THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017 SCREENING MATRIX

1. CASE DETAILS			
Case Reference	25/70051/SCRE	**Brief description of the project / development**	Proposed development for significant green and blue infrastructure, open space community facilities and supporting infrastructure alongside a development of approximately 600 dwellings
Appellant	Bloor Homes		
LPA	Huntingdonshire District Council		

2. EIA DETAILS	
Is the project Schedule 1 development according to Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations?	No
If YES, which description of development (THEN GO TO Q4)	NA
Is the project Schedule 2 development under the EIA Regulations?	Yes
If YES, under which description of development in Column 1 and Column 2?	Column 1: 10 (b) Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas Column 2: 10 (b) (ii) the development includes more than 150 dwellings; and 10 (b) (iii) the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.
Is the development within, partly within, or near a 'sensitive area' as defined by Regulation 2 of the EIA Regulations?	Yes
If YES, which area?	The site boundary is adjacent to Little Paxton Pits SSSI and close to St Neots Common SSSI
Are the applicable thresholds/criteria in Column 2 exceeded/met?	Yes
If yes, which applicable threshold/criteria?	10(b)(ii) The development proposed includes 600 dwellings; and 10 (b) (iii) The overall site area measures 88.6 hectares.

3. LPA/SOS SCREENING	
Has the LPA or SoS issued a Screening Opinion (SO) or Screening Direction (SD)? (In the case of Enforcement appeals, has a Regulation 37 notice been issued)	No

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If yes, is a copy of the SO/SD on the file?	NA
If yes, is the SO/SD positive?	NA
4. ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT	
Has the appellant supplied an ES for the current or previous (if reserved matters or conditions) application?	No

WHEN COMPLETING THIS DOCUMENT IN RELATION TO AN ENFORCEMENT APPEAL, THE UNDERSIGNED OFFICER HAS HAD REGARD TO THE PROJECT AS ALLEGED IN THE RELEVANT ENFORCEMENT NOTICE WHEN REFERING TO THE PROJECT / DEVELOPMENT.

Question	(Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)		(Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (<u>only if Yes in part 2a</u>) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)	
	Briefly explain answer to Part 2a and, if applicable and/or known, include name of feature and proximity to site **(If answer in Part 2a / 2b is 'No', the answer to Part 3a / 3b is 'N/A')**		Is a significant effect likely, having regard particularly to the magnitude and spatial extent (including population size affected), nature, intensity and complexity, probability, expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact and the possibility to effectively reduce the impact? If the finding of no significant effect is **reliant on specific features or measures** of the project envisaged to avoid, or prevent what might otherwise have been, significant adverse effects on the environment **these should be identified in bold**.	
1. NATURAL RESOURCES				
1.1 Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the topography of the area?	Yes	The site comprises 88.6 hectares of agricultural land. As existing the land slopes gently down from the south east to the north west. 72.3h of the land is proposed be undeveloped, providing green infrastructure / open space, however the indicative layout includes wildlife ponds and a cemetery in these areas, which will involve extraction of soil. The proposed developable area for residential development (16.3ha) falls from circa 34m AOD to 17m AOD (south east to north west). The site is elevated when viewed from Huntingdon Road to the north west, however the site is not elevated when viewed from Priory Hill Road, which forms the existing edge of the settlement of St Neots to the south.	No	Changes to topography would only be required during construction in the developable area and the proposed ponds. The extent of the developable area and the ponds could be controlled by **parameter plans** as part of an outline planning application. Having regard to the existing land levels, any changes in topography required to accommodate the proposed residential development would not require major extractive or additive earthworks. Consideration and control of the height of development proposed (relative to ground level information) **could be adequately assessed through plans submitted and controlled by planning conditions** without the need for an EIA.

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				The provision of wildlife ponds will require the extraction of soil, which may be used to reprofile areas of open space and soft landscaping around the ponds and within the areas of open space. **The height and extent of any soft landscape features (e.g. bunds) is not expected to be significant and could be adequately controlled by approved plans and planning conditions.** Any changes in topography will not therefore represent a significant effect for EIA purposes.
1.2 Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes	The majority of the site is located within a Sand and Gravel Mineral Safeguarding Area (as defined by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan). Notably, approximately 6ha of the proposed developable area (16.3ha) falls outside of this Mineral Safeguarding Area. The proposed developable area will therefore permanently sterilise part of a Mineral Safeguarding Area for sand and gravel (circa 10ha). Outside of the developable area, the site area is proposed to be used for green infrastructure and this use would not therefore prevent future extraction of minerals in principle. Both the construction phase and operation of the project would likely consume natural resources, including those that are non-renewable or in short supply.	No	Having regard to the size of the Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA) which would be sterilised by the proposal (circa 10ha), relative to the total size of the MSA, this is not considered to be a significant effect for the purposes of EIA. **The impact of the proposal upon the MSA can be adequately assessed within the scope of a planning application, based on the results of ground investigations, in consultation with the Minerals and Waste Authority.** The construction materials required for the proposed development are likely to comprise common natural and manufactured materials. Owing to the site topography, it is unlikely that significant amounts of soil will be required to be removed / brought to the site. Contours, cut-and-fill and recontouring could all be controlled

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		The scale of the development is such that large quantities of natural resources will be required.		by conditions where necessary. Energy will be required during construction, however this is unlikely to be significant for EIA purposes and could be supplied by onsite generation (having regard to the indicative EIA threshold of 1,000 dwellings in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 058 Reference ID: 4-058-20150326). Once operational, the dwellings will require energy and water supplies but this is not uncommon and is not of a scale which would be considered to have a significant effect. Early discussions with utility providers is encouraged including but not limited to potable water provision and wastewater treatment. Given the scale, nature and location of the project, it is considered unlikely that the use of natural resources during construction and maintenance of the project will have significant effects on the environment for EIA purposes. **Sustainable methods of construction and development will be a consideration in any planning application and could be secured by condition.**
1.3 Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, **high quality or scarce resources** which could be affected by the project,	Yes	The site is currently greenfield land which is in agricultural use. According to the Provisional Land classification	No	Having regard to the size of the developable area of the site (16.3ha) and the supply of alternative agricultural land in the locality, it is not considered that the loss of the site for agricultural purposes would have a significant

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e.g. forestry, agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?		(ALC) published by Natural England (updated June 2024) and the Post 1988 Agricultural Land Classification (England) the site is a mix of Grade 2, Grade 3, and non-agricultural land. The developable area of the site (16.3ha) is identified as being Grade 2 agricultural land.		effect for EIA purposes. The quality of the agricultural land and its loss could be adequately assessed by an **Agricultural Land Quality** report submitted in support of a future planning application.
2. WASTE				
2.1 Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes	It is anticipated that solid wastes will be produced during the construction phase of the project and during the ongoing occupation of residential properties (in the form of common sewerage waste and general household waste).	No	Given the scale of the project and the type of development proposed it is expected that any solid waste generated by the construction phase will be commonplace and capable of being managed by the waste hierarchy, **in compliance with a Construction Environmental Management Plan.** During the operational phase of development, household waste, including sewage waste will be managed by a wastewater provider and the council's bin collection services. Early discussions with utility providers is encouraged. It is considered unlikely that the quantities of solid waste produced during construction or operation would have significant effects on the environment for EIA purposes.
3. POLLUTION AND NUISANCES				
3.1 Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Yes	Construction operations and ongoing occupation of the project will result in the release of dust, pollutants and noxious substances into the air;	No	The impacts of dust and vehicle emissions during the construction phase can be managed with best practice measures such as dampening techniques and ensuring that vehicles are not

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		most likely from vehicle and machinery emissions.		left idling. **Such measures could be secured via a Construction Environmental Management Plan** which could be secured by condition. The proposed development would give rise to vehicle emissions following occupation, nevertheless, measures could be implemented to encourage residents to use sustainable modes of transport over private cars. It is noted that bus provision is proposed and the site is within walking distance of St Neots train station. In addition enhanced pedestrian routes to St Neots are proposed. Measures to encourage sustainable modes of travel could be secured by a **Travel Plan**. Impacts upon air quality could be assessed by an **Air Quality Assessment**, without the need for an EIA. The release of pollutants/hazardous substances is considered to be unlikely to have a significant effect for EIA purposes, given the scale of the project and the nature of the associated construction/operation phases.
3.2 Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes	Operations involved in the construction of the project will generate noise, vibration and the release of light and/or heat energy, most likely from construction machinery and traffic.	No	During construction, the generation of noise, vibration and light **could be controlled by best practice, secured by a Construction Environmental Management Plan**. Once operational, background noise generated by occupants would not be significant or

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		Noise and the release of light and heat from the residential properties and associated vehicles will occur over the lifetime of the project.		unexpected for a residential area. The release of heat could be controlled by **thermal efficiency of the buildings and the use of external lighting (including lighting for any sports facilities) is unlikely to be significant and could be controlled by a lighting plan and condition where appropriate.** Having regard to the type and scale of development proposed, the anticipated levels of noise, vibration, light and heat generated are not considered to be significant or uncommon for EIA purposes.
3.3 Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Yes	The project site is greenfield agricultural land, however given its size and adjacent land uses (including the East West mainline and sewage works), the risk of contamination being present cannot be ruled out. An impact on coastal waters/the sea is unlikely given geographic location. There is a reservoir adjacent to the south east corner of the site and the river Great Ouse runs through / adjacent to the western edge of site. Notably the developable area and the proposed cemetery is located in the eastern half of the site, furthest from the River Great Ouse. The Gallow Brook runs east-west through the site, north of the developable area. It is likely that the project, in particular the works carried out during construction, including	No	The risk of contamination being present on site could be **investigated via a land contamination assessment** prepared as part of any future planning application, without requiring an EIA. The risks of contamination associated with construction works can be minimised by **standard pollution prevention measures and could be secured by a Construction Environmental Management Plan**. The risk of groundwater contamination from the proposed cemetery will need to be assessed by any future planning application. Subject to the way in which the proposed cemetery will operate, **a groundwater risk assessment** may be required.

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		storage and use of fuels and lubricants for plant/machinery, and chemicals used during construction, will all carry some risk of entering the ground. The proposed cemetery will pose a risk of ground contamination once operational. Runoff from new roads and hard surfaces could result in contaminated water potentially being absorbed into surface water or groundwater.		The design of the drainage management and attenuation features on the site would need to incorporate measures to manage risks of pollution. Unmitigated risks of contamination are considered unlikely to have significant environmental effects for EIA purposes given the scale and nature of the project.
3.4 Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	No	The site is previously undeveloped land. The East Coast mainline runs adjacent to the eastern boundary and there is an existing sewage works within the western half of the site (albeit this is excluded from the red line area). No legal environmental standards are known to be exceeded in the area. If there are currently unknown pre-existing polluted or environmentally damaged areas in and around the project area, it is considered unlikely, given the scale and nature of the project, that the effects of pollution and/or environmental damage would be significant for EIA purposes.	NA	
4. POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH				
4.1 Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during	No	The nature and scale of the development would not give rise to a risk of major accidents at any point.	NA	

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construction, operation or decommissioning?		Whilst parts of the site are located within Flood Zones 2 and 3, no built development is proposed in these areas. Risks can be minimised by standard accident prevention measures. The risk of accidents is not considered likely to have significant environmental effects for EIA purposes given the scale and nature of the project.		
4.2 Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)	Yes	A development of this scale has the potential to cause air and water pollution if not appropriately managed. Construction phases carry a level of intrinsic risk with regard to plant / machinery operation and accidents can occur 'on-site'. It is considered that the operational phase of the project is likely to involve minimal risk, subject to appropriate management.	No	Risks to health can be minimised by **standard accident and contamination prevention measures**. The risks of accident/contamination is not considered likely to have signficant environmental effects for EIA purposes given the scale and nature of the project.
5. WATER RESOURCES				
5.1 Are there any water resources including surface waters, e.g. rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?	Yes	The River Great Ouse is located within the western part of the site. A reservoir is located adjacent to the south eastern corner of the site. The Gallow Brook also runs through the northeastern half of the site. Parts of the site are identified as being susceptible to ground water flooding by the HDC SFRA 2024.	No	No built development is proposed adjacent to the River Great Ouse, with the exception of a potential footbridge over the river. An extension to some existing allotments and wildlife ponds are proposed adjacent to the river course. Any impact of these proposals upon the river will need to be adequately assessed by **a Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy including hydraulic fluvial modelling**.

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		The site is withing a Drinking Water Safeguard Zones (Surface Water) (England).		The proposed cemetery is located north of the Gallow Brook and the proposed residential development is located to the south of the brook. The relationship between the proposal and the Gallow Brook will need to be assessed, by a **Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy hydraulic fluvial modelling,** to account for any surface water runoff directed to the brook. A **Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy** is required to be submitted with any planning application. This will be required to demonstrate that the proposal will not increase any risks of flooding on site or in the area, including fluvial flooding, surface water and ground water flooding.
6. BIODIVERSITY (SPECIES AND HABITATS)				
6.1 Are there any protected areas which are designated or classified for their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, or any non-designated / non-classified areas which are important or sensitive for reasons of their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, located on or around the location and which could be affected by the project? (e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water-bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, undesignated nature	Yes	No internationally or nationally designated ecological areas are located on the project site. The nearest designations are summarised below: Internationally designated areas: Little Paxton Pits SSSI (immediately adjacent to the north west of the site boundary – former quarry pits, designated for its importance to water birds) St Neots Common SSSI (circa 165 metres south west of the site boundary)	No	Whilst the north western site boundary is adjacent to Little Paxton Pits SSSI, no built development is proposed in this area, with the exception of a possible footbridge. The indicative layout shows a possible footbridge across the river, the location of which would be outside of the site boundary and outside of (albeit close to) the SSSI. The proposed residential development would be located circa 600 metres from Little Paxton Pits SSSI (separated from it by Huntingdon Road

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reserves or parks. (Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local))).		Little Paxton Wood SSI (circa 1.4 miles north east) Grafham Water SSSI (circa 3 miles north east) Regionally or locally designated areas: There are 17 Cambridgeshire Wildlife Sites within 5km, including the River Great Ouse which runs through the sites western edge. Given the intervening distance there are not expected to be any direct effects on any of the protected sites identified in the locality as a result of the proposed development. It cannot be ruled out at this stage that the proposal would have no indirect effects on any protected sites, particularly recreational impacts upon the nearest SSSI.		and proposed green and blue infrastructure) and circa 850 metres from St Neots Common SSSI (separated from it by Priory Hill Road and existing residential development). As no development is proposed within them, no direct effects on the protected sites are expected. The proposed blue and green infrastructure closest to the SSSI would not result in significant environmental effects and could complement and enhance the SSSI. Indirect effects on the protected sites could include: disturbance from noise associated with construction activities, risks of ground water contamination and recreational disturbance from the proposed dwellings (once operational). Subject to best practice working, secured by a **Construction Environmental Management Plan**, any impacts associated with increased vehicle movements (including noise and emissions) and possible risks of contamination during construction could be effectively managed without the need for an EIA. Given the proximity to Paxton Pits SSSI and St Neots Common, the proposal could increase recreational visitors to these sites (particularly in the event of a footbridge being provided over the River Great Ouse directly into Paxton Pits SSSI). The proposal includes significant blue and green infrastructure which will provide

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				recreational opportunities as well as habitat. The applicant has engaged with Natural England who have recommended habitat creation measures need to be balanced with the recreational needs of the local community, with the **landscape design following the guidelines for Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces (SANG) and a detailed Recreational Impact Assessment to be undertaken.** Any future planning application would need to be accompanied **by an ecological assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment** to fully assess any potential impacts upon protected sites. Risks of contamination from surface or groundwater can be assessed by a **Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy**. Given the scale of residential development proposed (relative to the indicative EIA threshold of 1,000 dwellings dwellings in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 058 Reference ID: 4-058-20150326), the intervening distances between built form and the SSSI, and potential mitigation measures, it is not considered that any indirect effects on protected sites would be significant for the purposes of EIA.
6.2 Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which	Yes	The site is greenfield land and has hedgerow / trees along some of its boundaries. It contains	No	Any future planning application will need to be accompanied by **ecological surveys and an**

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use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?		the Gallow Brook and a stretch of the River Great Ouse. The site is highly likely to support fauna and habitat of ecological value. The LPA's database suggests that bats, Kingfisher, otter, badger, and Grass Snake have been recorded on the site. The proposal includes significant areas of blue and green infrastructure which have the potential to support and benefit species of flora and fauna. Nevertheless, without mitigation measures the development could disturb or result in harm to protected flora and fauna.		**Ecological Impact Assessment**. Any adverse effects to protected flora and fauna could be avoided/mitigated by a sensitive design (notably no development is proposed adjacent to the River Great Ouse and this could be controlled by **parameter plans**), best practices during construction and adequate management (this could be secured by a **Construction and Environmental Management Plan**). The proposed development would be subject to the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain conditions set out in the Environment Act 2021 requiring not less than 10% demonstrable net gain in biodiversity.
7. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL				
7.1 Are there any areas or features on or around the location which are protected for their landscape and scenic value, and/or any non-designated / non-classified areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?[1] Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	Yes	No areas in the vicinity of the site are formally designated as features of high landscape value (e.g. AONB). The site is located directly north of the built up area of St Neots. The eastern half of the site (east of Huntingdon Road) is within the South East Claylands character area, whilst the western half (west of Huntingdon Road) is within the Ouse Valley character area (as defined by the Huntingdonshire Landscape and	No	A **Landscape and Visual Assessment** will need to accompany any future submission. Proposed green infrastructure within the western half of the site must be designed to reflect the characteristics of the Great Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area. Likewise, any proposed footbridge across the river must be sensitively designed to reflect its setting.

[1] See question 8.1 for consideration of impacts on heritage designations and receptors, including on views to, within and from designated areas.

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		Townscape Supplementary Planning Document 2022). The South East Claylands include large areas of high quality landscape with a varied and typically gently undulating landform, established hedgerows and woodland and the historic settlement patterns. The landscape of the South East Claylands is under pressure from urban development, especially close to the Great Ouse Valley, and from major transport infrastructure schemes. The proposed development will result in the edge of St Neots extending further into the Sout East Claylands character area. Development proposals should promote increased planting and soft landscaping around the edges of the towns to screen visually intrusive development; particularly through planting of tree and woodland belts. The Great Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area bisects St Neots, resulting in a very strong relationship between the two. In the northern part of the town Lammas Meadow and Islands Common provide rough grassland separating St Neots from Little Paxton to the north. This area has high scenic value. No built form is proposed within the area of the site located within The Great Ouse Valley landscape character area, with exception of a possible footbridge across the river.		Soft landscape and woodland buffers should be incorporated in and round the proposed developable area to assist in screening. This could be secured by **parameter plans**. Having regard to the scale of development and options for mitigation through the design and layout of the proposed development (e.g. landscape buffers to screen views of the developable area) which can be controlled by **parameter plans**), it is not considered that the proposal will have significant effects for the purposes of EIA.

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		The site is located largely within the parish of St Neots, however the western edge of the site (Island Common) is located within the parish of Little Paxton. By restricting the developable area to the south eastern corner of the site the proposal will retain a sizeable green gap between the settlement edge of St Neots and Little Paxton.		
7.2 Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people? (If so, from where, what direction, and what distance?)	Yes	The site is located on the northern edge of St Neots. The proposed developable area will be visible from Priory Park and existing residential development to the south, as well as users of Priory Hill Road. Notably, there is a belt of established trees along the southern side of Priory Hill Road which restricts views of the site from many of the existing properties. To the north the proposed development would be visible from buildings associated with Brook Farm (which are within the site but are to be retained) and users of Huntingdon Road. Views may also be possible for users of the East Coast Mainline to the east. There are no public rights of way on or immediately adjacent to the developable area of the site. The proposed development may be visible within some mid-longer distance views from the footpath to the north west (Ouse Valley Way),	No	Having regard to the site's location, topography and existing vegetation it is considered that views towards the proposed developable area would generally be localised and capable in principle of appropriate levels of mitigation. In addition, **corridors of new soft landscaping/woodland are proposed as part of the residential development, which will assist in screening some potential localised views (e.g. from Priory Hill Road and the East Coast Mainline). This could be secured by parameter plans and conditions.** It is noted that the proposed housing is located on the northern edge of the existing settlement and is below the indicative threshold for EIA development of this type (i.e. below 1,000 dwellings). Subject to a **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, and details of the height, layout and soft landscaping (which could be**

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		It is noted that the waste water treatment centre, buildings at Brook Farm, overhead power lines and East Coast Mainline are already visible in localised views of the site.		**secured by parameter plans and conditions**), it is considered that visual impacts could be adequately assessed and mitigated without the need for an EIA.
8. CULTURAL HERITAGE/ARCHAEOLOGY				
8.1 Are there any areas or features which are protected for their cultural heritage or archaeological value, or any non-designated / classified areas and/or features of cultural heritage or archaeological importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project (including potential impacts on setting, and views to, from and within)? Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	Yes	The very western extent of the site (known as Island Common) is within St Neots Conservation Area, however, no built development is proposed in this area. Priory Park, immediately to the south (on the opposite side of Priory Hill Road is also within St Neots Conservation Area. There are no Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Battlefields or Parks or Gardens within the Site. Within a 1km radius of the Site there are two Grade II* (including the Grade II* Listed Parish Church of St James) and five Grade II Listed buildings, however, owing to intervening development, direct views between these assets and the site are likely to be very limited. Brook Farm, located within the centre of the Site is recorded on the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and comprises a non-designated heritage asset. Brook Farm is understood to be retained as part of any forthcoming development of the Site.	No	The Screening Request states that any future application will be supported by a **Heritage and Archaeological Assessment**. It is noted that no built development is proposed within the area of the site which is within St Neots Conservation Area. Nevertheless, the proposed developable area has the potential to impact upon the setting of the conservation area. Owing to distance and intervening development, the site is not likely to contribute directly to the setting of any listed buildings. A **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** would need to include heritage-specific viewpoints assessments and visualisations, Having regard to the indirect nature of any effects on the setting of the conservation area and listed buildings, and the potential for **mitigation via a sensitive design, incorporating adequate soft screening and appropriate heights of development (which could be secured by parameter**

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		No designated archaeological remains are located within the Site, however it is located within an area of very high archaeological potential. St Neots is known particularly for its Roman archaeology. Within the proposed redline and immediately surrounding the redline a pattern of recorded cropmarks indicate extensive Iron age and Roman settlement, possibly connected by linear features and trackways. Within the portion of the scheme between Priory Hill road and Huntingdon road HER records a large area of 'undated enclosures' including several linears and a large double ditched circular feature, possibly a large barrow (CHER MCB18809), just to the south of Brook Farm. Close to Priory Hill Road, are smaller sub rectilinear enclosures (CHER MCB18810) and associated linears (CHER MCB18811), also undated by morphologically, more likely Iron Age. There is also a loosely located record of Saxon settlement remains found within gravel pits in the vicinity (CHER 00622). In the portion of the proposed site located between Mill Lane, Huntington Road and the River Great Ouse are some very extensive cropmarks indicating a settlement site of probable Iron Age or Roman date and including ring ditches, enclosures, trackways and field system (CHER 04747). There are also various uncertain records of Barrows or cremations across the area (CHER 08281, 00581). To the north of Brook farm, also to the north of Huntingdon road are further cropmark		**plans and conditions**) it is not considered that the proposal would have a significant effect on cultural heritage assets for the purposes of EIA. **Subject to further investigation of the potential for archaeological remains to be present (including a full Desk Based Assessment, geophysical survey and trenched evaluation), and mitigation where required**, it is not considered that the proposal would have a significant effect on remains of archaeological importance, for the purposes of EIA.

Question	(Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)		(Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)	
		enclosures (CHER 00635, MCB18807). In the fields to the east of the proposed red line are further cropmarks indicating further enclosures (CHER MCB18812, MCB18814) trackways (CHER MCB32328), ring ditch (CHER MCB32329) and the site of a Roman Villa (CHER MCB28365) and possible associated temple (CHER MCB28366).		
9. TRANSPORT AND ACCESS				
9.1 Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	Access would be provided via two new access points off Priory Hill Road which will loop together providing the main spine road through the site. Further highways improvements are proposed to the junction of Huntingdon Road/Mill Lane/Priory Hill Road and along Priory Hill Road, including provision of a pedestrian/cyclist crossing and pedestrian/cycle paths. Priory Hill Road provides a route to the A1 to the west and a route to Priory Park, St Neots railway station and town centre to the south. Therefore, any closure or congestion on this road during construction could affect public access to these facilities. There are no public rights of way on the application site. There is a public right of way adjacent to the western sites boundary (Ouse Valley Way), however no built form is proposed in this area, with the exception of a possible footbridge over the river which would allow a	No	The Screening Request states that any future application will be supported by a robust **Transport Assessment and Travel Plan**. The Transport Assessment should accurately establish the impact of vehicular trips generated by the proposal (both during construction and operation) upon the local and strategic road network. It should also assess public transport linkages and compliance with the County Council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2022). Having regard to the indicative threshold for EIA development of this type (1,000 dwellings dwellings in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 058 Reference ID: 4-058-20150326), the relatively sustainable location (adjacent to the existing built up area and within walking distance of the train station), and possible mitigation measures including a **Construction Environmental Management**

Question	(Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)		(Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (<u>only if Yes in part 2a</u>) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)	
		link between the site and the public right of way.		**Plan to manage construction traffic and a Travel Plan to promote sustainable methods of travel**, it is not considered that the proposal would have a significant impact on transport routes, for the purposes of EIA.
9.2 Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	Priory Hill Road provides a route to the A1 to the west, via Mill Lane. Congestion can occur at peak times along Mill Lane (particularly where the road narrows as it crosses the River Great Ouse) and around the existing double mini roundabouts located at the junction of Huntingdon Road/Mill Lane/Priory Hill Road.	No	The Screening Request states that any future application will be supported by a robust **Transport Assessment and Travel Plan**. Whilst roads in the vicinity may be susceptible to localised congestions at peak times, the project is not considered to inherently affect transport routes such that a significant environmental effect for EIA purposes would result. **The impacts associated with construction could be controlled by a Construction Environmental Management Plan.**
10. LAND USE				
10.1 Are there existing land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project? E.g. housing, densely populated areas, industry / commerce, farm/agricultural holdings, forestry, tourism, mining, quarrying, facilities relating to health, education, places of worship, leisure /sports / recreation.	Yes	The site is located on the northern edge of the town of St Neots. Existing residential development and Priory Park are located to the south of the site, on the opposite side of Priory Hill Road. The eastern half of the site is in agricultural use, with no public routes or access. Buildings associated with Brook Farm are included within	No	Having regard to the site size, its loss for agricultural use would not result in a significant impact on the agricultural industry (locally or nationally). Having regard to the location of the 'developable area', it is not considered that the proposal would result in significant effects for nearby residential properties. Disturbance to existing residents is most likely to occur during

Question	(Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)		(Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)	
		the application site boundary but no changes are understood to be proposed to these. The western half of the site (west of Huntingdon Road) surrounds St Neots waste water treatment works which is excluded from the site boundary. The very western edge of the site – the area of land located between the two branches of the River Great Ouse – forms part of Island Common which forms part of the St Neots Conservation Area but is not accessible to the public. Mill Lane allotments are located adjacent to the south western corner of the site. The East Coat Mainline is adjacent to the east.		the construction phase which is temporary and can be managed by way of a **Construction Environmental Management** Plan but is not considered to be significant for EIA purposes. No built form is proposed to the west of Huntingdon Road, closest to the waste water treatment works. Odour impacts from the waste water treatment works could be adequately assessed by an **Air Quality Assessment** without the need for an EIA**. No development should be proposed within the cordon sanitaire associated with the waste water treatment works (this could be controlled by parameter plans).** The proposal will increase the availability of publicly accessible green infrastructure, open space and allotments, which will be of benefit to the existing local community. Noise impacts associated with the East Coast Mainline could be assessed by a Noise Impact Assessment, without the need for an EIA.
10.2 Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	The project site is not allocated for development by the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. The western half of the site is allocated as part of a Green Infrastructure Priority Area (Great Ouse Valley), however no built form is proposed in this area of the site. The provision of blue	NA	

Question	(Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)		(Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)	
		and green infrastructure in this area would be consistent with aims of Local Plan Policy LP3 and should respond to the objectives of the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011). Land to the south of the development site is within the built up area of St Neots. Priory Park is allocated as a Local Green Space by the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan. Harley Industrial Park, Great Paxton to the north east is allocated as an 'Established Employment Area', however this is circa 0.4 miles from the development site and separated by the East Coast Mainline.		
11. LAND STABILITY AND CLIMATE				
11.1 Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	No	Whilst the project would likely be impacted by an extreme climatic condition/occurrence, the location is not considered to be susceptible to the occurrences described. No built form is proposed in Flood Zones 2 and 3.The Flood Risk Assessment submitted with any future planning application would need to demonstrate resilience to future flooding as a result of extreme events linked to climate change.	NA	

Question	(Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)		(Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)	
12. CUMULATIVE EFFECTS				
12.1 Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulation of impacts together during the construction/operation phase?	Yes	Other significant construction projects ongoing in St Neots include: St Neots East (Loves Farm 2) mixed use allocation in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 for up to 3,265 homes and 22ha of employment land. A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvement Scheme. Cumulative impacts could occur in terms of: - Sequential landscape and visual impacts - Traffic impact (air quality, noise and volume of road use) - Carbon emissions - Production of waste - Recreational disturbance to protected sites - Socio economic impacts	No	Having regard to the distance between the proposed development and the other construction projects identified, it is not considered that significant effects will arise for the purposes of EIA. Cumulative effects could be adequately assessed by technical reports without the need for an EIA, including: - **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** - **Air Quality Assessment** - **Transport Assessment** - **Construction and Environmental Management Plan** - **Recreational Impact Assessment** - **Planning Statement**
13. TRANSBOUNDARY EFFECTS				
13.1 Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects?[2]	No	No national transboundary effects are anticipated.	NA	

[2] The Regulations require consideration of the transboundary nature of the impact. Due to the England's geographical location the vast majority of TCPA cases are unlikely to result in transboundary impacts.

14. CONCLUSIONS – ACCORDING TO EIA REGULATIONS SCHEDULE 3

The NPPG states that "Environmental Impact Assessment should not be a barrier to growth and will only apply to a small proportion of projects considered within the town and country planning regime" and "should only apply to those projects which are likely to have significant effects on the environment." The NPPG also provides further elaboration on the thresholds, identifying indicative thresholds for the likely significant effect (Paragraph: 058 Reference ID: 4-058-20150326), which in this case would be:

i. area of the scheme is more than 5 hectares; or
ii. it would provide a total of more than 10,000 sqm of new commercial floorspace; or
iii. the development would have significant urbanising effects in a previously non-urbanised area (e.g. a new development of more than 1,000 dwellings).

Key issues to consider are the physical scale of such developments, potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise.

Characteristics of development

The site comprises 88.6 hectares of agricultural land, however the proposed developable area for residential development is circa 16.3ha, with the remainder of the site proposed for green and blue infrastructure, a cemetery and allotments.

The proposal will result in the development of greenfield land which is currently in agricultural use, but having regard to the size of the site proposed for built development and anticipated soil quality, the loss of agricultural land is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

The majority of the site is located within a Sand and Gravel Mineral Safeguarding Area (as defined by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan), however, having regard to the size of the Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA) which would be sterilised by the proposal (circa 10ha), relative to the total size of the MSA, this is not considered to be a significant effect for the purposes of EIA. Impacts on the MSA could be adequaltly assessed by techincal reports submitted with a future planning application, without the need for EIA.

The proposed development will not require any works which are unusual or complex and accordingly no significant effects are anticipated with regard to production of waste, pollution and nuisance, risk of accidents or risks to human health. Any risks in this regard can therefore be adequately assessed and controlled via any future planning application, without the need for EIA.

A significant change in topography is not anticipated to accommodate the proposed development and whilst the project site has the potential to support protected species and their habitat, it is anticipated that any impact on ecology/biodiversity will be localised and could be adequately assessed, and where necessary mitigated, by surveys and technical reports submitted in support any future planning application, without the need for EIA.

The site is located on the northern edge of St Neots. There are other significant construction projects ongoing in and around St Neots, however, based on the above assessment, it is not considered that significant effects will arise for the purposes of EIA. Cumulative effects could be adequately assessed by technical reports without the need for an EIA.

Location of development

The site is currently agricultural land / floodplain land within the open countryside. Having regard to the size of the developable area of the site (16.3ha) and the supply of alternative agricultural land in the locality, it is not considered that the loss of the site for agricultural purposes would have a significant effect for EIA purposes. No development is proposed within the floodplain. Buildings associated with Brook Farm are located within the site, but it is understood that these are to be retained.

The project site does not form part of any of the environmentally sensitive areas listed under 2 (c) i-vi of Schedule 3 Regulation 5(4) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. Whilst the north western site boundary is adjacent to Little Paxton Pits SSSI, no built development is proposed in this area, with the exception of a possible footbridge. The project site is also

close to St Neots Common SSSI (albeit separated from it by Priory Hill Road and some residential development). As no development is proposed within them, no direct effects on the protected sites are expected. Indirect effects have been considered and given the scale of residential development proposed (relative to the indicative EIA threshold of 1,000 dwellings dwellings in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 058 Reference ID: 4-058-20150326), the intervening distances between built form and the SSSI, and potential mitigation measures, it is not considered that any indirect effects on protected sites would be significant for the purposes of EIA.

There are existing residential properties located to the south of the site (on the opposite side of Priory Hill Road) and Mill Lane allotments are located adjacent to the south western corner of the site. An extension to the existing allotments is proposed. Probable effects upon existing residents have been considered but are not considered to be significant for EIA purposes (having regard to the scale of development proposed and possible mitigation measures).

The project site is located adjacent to the East Coast Mainline and St Neots Waste Water Treatment Centre. Potential noise and odour impacts upon future residents could be adequately assessed by technical reports submitted in support of any future planning application, without the need for EIA.

The anticipated impacts of the proposal with regard to the local landscape and cultural historical/archaeological assets have been assessed above. The project is considered unlikely to have a significant impact in EIA terms upon the landscape and any historical assets, subject to mitigation measures (including a sensitive design incorporating soft landscape buffers). The full archaeological potential of the site is unknown at the time of writing, however, finds within the area and cropmarks located on the site indicate that it has very high archaeological potential. Further assessment, including geophysical survey and trenches evlauation, should reveal the extent of any archaeological assets and any mitigation required.

Characteristics of the potential impact
Probable environmental impacts, which will need to be assessed as part of any future planning application include but are not limited to: landscape and visual impacts, impacts on ecology / biodiversity, traffic generation / highways, pollution (including odour, noise, light and emissions), flood risk and drainage, impacts on heritage assets. It is considered that these impacts (including cumulative impacts) would be generally localised in their extent and in some cases the impacts would be limited to the construction period. The expected onset, duration, frequency, intensity and complexity of the impacts are unlikely to be substantive or strategic at district wide level. Furthermore, it may be possible to reduce some impacts by way of mitigation - the specifics of which would be identified following a full assessment of the anticipated impacts of the project.

As impacts are expected to be localised the population size affected by the proposals would not be significant in EIA terms. The project would increase the population of the town but not on a scale that would result in significant social and economic effects over a wide area. The likely extent of impacts associated with the proposal is not therefore considered to be strategic or substantive in EIA terms.

The proposal will not result in any transboundary impacts considered to be strategic or substantive in EIA terms.

Conclusion
It is considered, in light of available information, that the proposal would not have a significant impact in EIA terms and that any impacts would be more localised to the site. As a result, the Local Planning Authority consider that an ES is not required to accompany any future planning application under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 as amended. There are nevertheless a number of factors (including those outlined above) which would have to be fully assessed should a planning application be submitted.

15. SCREENING DECISION		
If a SO/SD has been provided do you agree with it?	NA	
Is it necessary to issue a SD?	Yes	
Is an ES required?	No	
16. ASSESSMENT (EIA REGS SCHEDULE 2 DEVELOPMENT)	**OUTCOME**	
Is likely to have significant effects on the environment	ES required	
<u>Not</u> likely to have significant effects on the environment	ES not required	✓
More information is required to inform direction	Request further info	

NAME	Hollie Renney
DATE	03.06.2025