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STOREFIELD GROUP LIMITED

PHOENIX PARKWAY

HABITATS RISK ASSESSMENT

JANUARY 2024

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DATE ISSUED:	**JANUARY 2024**
JOB NUMBER:	**GM11841**
REPORT NUMBER:	**006**
VERSION:	**V1.0**
STATUS:	**FINAL**

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 The Storefield Group Ltd (Storefield) has commissioned Wardell Armstrong LLP to prepare an environmental permit application for their proposed development in Corby, North Northamptonshire.

1.1.2 The Site has been identified as a strategic site for employment development within local planning policy. In order to make the site suitable for use as an industrial and commercial development, Storefield propose to raise and level the site to create a suitable load-bearing development platform.

1.1.3 The site was formally a liquid waste treatment facility, for which the permit has been surrendered. Additionally, the site is also partially located on a landfill site which is currently in formal closure. Prior to this, the site was quarried to remove material for use in the Corby Integrated Iron and Steel works.

1.1.4 It is proposed that the development platform will be constructed of approximately 686,000m³ of suitable waste materials. The scheme has been designed to require the minimum volume of suitable waste materials, which will be recovered through the permanent deposit of these materials.

1.1.5 This Habitats Risk Assessment identifies the potential risk to nearby protected habitats that may arise through site activities and the mitigation measures that will be implemented. The risk assessment follows the source-pathway-receptor model, as outlined in the Environment Agency guidance on 'Risk Assessments for your Environmental Permit'[1].

1.1.6 Section 2 of this document provides details of the site location and provides a description of designated and/or protected habitats within 2km of the site.

1.1.7 The Habitats Risk Assessment is provided in Section 3. This provides the potential risks from the activities on site, who may be affected and how (pathway), the mitigation measures that will be implemented and an assessment of the overall risk.

1.1.8 Section 4 provides a summary of the Risk Assessment.

[1] Risk assessments for your environmental permit - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

2 SITE SETTING AND ACTIVITIES

2.1 Site Setting

2.1.1 The site is situated north of Willowbrook Industrial Estate, near to Corby Town, North Northamptonshire. The site is centred at SP 90128 90860 and the nearest postcode is NN17 5BE.

2.1.2 The site is approximately 20.5 ha in size, and currently comprises of scrubland, incorporating a closed former landfill (Corby Tubeworks), which is in formal closure. Additionally, there is an area of land which was formerly permitted as a liquid waste treatment facility. The Waste Management Licence originally issued for the landfill did not require the landfill to be capped nor specify a final restoration profile.

2.1.3 The site is bound to the south by the river Willow Brook North, with Willowbrook East Industrial Estate adjacent to the southern boundary of the site. An area of scrubland with a commercial development sits between the area and the Phoenix Parkway Road. Earlstrees Industrial Estate sits approximately 370m west of the permit boundary.

2.1.4 To the north, Mitchell Road runs parallel to the site boundary and forms a route from Phoenix Parkway to Rockingham Motor Speedway. Beyond Mitchell Road there are several industrial and commercial premises, breaking into a more rural setting beyond these. An area of vegetation borders the east of the site.

2.1.5 The nearest residential properties are located approximately 750m southwest of the site boundary on Pen Green Lane, beyond Phoenix Parkway and a railway line.

2.2 Proposed Site Activities

2.2.1 The site lies within the Rockingham Enterprise Area, identified as a strategic site for employment development. However, due to the existing varied topography, essential engineering and enabling works are required to ensure its suitability for development.

2.2.2 The intention is to import suitable waste materials to deposit at the site to create a more uniform development platform. Incoming waste will comprise of construction and demolition wastes and IBA, which will be largely inert. The waste will undergo strict waste acceptance procedures and only suitable wastes will be deposited.

2.2.3 The works are expected to take between four to five years to complete.

3 PROTECTED HABITATS AND SPECIES

3.1 Species

3.1.1 A number of field surveys were undertaken in 2018 and 2019 and focussed on reptiles, amphibians (great crested newts), and invertebrates. The surveys found that GCN are present within a pond adjacent to the site. The site has suitable terrestrial habitat for newts, but no suitable breeding habitat was identified.

3.1.2 Section 5 provides further detail regarding the location of the GCN in relation to the site, and the mitigation measures which will be implemented to both protect GCN from the site activities and enhance GCN habitat near to the site.

3.2 Habitats within 2km of the Site

3.2.1 Data available on DEFRA'S Magic Map Tool identified that there are no European Sites including Ramsar Sites, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within 2km of the site. The nearest SSSI is Cowthick Quarry SSSI, located approximately 3km to the southeast.

3.2.2 Magic Map identified pockets of protected deciduous woodland to the east, west and south of the site, the largest area being to the east. The deciduous woodland is protected under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41, Habitats of Principal Importance.

3.2.3 Various ecology surveys and reports have been prepared to support the planning application, including an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey prepared by REC in February 2018, which included information provided by the Northamptonshire Biodiversity Records Centre. Of this information, a number of designated Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) were identified as being within 2km of the site.

3.2.4 A summary of the habitats and the approximate distance and direction from the site boundary is provided in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Protected Habitats within 2km of the Site

Receptor	Receptor Type	Distance/Direction	National Grid Reference
Deciduous Woodland (Priority Habitat Inventory)	Protected Habitat	Adjacent to the site boundary to the east, west and south	SP906909
Brookfield Plantation LWS	Protected Habitat	340m, north	SP896918
Brookfield Plantation Cutting LWS	Protected Habitat	640m, northwest	SP890921

Table 3.1: Protected Habitats within 2km of the Site			
Receptor	**Receptor Type**	**Distance/Direction**	**National Grid Reference**
Corby Tunnel Quarries LWS	Protected Habitat	740m, northwest	SP893915
West Cutting LWS	Protected Habitat	1.3km, northwest	SP887916
Rockingham Wood LWS	Protected Habitat	1.5km, northwest	SP885918
Plantation Meadow LWS	Protected Habitat	1.5km, northwest	SP888922
Corby Old Quarry Gullet LWS	Protected Habitat	1.8km, east	SP926908

3.2.5 The following information regarding the LWS's has been derived from record data provided from Northamptonshire Biodiversity Records Centre.

3.3 Brookfield Plantation LWS

3.3.1 The Brookfield Plantation spans an area of approximately 123.2 hectares and supports a large mixed plantation on old quarry workings. The site is designated due to the presence of 22 woodland plants and a rich calcareous/neutral grassland ride system and ponds. Sycamore, larch and Norway spruce dominate the plantation with margins of varied scrub enclosing compartments of woodland. The most diverse rides support a variety of grasses and herbs including common knapweed, selfheal, common mouse-ear and red bartsia. Two deep pools are present within the site with lots of fish, alongside reports of newts and frogs and a large number of notable invertebrates.

3.4 Brookfield Plantation Cutting LWS

3.4.1 The Brookfield Plantation Cutting spans an area of approximately 15.4 hectares and comprises a disused railway line with steep banks and deep cutting. The site supports Lowland Calcareous Grassland with 18 calcareous species and 16 neutral grassland species. The cutting bound the adjacent Brookfield Plantation LWS to the north and west and provides access to the plantation. Flooded at the north-east end, the cutting supports a deep pool with numerous fish and aquatic insects. The cutting is notable for the herb rich assemblage on the slopes alongside a good variety of scrub.

3.5 Corby Tunnel Quarries LWS

3.5.1 The Corby Tunnel Quarries LWS spans approximately 6 hectares and is set within the Brookfield Plantation LWS. The site comprises two deep ironstone galleys from quarrying operations either side of the Corby Tunnel. The LWS designation is due to the presence of Lowland Calcareous Grassland containing 14 calcareous indicators species alongside seasonally wet areas and scrub.

3.6 West Cutting LWS

3.6.1 The West Cutting LWS spaces approximately 0.7 hectares and is adjacent to Rockingham Wood LWS and Brookfield Plantation Cutting LWS. The site comprises a railway cutting supporting calcareous grassland alongside scrub and trees. Grass snake, green hairstreak, essex skipper and small skipper have been recorded onsite.

3.7 Rockingham Wood LWS

3.7.1 Rockingham Wood comprises mixed woodland with grassy rides and spans approximately 16.6 hectares and is adjacent to Brookfield Plantation Cutting LWS. The site comprises a patch of ancient woodland replanted with conifers alongside some older oaks and typical ancient woodland ground flora. The site forms part of a larger block of woodlands composed of Brookfield Plantation LWS, West Cutting Local Wildlife Site LWS**,** Boundary Plantation LWS and Brookfield Plantation Cutting LWS. Tree species present include oak, ash, sycamore, Norway maple, larch and alder alongside an array of woodland ground flora including common bluebell and dogs' mercury.

3.8 Plantation Meadow LWS

3.8.1 Plantation Meadow LWS is located to the north of the plantations, and spans approximately 3.25 hectares. This site supports a grassy hay meadow, designated due to the presence of Lowland Meadow with 6 neutral grassland indicators.

3.9 Corby Old Quarry Gulley LWS

3.9.1 Corby Old Quarry Gulley LWS spans approximately 22.2 hectares, and comprises a roughly regraded large, open-cast ironstone quarry. The site supports areas of pasture, woodland and several ponds and lakes. Designation is due to the presence of Lowland Calcareous Grassland with 18 neutral indicators species and 12 calcareous indicators. Large areas of floral rich grassland provide very good insect habitat, species present include six-spot burnet moths, cinnabar moth, red admiral, small and large skippers, holly blue, gatekeeper and a species of hawkmoth. A large lake onsite with almost an acre of reed bed supported black tailed skimmer, migrant hawker, azure damselfly and blue-tailed damselfly. A recent survey revealed the site to be of poor/little botanical interest with little invertebrate interest.

4 HABITAT RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1.1 The Environment Agency guidance identifies the following potential impacts which may be caused by activities:

- pollution from contaminated runoff;
- habitat loss caused by pollutants;
- smothering by particulates;
- disturbance by noise, smoke and odour; and
- physical damage, for example from litter.

4.1.2 Contaminated run-off can also cause impacts on surface waters, including eutrophication and toxic contamination.

4.1.3 Table 4.1 below identifies the potential risks that may arise from the deposit of the waste and considers the possible receptors and pathways. The risk assessment shows how these risks are minimised by preventing the hazard at source or by providing measures to break the pathway and prevent pollution migrating toward receptors.

4.1.4 The risk assessment demonstrates how all identified hazards that could cause harm will be subject to strict preventative control measures. The scheme has been designed to ensure that potential emissions of particulates, noise and odour are minimised to be contained within the site boundary as far as possible and will not cause harm to sensitive ecological receptors.

4.1.5 The site will be subject to frequent monitoring and inspection to ensure mitigation measures are keeping dust emissions to a minimum. Records will be kept of inspections and any actions taken to resolve any identified emissions.

Table 4.1: Habitat Risk Assessment							
Hazard	**Receptor**	**Pathway**	**Consequence**	**Probability of exposure**	**What is the overall risk**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Residual Risk**
Dust/particulate matter from site activities (handling and depositing of inert waste)	Nearby deciduous woodland and LWS	Windblown	Settlement of dust on flora, smothering of plants	Medium	Medium	• Water will be available via a water bowser on site to dampen down dust if required. Bowser will be maintained so that it always has adequate water supply to be used immediately as required. • Dust will be visually monitored daily as part of the environmental monitoring regime. • During periods of prolonged dry windy weather, monitoring frequency will increase, and dampening down will occur as necessary • Vehicles delivering waste will be sheeted/covered when entering and exiting the site. • Activities that have potential to produce large amounts of dust will be postponed in the event of high winds. • On site speed limits will be enforced to prevent the generation of dust by vehicle movements on entrance/exit roads. • Drop heights of materials will be minimised • Wheel wash on site to be utilised by vehicles existing the site • Site roads will be properly maintained and swept as necessary • Site plant will be properly maintained to minimise emissions • The site will operate in accordance with a Dust Management Plan approved by the Environment Agency	Low
Noise from plant, tipping and handling of materials, vehicles entering and exiting the site	Nearby habitats, local wildlife	Through the air	Disturbance of nearby habitats and local wildlife	Medium	Medium	• Plant will be fitted with noise suppression features (e.g. silencers) as appropriate. • Where vehicle reversing alarms are required, 'smart' reversing alarms should be utilised that produce sound at a volume relative to background level. • All plant will be maintained in accordance with manufactures recommendations. • Particular attention will be made to noise suppression equipment such as silencers and acoustic panels. • A speed limit of 10mph will be enforced • Site plant will be switched off when not in use • The site is located in close proximity to existing industrial receptors, and it is not expected the site operations will produce noise levels	Low

Table 4.1: Habitat Risk Assessment							
Hazard	**Receptor**	**Pathway**	**Consequence**	**Probability of exposure**	**What is the overall risk**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Residual Risk**
						which exceed existing noise levels. Nevertheless, care will be taken to implement the above mitigation measures, which will be reviewed as necessary.	
Odorous materials in incoming waste	Local wildlife, nearby habitats	Through the air	Disturbance	Low	Low	• The wastes that are to be accepted present a low risk of odour (inert wastes and incinerator bottom ash), no biodegradable wastes will be accepted. • Any loads containing odorous material will be rejected and removed from site at the earliest possible opportunity, and stringent waste acceptance procedures will be in place. • Olfactory inspections for odour will be undertaken daily as part of the general site monitoring regime. • If any noticeable odours are discovered, an investigation will be undertaken to determine the source and where appropriate remedial action will be undertaken.	Low
Litter within incoming waste or generated by site staff	Local wildlife, nearby habitats	Windblown, across the ground	Loss of amenity, potential harm to wildlife	Low	Low	• Strict waste acceptance procedures will be in place, in accordance with the Operating Techniques and the Environmental Management System. • The permitted waste does not include wastes which will comprise of litter (e.g. packaging). Only inert materials will be accepted. • If non-conforming waste is identified it will be handpicked and stored in an enclosed receptacle awaiting removal from site. • Wastes that are produced by site operatives will be stored in secure, enclosed containers awaiting removal off site.	Low
Loss of habitat	Nearby protected deciduous woodland	Site operations	Loss of habitat	Low	Low	• Deposit of waste and associated works such as site clearance will not encroach upon the areas of deciduous woodland. • All habitats adjacent to the site boundary are being retained and will be protected from enabling and construction works through the installation of fencing, which will prevent accidental machinery ingress.	Low
Contaminated run-off	Nearby habitats,	Across the ground		Low	Low	• Predominantly inert wastes to be accepted and deposited on site, and Incinerator Bottom Ash waste will be tested to ensure it meets	Low

Table 4.1: Habitat Risk Assessment							
Hazard	**Receptor**	**Pathway**	**Consequence**	**Probability of exposure**	**What is the overall risk**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Residual Risk**
	surface waters, local wildlife					the Waste Acceptance Criteria prior to deposit. Low risk of contamination in run-off. • Surface water management controls will be in place, comprising of surface water trenches constructed as the platform is constructed. These will collect surface water and allow the surface water to collect and soak away rather than run-off.	

5 GREAT CRESTED NEWTS

5.1.1 Consultation with the local record centre included 46 records of great crested newts (GCN) within 2km of the site boundary. Many of these records are concentrated in and around the nearby Corby Old Quarry Gilley LWS approximately 1.8km east of the site.

5.1.2 Further records are concentrated approximately 700m east of the site, associated with ponds in close proximity to a stretch of dismantled railway line. The closest record is approximately 620m north-west associated with a pond within Corby Tunnel Quarries LWS.

5.1.3 In addition, the land adjacent to the northwest of the site is used as a receptor site for GCN under a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) (Ref. EPSM2009-822) for the installation of Corby Northern Orbital Road which runs adjacent to the northern site boundary. Three ponds were created as part of this work, though only one still holds water. A population of GCN is known to be approximately 600m east of the site based on previous translocation completed within this area for previous planning applications.

5.1.4 Great crested newt is fully protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2018, and partially protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The legislation means that it is an offence to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture GCN;
- Damage or destroy a breading site or resting place used by GCN;
- Disturbing GCN when it is using a place of shelter and protection; or
- Obstruct access to a breeding site or resting place.

5.1.5 Impacts to GCN will be mitigated under licence. Habitats on land adjacent to the east will be enhanced and managed in the long-term, with connectivity between enhanced and existing habitats will be strengthened. Mitigation to reduce impacts to the invertebrate assemblage will also be undertaken during enabling works.

5.1.6 Amphibian fencing around the entirety of the site boundary will be installed and subsequent capture and relocation of GCN. A receptor site will be established on the land adjacent to the east of the site. Habitats in this area are already suitable for GCN but will be enhanced through the creation of hibernacula (log and rubble piles) and the creation of ponds to provide additional breeding habitat. Habitats in the receptor site will be subject to long-term management (which would be a condition of the

mitigation licence). The retained and enhanced Willow Brook corridor will provide connectivity for GCN between the receptor site to the east and the existing habitat to the west.

5.1.7 These mitigation measures will avoid the killing or injuring of newts and reduce the extent of habitat loss during the enabling works. The residual effects to the GCN are assessed as being permanent positive significant at the local level.

6 SUMMARY

6.1.1 Extensive field surveys have been conducted as part of the planning permission application process. GCN are protected under licence. To protect GCN at a local level, amphibian fencing will be erected around the site perimeter and the nearby habitat will be enhanced with specific regard to GCN.

6.1.2 Dispersion and settlement of dust, for example dust arising from stockpiles of inert waste materials becoming dry and wind whipped, which would have the potential to smother leaves within nearby habitats. However, the site will operate in accordance with a Dust Management Plan, which includes dust suppression and mitigation measures to control dust, particularly during periods of dry windy weather.

6.1.3 The site is located within an industrial area, and noise emissions are not expected to be greater than the existing noise levels within the local area to the site. Nevertheless, control measures will be implemented to monitor and control noise emissions.

6.1.4 Due to the nature of the materials to be accepted and deposited on site being inert in nature, disturbance of habitats and local wildlife from odour and litter is considered to be low risk.

6.1.5 The site will be inspected on a daily basis. Site staff will carry out a visual and olfactory assessment around the site boundary to check for emissions of litter, odour, noise, mud or dust. Records of these checks will be made in the site diary and records will be kept in accordance with the record keeping procedures.

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