### Key Issues

This case study focuses on three key issues, all of which relate to topical issues in EIA.

1. **The benefits of environmental analysis early in the project lifecycle to enable some environmental effects to ‘be designed out’ and others to reduce in significance during the EIA process;**

2. **The benefits of developing an EIA Strategy with the determining authority at the outset; and**

3. **Obtaining the correct balance between sufficient information upon which to robustly assess the proposed development within the ES against the need for flexibility and the need for the proposed development to evolve over a 20 year, phased build out programme and varying market condition.**

### Purpose of the project

Lincolnshire Lakes is a major residential led mixed use development which aims to house the existing demographic growth of Scunthorpe and provide for new commercial and business facilities generated by the £3 billion plus government initiative to create the UK’s largest deep water port (South Humber Gateway project).

### Description of the project

The 262 hectare site is largely open agricultural fields and is located on the western periphery of Scunthorpe’s urban fringe in North Lincolnshire. The proposed development includes for: 3,500 new homes; a primary school; village centres; care/retirement home; health care facility; community facilities; open space, sports pitches, new wildlife habitat, lakes and wetlands and the new terminating junction to the M181. Phased construction will commence in 2014/5, with the full development completed by 2034.
Lessons learnt

The project had a number of complicated scenarios including: how the ES would assess the proposed development as a whole and ensure the individual implementation of the four applications; the potential triggering of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NISP) as a result of the de-trunking of the M181 proposed; the approach to the assessment of concurrent phases (over a 20 year period) and the need to consider ‘peak magnitude’. The development of an EIA Strategy (in conjunction with workshops) at the outset of the EIA process identified and resolved such complications and ensured the determining authority understood the approach and that it was robust.

WSP were appointed as technical and EIA advisors during the preparation of the associated Core Strategy and Area Action Plan. Therefore survey data and technical analysis and evaluation were undertaken in advance of and in conjunction with the development of the parameter plans and supporting design principles for the proposed development. For example, site investigation was undertaken to inform the geotechnical properties of the ground and what technical solutions would enable development (e.g. surcharging). The data also enabled sufficient understanding of cut and fill requirements, the suitability of the cut for re-use and how requirements could be minimised. In addition, specific spatial options were modelled to determine appropriateness of sensitive land uses. For example, the new terminating junction to the M181 and connecting road network was subject to noise and NO\textsuperscript{2} and PM\textsuperscript{10} modelling to inform positioning of the proposed primary school and outdoor play areas and potential extent of residential and commercial areas.

Project specific, minimum information requirements were developed at the outset of the design process and monitored on a regular basis throughout design workshops and during the EIA process. These requirements informed the parameter plans, supporting design principles and strategies. This enabled an appropriate level of understanding of the proposed development. However, where information was not required for the purpose of the EIA, it was removed to increase flexibility. Advice on the tolerances of parameters was provided to further increase flexibility but without the tolerance causing a change in the level of significance assigned within the ES. This process was iterative.

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Lessons learnt cont. -

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