1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Gleeson Land (the "Applicant") is applying for hybrid planning permission for the demolition of Chicory Cottage and associate outbuildings and the development of up to 424 residential dwellings, the creation of a Strategic Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), along with the provision of open space and associated access, parking, landscaping, infrastructure and earthworks (the Development) on land at Downlands Farm, Uckfield. Located within the administrative area of Wealden District Council (WDC) the Site extends to approximately 46 hectares (ha) and is shown on Figure 1.1. A full description of the Site and Development is provided in Chapter 3 of this Environmental Statement (ES).

Requirement for EIA

1.2 The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process is the mechanism by which development proposals are appraised in terms of their likely significant environmental effects. EIA is described as a means of drawing together, in a systematic way, an assessment of a development's likely significant environmental effects (beneficial and adverse). This helps to ensure that the importance of the predicted significant environmental effects, and the scope for reducing them, are properly understood before a decision is made. Information on the likely significant effects of the Development has been gathered and is presented in this document, the Environmental Statement (ES). The ES will inform the decision-maker (in this case WDC) of the likely significant environmental effects of the Development both during construction and operation, and proposes mitigation measures to prevent, reduce or offset any significant adverse effects on the environment.

1.3 The Development falls within Category 10(b) of Schedule 2 of the *Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended)*[i] as an urban project where the area of the development includes more than 150 dwellings and the Site area exceeds 5 hectares (ha). It is considered that the Development could lead to significant effects on the environment and an ES, informed through the EIA Scoping process (see Chapter 2 for further details), has been prepared in support of the planning application.

Organisation of the Environmental Statement

1.4 Regulation 18 of the EIA Regulations sets out the information an ES should include. Table 1.1 below shows where the Regulation 18 information has been provided in this ES. Appendix 1.1 sets out where the information required by Schedule 4 has been provided in this ES.

Table 1.1: Location of Information within the ES Required by Regulation 18 of the EIA Regulations

Specified Information		Location within ES
Reg 18 (3) An environmental statement is a statement which includes at least—		
(a)	a description of the proposed development comprising information on the site, design, size and other relevant features of the development;	Chapter 3.
(b)	a description of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment;	Technical Chapters 6-10.
(c)	a description of any features of the proposed development, or measures envisaged in order to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment	Chapter 3 and Technical Chapters 6-10.
(d)	a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, taking into account the effects of the development on the environment;	Chapter 4.
(e)	a non-technical summary of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (d);	Separate standalone NTS.
(f)	any additional information specified in Schedule 4 relevant to the specific characteristics of the particular development or type of development and to the environmental features likely to be significantly affected	Technical Chapters 6-10.
Reg 18 (4) An environmental statement must—		
(a)	where a scoping opinion or direction has been issued in accordance with regulation 15 or 16, be based on the most recent scoping opinion or direction issued (so far as the proposed development remains materially the same as the proposed development which was subject to that opinion or direction);	Further information is provided in Chapter 2.
(b)	include the information reasonably required for reaching a reasoned conclusion on the significant effects of the development on the environment, taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment; and	Technical Chapters 6-10.
(c)	be prepared, taking into account the results of any relevant UK environmental assessment, which are reasonably available to the person preparing the environmental statement, with a view to avoiding duplication of assessment.	No other European assessments have been prepared to accompany this application.
Reg 18 (5) In order to ensure the completeness and quality of the environmental statement—		
(a)	the developer must ensure that the environmental statement is prepared by competent experts;	Each of contributors to the ES has set out their credentials in the introductory section of their technical assessment chapter.
(b)	the environmental statement must be accompanied by a statement from the developer outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts.	See Appendix 1.2.

ES Structure

1.5 This ES comprises 11 chapters and is supported by figures (located at the back of each chapter within Volume 1) and technical appendices (within a separate Volume 2). A Non-technical Summary (NTS) of the full ES is provided as a separate standalone document. Table 1.2 sets out the structure of the ES.

Table 1.2 ES Structure

Volume 1 – Main Text & Figures		
Chapter No.	**Chapter Title**	**Description**
1	Introduction	Introduction to the ES, EIA requirements, details of project team, ES organisation and availability.
2	EIA Methodology	Methods used to prepare each chapter, description of ES structure and content, generic significance criteria, scoping and consultation.
3	Site and Development Description	Site description and details of the Development. Summary of effects with respect to energy, sustainability and climate change.
4	Alternatives and Design Evolution	Outline of the main alternatives considered by the Applicant.
5	Construction Methodology and Programme	Details of anticipated programme for construction of the development, along with anticipated construction plant and construction methodology.
6	Landscape and Visual Effects	Assessment of effects of the Development relating to landscape and visual amenity.
7	Biodiversity	Assessment of effects on biodiversity and ecology at the Site.
8	Water Resources and Flood Risk	Assessment of the effects on the water environment, including effects relating to water quality, drainage and flood risk.
9	Cultural Heritage	Assessment of the effects of the Development relating to the archaeology and built heritage.
10	Land Contamination	Assessment of effects relating to land contamination.
11	Summary and Residual Effects	Summary of the residual and interactive effects of the Development.
Volume 2	**Technical Appendices**	**Technical data and reports to support the chapters in Volume 1.**
Standalone Document	**Non-Technical Summary**	**Summary of the ES in non-technical language.**

Project Team

1.6 The ES has been coordinated by Barton Willmore, now Stantec and presents the results of technical studies carried out in conjunction with a number of specialist consultants appointed by the Applicant. The project team is listed in Table 1.3 along with their respective disciplines and contributions to the ES. A 'statement of expertise' as required by Regulation 18 (5) (b) of the EIA Regulations 2017 (as amended) is provided at Appendix 1.2.

Table 1.3 Project Team

Organisation	Expertise
Gleeson Land	The Applicant
Barton Willmore, now Stantec	Town Planning, Development Economics and EIA Project Management
Richards Urban Design	Masterplanners
FLAC	Arboriculture
Motion	Transport Planning
EDP	Landscape and Cultural Heritage
Aspect Ecology	Biodiversity
Waterman	Flood Risk and Drainage
BRD Environmental Ltd	Land Contamination
Daedalus	Energy and Waste

Other Documents

1.7 A number of other documents have been submitted to WDC in support of the planning application. These include:

- Planning Statement;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Transport Assessment;
- Framework Travel Plan
- Economic Benefits Statement;
- Arboricultural Assessment;
- Woodland / SANG Management Plan; and
- Lighting Strategy.

Environmental Statement Availability

1.8 The ES can be made available for public viewing by appointment at the following WDC address:

Wealden District Council
Planning and Building Control
Vicarage Lane
Hailsham, BN27 2AX

1.9 Viewings can be arranged by contacting the following:

Tel: 01323 443322
Email: planning@wealden.gov.uk

1.10 The ES will also be available for view and comment on the WDC website:

https://www.wealden.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/

1.11 The ES may be purchased in volumes, the costs for which are set out below:

- Non-Technical Summary (NTS) - £15
- Volume 1: ES Main Text & Figures - £150
- Volume 2: ES Appendices - £250
- Full copy (Volumes 1 and 2 with NTS) of the ES on memory stick - £15

1.12 For copies of any of the above please contact the Environmental Planning team at Barton Willmore, now Stantec:

Environmental Planning Team
Barton Willmore, now Stantec
7 Soho Square
London, W1D 3QB

Tel: 020 7446 6888
Email: IEPenquiries@bartonwillmore.co.uk

References

[i] The *Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017* (2017 No.571) (as amended) (2020 No.505)