

## **5. SCOPING AND ALTERNATIVES**

### **5.1 Scoping methodology**

- 5.1.1 The purpose of scoping is to define the range and level of detail required for accurate consideration of the environmental assets potentially affected by the development of the application site. The scope of the EIA has been determined in line with the Environmental Impact (Forestry) Regulations 1999. The scoping process included circulation of the scoping report to all relevant organisations and a scoping meeting.
- 5.1.2 The scoping exercise for this EIA has also been informed by the previous consultation responses to the planning application and information requested by Sunderland City Council about the scheme to discharge conditions.
- 5.1.3 Section 1 of this Environmental Statement documents the outcome of the Forestry Commission's screening process. The screening opinion from the Forestry Commission focused on the need for study of traffic, felling of woodland, loss of amenity greenspace and loss of CO<sub>2</sub> storage.
- 5.1.4 Previous to the scoping study, as part of the planning application, an ecological survey was undertaken by E3 ecology. This involved consultations with Durham Wildlife Trust. These consultations were repeated in January 2008 to ensure the information is up to date and the response is included in Appendix 5.4. Archaeological Services at Durham University undertook an archaeological evaluation, and geophysical investigation followed up by trial trenching exercise. Ground investigation work was carried out by Dunelm Environmental. Waterman carried out an arboricultural survey. All of these therefore informed the scoping exercise.
- 5.1.5 The scoping report was issued on the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2007 to the consultees, both statutory and non-statutory, together with an invitation to a scoping meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008. The purposed of the meeting was to give them an opportunity to identify any likely significant environmental affects which could arise from the project. The meeting was minuted and these are in Appendix 5.2. A list of other individuals and other organisations made aware of the process is given in section 5.4.

### **5.2 Identification and definition of potential impacts**

- 5.2.1 Initially as a starting point the range of environmental interests and potential effects of the proposed application site were established and they are summarised in Table 5.1.

<b>Table 5.1 Environmental Interests</b>	
<b>Environmental interests and amenities</b>	<b>Potentially vulnerable to:</b>
<b>Construction</b>	
Soils and Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some loss of soils as a result of the building construction and construction of car park site.</li> <li>• Some loss of land in agricultural usage.</li> </ul>
Landscape setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No adverse effect on landscape character.</li> <li>• Possible visual intrusion at identified receptors.</li> </ul>
Nearby residential / other properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise.</li> <li>• Dust.</li> <li>• Visual intrusion.</li> <li>• Traffic implications.</li> <li>• Cumulative impacts.</li> </ul>
Highways network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disturbance of the road surface, drainage from mud from construction traffic</li> <li>• Highways safety</li> <li>• Disruption of traffic, junction capacity.</li> </ul>
Flora and fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Habitat loss/change.</li> <li>• Impact on adjacent woodland.</li> <li>• Disturbance to protected species/habitats etc.</li> <li>• Secondary effects – dust, surface and groundwater changes.</li> <li>• Cumulative impacts.</li> </ul>
Footpaths on site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual disturbance.</li> </ul>
Water Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in groundwater and surface water regime.</li> <li>• Reduction in ground and surface water quality.</li> </ul>
<b>Operation</b>	
Landscape setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on landscape character.</li> <li>• Visual intrusion at identified receptors.</li> </ul>
Nearby residential properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual intrusion.</li> <li>• Traffic implications.</li> <li>• Cumulative impacts.</li> </ul>
Highways network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highways safety.</li> <li>• Disruption of traffic, junction capacity.</li> </ul>
Flora and fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Habitat change.</li> <li>• Impact on Saltergill Beck.</li> <li>• Disturbance to protected species/habitats etc.</li> <li>• Secondary effects – surface and groundwater changes.</li> </ul>
Footpaths off site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual disturbance.</li> </ul>
Water Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in groundwater and surface water regime.</li> <li>• Reduction in ground and surface water quality.</li> </ul>

## 5.3 Consultations

5.3.1 The consultees (statutory and non-statutory) that were asked for input to the scoping included:

- Planning Authority (Sunderland County Council)

- Forestry Commission
- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- English Heritage
- Sport England
- Highways Agency
- Friends of the Earth
- The Wildlife Action Group, (TWAG) made up of local residents

5.3.2 A scoping meeting was held at Roker Hotel, Sunderland, on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008 to which the consultees were invited to attend. The invitation requested that responses were given either before or at the meeting. There were fifteen attendees and the issues raised were minuted (appendix 5.1). No written responses were received at the meeting. Some consultees elected not to attend either because they had no comment or because they chose to write in response instead. TWAG stated they wanted further time to respond in writing after the meeting. Their response was received on 10<sup>th</sup> March (see Appendix 5.5) and the matters they raised have been addressed in the ES. A further community questionnaire was submitted on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2008 to the Forestry Authority and copied to Wardell Armstrong.

5.3.3 The following other individuals or organisations also received a copy of the scoping report:

- Steve Scoffin – Great North Forest
- Mr Fraser Kemp MP
- Councillor Melville Speding
- Councillor John Scott
- Councillor Joan Carthy
- Councillor Dennis Richardson
- Councillor Joe Lawson
- Councillor Kath Rolph
- Councillor Anne Hall
- Councillor Bob Heron
- Councillor David Tate
- Councillor Florence Anderson
- Councillor James Blackburn

## 5.4 Summary of consultee responses

5.4.1 A full copy of all consultation responses received at time of writing is given in Appendix 5.1. The following issues relevant to this Environmental Statement, were highlighted:

Table 5.2 Summary of issues raised by consultees		
Consultee	Issue	Section of the ES that addresses the issue
Sunderland City Council	The Council had already requested matters to be studied as part of the planning application process and had nothing further to add.	
	The Councillor attended in an observational capacity.	
	The EHO was consulted regarding noise monitoring locations	8
	The planning application has already been determined by the relevant Committee.	
	Faber Maunsell on behalf of the council commented on the Remediation strategy; the proposed assessment criteria for metals on the original report are highly conservative since they are for gardens rather than for a playing field. There is made ground on site and the fill includes black gravely sand from an unknown source, FM suggest SCC check their landfill records. Due to the proximity of the Sewage works testing for PCBs is requested. The desk study puts the site in Characteristic Situation 2 requiring basic gas measure; the remediation strategy should address the risk from gas and possible mitigation in the earthworks. The council have been advised to request a testing frequency and chemical test suit for imported soils, topsoil, soils within top 600mm and soils below the top 600m.	12
Forestry Commission	In their screening opinion the commission stated that the loss of amenity greenspace should be considered.	10, 2
	The commission wanted to EIA to consider the impact of felling the woodland in terms of the environment and the loss of CO <sub>2</sub> storage.	13
	In the screening opinion the added traffic in the area was raised as an issue.	9
Natural England	The EIA should cover potential cumulative effects of the proposal with other similar proposals in the region.	6
	The EIA must include a full assessment of the impact of the proposals on biodiversity and geology, including ecology, statutory site, protected species, non-statutory sites and BAP habitats and species.	6
	The EIA should include a landscape character assessment and cumulative assessment	10
	The EIA needs to consider the impact on the Great North Forest	6
	A thorough assessment of the development's impact on effects on access to the countryside and its enjoyment through recreation, including rights of way, landscape and visual effects on open access land.	10, 2

<b>Table 5.2</b>		
<b>Summary of issues raised by consultees</b>		
<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Section of the ES that addresses the issue</b>
	Expect the proposals to retain the current rights of way and to ensure that these will not be adversely affected	3, 10
Environment Agency	The site lies in a flood zone 1 and is over 1ha so a FRA would be required at the planning application stage.	Erata – the site is not in a flood risk zone
	Any likely effects to the surface and ground water quality and flow should be considered.	9
	Any likely effects to the land quality, including impacts of any excavations, infilling or regarding or using imported materials should be considered.	12
	Any likely effects on local, regional or global air quality in all phases of the development should be considered.	13
	Any likely effects on biodiversity and important local, regional and global habitats should be considered.	6
	EA has a duty to promote sustainable development and consideration should be made for maximising the use of secondary and recycled materials and minimising the use of non-renewable resources.	
English Heritage	The Agency did not wish to comment formally on the proposals.	
Sport England	The Agency did not wish to comment formally on the proposals.	
Highways Agency	Effects on the A19/A690 junction	9
Durham Wildlife Trust	Effect of loss of woodland	6
Local Residents Group (TWAG)	Major concerns about the loss of the area of Great North Forest	6
	Would like visual impacts to be addressed particularly long distance lines of sight.(Durham Cathedral & Penshaw Monumnet	10
	Concerns about linking in to a minor C class road (C9) and effects on local transport network	9
	Concerns about the timing of the ecological work	6
	The requirement for a bat survey	6
	Air Quality effects of removing trees	13
	Noise from the site when in use	8
	Presence of GCN close to the site	6

5.4.2 To facilitate scoping an environmental matrix was developed to summarise the conjectures level of significance of potential effect and thus to determine the likely level of detail of the study required. This is shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Scope of study of significant potential effects									
Potential releases and effects									
Site activity	Landuse	Surface Water & flood risk	Ground Water	Air quality	Noise	Landscape	Wildlife	Cultural Heritage	Traffic
<b>Establishment</b>									
Access and infrastructure, construction & building construction	-	●	○	●	●	-	○	○	●
Soil handling	-	-	-	-	-	-	○	-	-
Site landscaping	□	-	-	-	-	○ & □	○ & □	-	-
<b>Operations</b>									
buildings, car parks, public realm etc	-	-	-	○	●	○ & □	○	-	●
Traffic off site	-	-	-		●	-	-	-	●
Note: ○ Potential minor negative impact      □ Potential minor positive impacts									
Note: ● Potential negative impact requiring investigation and assessment      ■ Potential positive impact requiring investigation.									

## 5.5 Alternatives

5.5.1 The main aim of the proposal is to provide Tyne and Wear Youth League with a place with sufficient capacity to train and play. It is one of the most successful and thriving leagues in the country. This is evidenced by the membership role outlined in section 1 of the Environmental Statement. The 'do nothing' scenario does not address the need. It should be noted that construction and operation of this facility does not mean that pitches elsewhere will be closed.

5.5.2 EIA legislation requires consideration of 'alternatives', not necessarily 'alternative sites' however, has alternative sites have been addressed briefly. Other alternatives to be considered do, however, include different design layouts.

### **Alternative sites**

5.5.3 The proposed site would belong to the League and would be a long term solution to addressing its needs. The land of the site has been donated to the League and the development has secured £1million in funding from Sport England. There are no other alternative sites which offer this combined opportunity. Russell Foster who is prepared to donate the land does not own other land suitable for this use that could

be made available as an alternative. No other prospective benefactors are in the offing. The Newbottle site is the only one available to the League.

- 5.5.4 Other existing pitches identified in the open space study in the vicinity are identified in Table 5.4. These are not adequate to be used in the way that the proposed development can be used for a range of reasons outlined. They are not therefore viable alternatives.

<b>Site</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Shiney Row Playing fields – Success Road	3.9ha	Too small Informal Pitches and minimal parking for under 20 cars, pavilion building. Access off minor.
Sunnside Recreation ground and playing fields	1.5 – 2 ha	Too small No pitches laid out and no parking.
Philadelphia YMCA football Ground	1.2ha	Too small Only one pitch and limited parking, access off Philadelphia Lane in the village.

- 5.5.5 The senior pitches on the proposed development are 5,760m<sup>2</sup> and the junior pitches are 1,944m<sup>2</sup> and the area of the site is 11.1ha. The Shiney Row Site could only accommodate approximately 7 junior pitches. The Sunnside recreation ground could accommodate 3, the number being constrained by topography. The YMCA site is currently used as a single large pitch.

- 5.5.6 The access routes to these other sites are from within housing areas and there is very limited parking if any at each site.

### ***Alternative designs***

- 5.5.7 One option would have been to restrict the size of the proposed site to the area of the field and not develop the woodland area. This would mean that only 15 pitches could be accommodated and there would be no room for the small pitches, senior pitches, multiuse games areas (MUGA) parking or changing facilities. Alternatively constructing a smaller number of pitches and retaining the other facilities would reduce the flexibility to manage use of the grass by rotating use of the pitches and allowing them to recover from wear. This would be likely to mean there would be fewer opportunities to play, so fewer members could be accommodated. Clearly both of these approaches would result in an inferior facility so they were rejected as solutions to the League's needs.

- 5.5.8 It would not be an acceptable option to reduce the parking provision, so reducing the footprint of the development, as this could lead to 'on street' parking that could be a nuisance to local residents.

5.5.9 A further possibility could have been to develop more of the agricultural land east of the proposed site. This would have presented more level problems because the surrounding land slopes more to the west than it does north to south. Construction of pitches in this orientation would have required more terracing of the landform, so this option was also rejected.

5.5.10 In the long term there is a bypass proposed for Newbottle. This is partly built and while its construction date is uncertain, the intent to provide a route is documented in current Council strategy documents as explained in the transportation assessment, section of this report, section 9. Being on this route will further improve the accessibility of the facility by road in the future.