**EIA Quality Mark Case Study**

Land north of Newmarket Road, Cambridge

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**Key Issues**

The plan to create a new urban extension at Cambridge Airport is long established and in 2008 South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) and Cambridge City Council adopted an Area Action Plan (AAP) for Cambridge East. This identified the area for a sustainable new urban quarter of approximately 10,000 to 12,000 dwellings and associated development.

The comprehensive development of up to 12,000 homes envisaged in the AAP was predicated on the relocation of Cambridge Airport and all of the Marshall Group activities. The AAP identified a first phase of development north of Newmarket Road, which could be delivered without the relocation of the airport.

To date the airport has not been relocated; however, Marshall has brought forward proposals for the development of the land to the north of Newmarket Road. The emerging local plan, which directs development in the district up to 2031, identifies the site (known as 'Wing') for development within the plan period. The rest of the airport is safeguarded for future redevelopment after 2031.

The EIA therefore needed to give consideration to the introduction of new housing in close proximity to an operational airport and to aviation, automotive and manufacturing activities taking place in the vicinity.

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**Purpose of the project**

In December 2013 Marshall Group Properties Ltd (MGP) submitted an outline application for the development of land north of Newmarket Road, Cambridge for a residential-led, mixed use community. The new community is known as ‘Wing’.

The development will increase the supply of market and affordable homes on the fringe of Cambridge, as well as provide employment opportunities.

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**Description of the project**

The proposals for Wing include up to 1,300 homes market and affordable homes with supporting facilities, including a school, community hall, mixed use local centre, employment, retail, a range of open spaces and play spaces, along with the necessary infrastructure to serve the community.

The 64.8 ha site is located adjacent to the north east fringe of Cambridge, immediately north of Newmarket Road and Cambridge Airport. The south west part of the site comprises a range of industrial and commercial premises associated with aviation, automotive and manufacturing uses (known as the North Works), while the rest of the site is mainly in agricultural use.
EIA Learning Outcomes

Lessons learnt

The importance of considering adjacent land uses and the phasing of large-scale developments

As anticipated, at the time of submission the noise assessment work identified that the existing airport engine run-up bay will either need to be adapted or relocated from its current location in the north of the airport site to an alternative location prior to the occupation of dwellings at Wing that might be affected by engine testing activity. The compatibility of the land uses has been a key consideration with respect to the mitigation required.

Air quality assessment work confirmed that the current and future baseline air quality conditions at the site and in the vicinity are not considered a constraint on the development of the site for homes in principle. However, while the North Works is still operational in the short term, odour mitigation measures may be required including for example the scheduling of paint spraying activities to specific times of day and atmospheric conditions. This highlights the importance of considering the phasing of large-scale developments and the temporary effects of activities that will gradually cease over time, but still may require mitigation in the shorter term.

The importance of public consultation / involvement in the assessment of community effects

Views were sought from both existing local residents and employees at the North Works site regarding the key issues of local importance. The results of this consultation were then used to scope the community and economic assessment (as well as inform the design process). A detailed health impact assessment was also undertaken which helped generate a set of mitigation and enhancement measures. As a result of the approach to community and health effects:

1. There was a better understanding of the local community and its health and social needs.
2. A detailed review of health care service provision was undertaken and delivery options considered early in the process.
3. The master plan was health-proofed as it emerged (using the World Health Organisations health urban planning principles).
4. The local residents and North Works employees were empowered and felt that they had some say over the future of their community and locality.

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