

14. Summary and Conclusions

14.1 Given the time lapse since the original ES submission in March 2014, subsequent ES Addendum in September 2014 and Further Environmental Information (FEI) submitted as part of the Statement of Case (August 2016) in advance of the PAC hearing, this ES Addendum has reviewed and refreshed necessary the EIA baseline surveys and methodologies utilised as part of the assessments undertaken to ensure any future decision taken on the application is robust and based on the latest available information.

14.2 This ES Addendum also acknowledges and seeks to respond to submissions made by third parties in relation to the applicant's environmental information that were not previously considered by the PAC.

14.3 A summary of each of the environmental disciplines re-examined as part of this ES Addendum is provided below.

Geology, Soils and Agriculture

14.4 The updated Chapter has identified any additional information relating to geology, soils and agriculture requiring further consideration since the original 2014 assessment.

14.5 A verification site visit was undertaken on 28 November 2018. A review of the relevant databases has confirmed that the 2014 findings remain accurate. No significant adverse impacts on geology, soils or agriculture on or surrounding the site will occur provided the appropriate mitigation is followed.

The Water Environment

14.6 The WFD assessment has been updated to account for updates in the WFD classifications and objectives for the waterbodies downstream from the application site. The findings and conclusions of the original WFD assessment provided remain valid and therefore there are no proposed changes to the predicted impacts and mitigation identified in the original 2014 ES.

Land Quality

14.7 This ES Addendum identifies any additional land uses or events since the 2014 assessment which might lead to unacceptable risk to health of the environment. That has included a verification site walkover in 2018. It confirmed no evidence of contamination from historic or recent blasting activities.

14.8 This ES Addendum has responded to a concern raised through third party representations to the Department on the potential presence of a hazardous mineral, erionite, on site. A risk assessment has been carried out informed by a site survey in January 2019 when representative samples were collected for laboratory analysis. It was confirmed that erionite was not present in any of the representative samples.

14.9 Notwithstanding that, a further precautionary approach has been adopted for the management of dust generation during construction works and additional precautionary mitigation measures included within the Construction Management Plan.

14.10 In conclusion all samples for soil and water laboratory testing remain below the generic assessment criteria and the conclusions in respect of land quality in the original 2014 ES remain valid.

Ecology

14.11 An updated site assessment was undertaken in October 2018 which confirms that there has been no material change in the habitats and features present on site.

14.12 As the surveys employed to inform the FEI (submitted in August 2016) remain consistent with the NIEA specific survey requirements published in February 2017, it is considered the specific survey and assessment work undertaken to inform the FEI in August 2016 remains valid and robust.

14.1 As a result of the recent CJEU ruling it is necessary to give additional consideration to the application of the legal tests contained at Regulation 43 of the Habitats Regulations. Further detail in relation to this CJEU ruling and the tests under Regulation 43(1) of the Habitats Regulations are considered within the shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment provided.

14.2 The conclusion drawn from undertaking this assessment in light of the recent CJEU ruling is that the proposals would not give rise to an adverse effect on the integrity of the relevant designated sites, when the proposed development is considered either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

Landscape and Visual Impact

14.3 A further comprehensive landscape and visual appraisal has been carried out in 2018 to update the appraisal of the application site, the description of the character of the surrounding landscape and views towards the application site.

14.4 The 2018 visual appraisal involved revisiting the locations identified during the 2013 assessment, as set out in the visual appraisal section of the original ES Chapter 10. Physical changes include:

- the development of a Solar Array at Sealstown Road;
- extension of Blackrock residential development;
- completion of Cashelton Manor residential development on Upper Hightown Road; and
- erection of a wind turbine north of Boghill Road.

- 14.5 The conclusions of the original ES chapter and subsequent landscape and visual submissions remain broadly valid, the only changes since being as a result of the increasing influence of infrastructure and urbanisation in the landscape surrounding the application site.
- 14.6 This does not affect the significance of effects on features, character or views in relation to the proposed development alone and the submitted original ES Chapter 10 remains an assessment of the scenario of maximum significance of effects of the proposed development.
- 14.7 In relation to the proposed landscape strategy for the proposed development, the proposals for Boghill Road have developed since the submission of the original ES as described in the 2014 ES Addendum and as set out in the updated landscape proposals plans. The latest revisions to the Boghill Road landscape proposals include for a response to DfI Roads comments (11 March 2015) on the arrangement of vegetation in relation to fencing.
- 14.8 The principal change from the previous proposals is the arrangement of the stock-proof fence and hedgerow planting, with the fence located on the highway side of the hedgerow as required. The previous assessment of the road proposals with regard to landscape character, assessment of effects on landscape features and assessment of effects on visual receptors remain as per the original ES chapter/

Cultural Heritage

- 14.9 Following a review of the DfC HED database, five additional features of cultural heritage interest have been identified within 1km of the proposed development.
- 14.10 All additional features are outside the proposed development site and will not be impacted upon due to the proposed works. The findings and recommendations included in the original ES therefore remain valid.

Transport

- 14.11 As part of the 2019 review of the original TA, the following was undertaken as part of this ES Addendum:
- New traffic data was collected at all junctions previously surveyed on 22nd November 2018 from 07:30 to 09:30 and 16:30 to 18:30;
 - DfI Roads were contacted to identify if any new committed developments should be included in the update; and
 - The PSNI were contacted to obtain new road traffic accident data for the period 2015 - 2018.
- 14.12 The background traffic recorded at the time of the 2016 and 2018 traffic surveys was slightly higher when compared against the observed traffic levels in the original 2014 assessment. It is likely that the changes in base traffic are a result of committed developments (Blackrock and Hightown Road) being constructed and occupied.

- 14.13 The original approved TA and the 2016 Transport FEI prepared for examination at the PAC hearing had made allowances for these committed developments. DfI Roads who have confirmed that no new committed developments need to be considered in addition to those assessed as part of the original approved TA.
- 14.14 For robustness however and to reflect the difficulty in confirming accurately the degree of build out of these developments, the original assumptions/volumes for committed developments have been retained. The effect will be to have higher traffic volumes included in the traffic modelling due to a degree of double counting but this will provide a safety margin in the assessment.
- 14.15 Previously, an opening year of 2018 and design year of 2028 and 2033 were used as part of the traffic impact assessment. Given that new traffic surveys were collected as part of the 2019 TA Review, these assessment years were updated as follows:
- Opening Year = 2023; and
 - Design Years = 2033 and 2038.
- 14.16 The 2019 TA Review re-endorses the conclusion of the original TA's Traffic Impact assessment and the subsequent 2016 FEI in that only two junctions (Hydepark Road/Boghill Road and Hydepark Road/Hightown Road) exceed the 5% threshold required to undertake detailed analysis to determine their operational performance without and with development traffic.
- 14.17 Based on the 2019 review, it is considered that the conclusions within Chapter 12 of the original EIA submission that potential operational impacts associated with the development are not significant and are localised in their area of influence is unchanged and remains valid.
- 14.18 The original Transport Chapter also noted that although there will be an increase of operational traffic to the site, the junction operational assessment indicated that the junctions perform within sufficient capacity threshold limits. The 2019 TA Review revisited the traffic modelling and this conclusion remains valid.
- 14.19 The 2016 Review and the 2019 TA Review found that the latest accident data at the time of review is generally consistent with the accident levels presented previously and it is therefore considered reasonable to conclude that the findings of the approved TA in relation to road safety remain valid.

Noise

- 14.20 The Noise Impact Assessment has been revisited to take into account changes to relevant assessment methodology guidance; undertake updated background noise surveys due to the passage of time; consider the noise impacts of the latest available traffic flows on the local road network for the revised opening year of 2023 and consider any additional cumulative assessment required in respect of consented wind turbines.

14.21 This re-assessment concludes that the operational noise of the proposed scheme remains as per the previous conclusions identified in ES Chapter 13 Noise.

Air Quality

14.22 The Air Quality Impact Assessment has also been revisited to take into account the new operation commencement date of 2023, any changes in future background concentrations and the latest available traffic flows.

14.23 This re-assessment concludes that the findings of the original ES remain valid.

Climatic Factors

14.24 The updated Chapter revisits the WRATE assessment previously carried out to account for the latest available software version of the WRATE tool. With the exception of the opening year of the proposed development (updated to 2023), all other input parameters and assumptions have remained unchanged.

14.25 The results of the updated WRATE assessment conclude that the net benefit remains the same and that across all other indicators there is an overall net benefit to the environment with the exception of eutrophication as before.

14.26 This Chapter also responds to a third party representation enclosing a report produced by United Kingdom Without Incineration Network entitled "Evaluation of the climate change impacts of waste incineration in the United Kingdom" (UKWIN, 2018). For the reasons outlined in full at Appendix 11.2, this report cannot be considered as an objective assessment of the climate change impacts of incineration.

Population/Socio-Economic Impacts

14.1 This Chapter has revisited the assessments previously carried out to consider any changes in baseline economic and health related conditions.

14.2 A review of the Economic Impact Study carried out in original 2014 study has been undertaken and concludes that the most up-to-date data does not significantly alter the basis of the assessment or the robustness of the conclusions of the previous study.

14.3 The forecasts are not materially different from those in the original assessment. It is still expected that Northern Ireland will experience subdued employment growth over the forecast period, but this is now expected to be accompanied with lower real wages and slower wage growth. Consequently, multi-million-pound investments by the private sector are just as important now (if not more so) than when the original study was undertaken.

14.4 A review of the Health Impact Assessment carried out in 2014 has been undertaken which also responds to two third party representations received in relation to health, specifically the alleged presence of erionite on the Hightown Quarry site and the toxicity of incineration.

- 14.5 Following a review of current regulatory and policy requirements, in combination with a review of the supporting evidence, technical inputs, baseline data and suitability of the assessment protocols applied, the HIA remains appropriate, complies with current requirements and the findings have been reinforced through ongoing research.
- 14.6 The conclusion and recommendations of the original HIA there remain valid and no supplementation is required.

Material Assets

- 14.7 As a result of discussions with NIE, a third grid connection route option has been identified requiring the crossing of the M2 to an existing substation at Glengormley.
- 14.8 Through the employment of a suitable trenchless crossing technique (to be determined by NIE following detailed ground investigations), this crossing is considered to be feasible and does not require any mitigation beyond that previously identified as part of the 2014 and 2016 routes i.e. temporary traffic management and the reinstatement of any affected landscaping may be necessary.