark