

STRIDE TREGLOWN



Ellel Holiday Village LLP

Environmental Statement - Non-Technical Summary

Ellel Holiday Village, Lancaster

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1. Introduction

- 2.1.2 An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken in respect of proposals to develop land on land at Ellel Grange located to the south of Galgate, Lancaster for a holiday village / leisure destination.
- 2.1.3 The EIA has been carried out in accordance with the Town and Country (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.
- 2.1.4 The assessment has been coordinated and the Environmental Statement (ES) authored by Stride Treglown on behalf of the applicant, Ellel Holiday Village LLP. The detailed assessment work has been undertaken by a number of specialist consultants.
- 2.1.5 This report is a non-technical summary of the main ES. It provides a summary of the main environmental effects that are likely to arise from the project.

2. Competent Expert

- 2.2.1 As noted above, the Regulations governing the EIA process were amended in 2017. In order to ensure that the overall coverage and quality of Environmental Statements submitted for consideration is maintained at an appropriate level, Regulation 18 introduced the requirement for developers to confirm that their appointed consultant team are suitably qualified and can be considered to be 'competent experts'. Regulation 18(5) states:

In order to ensure the completeness and quality of the environmental statement—

(a) the developer must ensure that the environmental statement is prepared by competent experts; and

(b) the environmental statement must be accompanied by a statement from the developer outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts.

- 2.2.2 In accordance with this Regulation, a standalone statement has been prepared and is submitted as part of the planning application and is provided to demonstrate the competence of the team undertaking the work

3. Site Description

- 2.3.1 The application site lies some 0.54km south of the village of Galgate and is split into two parts by the Lancaster Canal.
- 2.3.2 The 'Entrance Site' is a loosely rectangular shape measuring 18.5 hectares. It lies immediately to the west of the A6, adjacent to Hampson Green roundabout which itself, provides direct access to Junction 33 of the M6 in both and northerly and southerly direction. The existing vehicular access to Ellel Grange bisects the southern part of the site.
- 2.3.3 The main site lies to the west of the Lancaster Canal and immediately south of the 'Glasson Branch' and extends to approximately 70 Hectares. The site excludes Ellel Grange itself but includes land to the north, west and south of it and notably, the Home Farm – a collection of farmhouse, cottages and vernacular agricultural buildings set adjacent to a walled garden.
- 2.3.4 Land uses on both sites are largely agricultural grazing interspersed with stands of woodland. Several public footpaths bisect the site, providing access to the Lancaster Canal, Cockerham and a number of farmsteads.

- 2.3.5 There are two listed buildings within the site, Ellel Grange Bridge and Double Bridge, which are both Grade II listed. Adjacent to the site lies Ellel Grange and Redwards (Grade II) whilst further to the south lie Kings Lee Chapel (Grade II*) and the Preston Family Mausoleum, Church of St Mary (Grade II). The landscape immediately surrounding the site to the west includes a Grade II listed Park and Garden, a conservation area and a number of listed buildings. The most prominent elements in the views being the Grade I listed Ashton Memorial and the Grade II listed Lancaster Moor Hospital to the west and north of the Site respectively.
- 2.3.6 The site does not include or lie close to a Conservation Area and has no specific landscape or policy allocation.
- 2.3.7 A site location plan is included as an appendix to the main ES and further detailed analysis of the site is set out in the Planning, Design and Access Statement which accompanies the planning application.

4. Proposed Development

- 2.4.1 The proposed development which is the subject of the outline planning application and considered in this Environmental Statement is for a new holiday village at Home Farm. As the application is made in outline the exact form and quantum of development is subject to future reserved matters applications to be submitted if outline planning permission is granted.
- 2.4.2 Despite this, for the purposes of undertaking technical and environmental impact assessment, the proposals submitted are for the following quantum of development:
- Up to 450 lodges (2/3/4 bed and studios)
 - 27,000sq f of new and refurbished outbuildings associated with the holiday park
 - 80,000 sq ft of commercial uses at the market place (leisure/retail/F&B/hotel/)

5. Environmental Effects

- 2.5.1 The EIA has considered the potential for environmental effects across a number of fields, specifically: landscape and visual impact; ecology; highways and transportation; air quality; cultural heritage and climate change. The following sections provide a non-technical overview of the work undertaken and findings.

LVIA

- 2.5.2 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), carried out in accordance with Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition, (GLVIA 3), investigates the potential impacts of proposed residential development on agricultural land at Ellel Grange, Galgate, Lancaster. The landscape receptors, visual receptors and the viewpoint locations were agreed with the local planning authority.
- 2.5.3 The site and surrounding area are identified by Natural England as falling within National Landscape Character Area (NCA) 31 - Morecambe Coast and Lune Estuary. The NCA is a relatively small and low-lying character area. The intrinsic feature of landscape importance identified in this character area is the coastal zone and Lune Estuary (not including the site). The site sits inland from these coastal areas in a pastoral agricultural landscape south of Galgate.

Potential Landscape Effects

The proposal development would introduce new areas of publicly accessible open spaces, new trees and woodland, an eco-park, a new wetland habitat, and enhance biodiversity and wildlife habitat. As well as restored field boundaries, and new tree planting in line with the Landscape Strategy as set out but Lancashire County Council. In particular the proposals would:

- Conserve the hedgerow and woodland network
- Enhance the number of rural landscape features
- Conserve distinctive field patterns and related landscape features and landforms,
- Conserve remnants of former agricultural habitat mosaics,
- Conserve remaining field ponds,
- Enhance the river corridor landscapes
- Enhance opportunities for informal recreation
- Restore, retain, manage and replant hedgerows and hedgerow trees
- Restore broadleaved woodlands particularly in the vicinity of watercourses

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment considers that there would be a moderate – minor beneficial effect on the landscape and its context.

Potential landscape effects are not considered to be significant.

Potential visual effects

- 2.5.4 Due to the undulating landscape and the existing topography of the visual envelope of the site is generally limited to the site and its immediate setting.
- 2.5.5 Upon maturity of the proposed tree planting and once the development has integrated in the wider landscape context, the visual effects of the proposals would range from moderate adverse - minor adverse and in some cases minor adverse - negligible.
- 2.5.6 Where the effects are considered to be moderate and the proposals are visible, these views are experienced by receptors engaging in recreation activity, experiencing views towards recreational facilities. Therefore, the potential visual effects are not considered to be significant.

Cumulative Effects

- 2.5.7 Consideration has been given to the cumulative effects of the development on the site along with any adjacent potential future proposals. Through liaison with the Local Planning Authority, a number of cumulative sites were agreed and assessed within the LVIA.
- 2.5.8 The outline application ref 19/01135/OUT Land North East of Ballrigg Lane, Lancaster, and the majority of the allocation sites lie beyond the 2km LVIA study area. Of the identified committed development and allocated sites considered within the LVIA, only Site Allocation LPSA 842 (Junction 33 Auction Market) lies within the 2km study area.

- 2.5.9 Collectively the application site and the allocation site make up a small portion of the overall regional landscape character areas within which they are located. The cumulative effects of the two developments on the Landscape Character Area would not be considered significant.
- 2.5.10 By virtue of the allocation of the land to the north of the application site, the character of the site and its immediate setting is expected to change. The development on the application site would be in line with these future proposed changes. The proposed development has been appropriately designed and masterplanned to ensure there will be beneficial effects on the landscape and its immediate setting, and landscape features. It is assumed that any development on the allocation site would also be appropriately designed with suitable mitigation measures to ensure any adverse effects are reduced, or where possible effects could be beneficial, such as improved landscape features. Notwithstanding this the proposed development on the application site would not amplify any adverse effects arising from development on the allocation site. If appropriately designed, the development of the two sites have the potential to have beneficial effects on the landscape setting and landscape features. The cumulative effects are therefore not considered to be significant.
- 2.5.11 The two developments will be visible from the visual receptors identified above. Both proposed developments on the application site and the allocation site will have adverse effects on the visual receptors. However, with appropriate landscape design, mitigation measures and landscape management the cumulative visual effects would reduce with time and would not be significant.

Ecology

- 2.5.12 The scope of the ecology assessment was agreed via the EIA Scoping Opinion, in consultation with Officers (and their technical advisors) of Lancaster City Council, the Greater Manchester Ecological Unit and Natural England.
- 2.5.13 The following ecological features were scoped in to assessment: Morecambe Bay Ramsar Site; Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA; Morecambe Bay SAC; Bowland Fells SPA; Calf Hill & Cragg Woods SAC; Lune Estuary SSSI; Ellel Grange Woods BHS; Lancaster Canal BHS; semi-natural woodland (Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland and Wet Woodland) and plantation woodland; trees; ditches; hedgerows; wetland complex (Lowland Fen and Rush Pasture); neutral semi-improved grassland; improved grassland; unimproved acid grassland (Lowland Dry Acid Grassland); inland rock outcrop; ponds; invertebrates; nesting birds; foraging birds; badgers; foraging and commuting bats; roosting bats (trees and Home Farm buildings); otter; hedgehog; and, brown hare.
- 2.5.14 Mitigation measures have been designed to reduce effects on these ecological features during construction and in operation. Taking into account mitigation measures to minimise negative effects, negative significant residual effects are still anticipated for the following ecological features: Ellel Grange Wood BHS; woodland; hedgerows; wetland complex (Lowland Fen and Rush Pasture); neutral semi-improved grassland; improved grassland; invertebrates; nesting birds; foraging birds; badgers; foraging and commuting bats; and, brown hare.
- 2.5.15 For these features, measures have been designed to compensate for the residual significant effects which could not be mitigated. Despite compensation measures, negative significant residual effects are still anticipated on the following ecological features: improved grassland; and, brown hare. Improved grassland and brown hare are considered to be of site importance, being common and widespread in the local area.
- 2.5.16 Although there will be no significant residual effects on semi-improved neutral grassland, inland rock outcrop and foraging birds (species favouring open grassland only), the development will not result in enhancement of these features.

- 2.5.17 Development proposals will result in enhancement of the following ecological features: Ellel Grange Woods BHS; Lancaster Canal BHS; semi-natural woodland (Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland and Wet Woodland) and plantation woodland; trees; ditches; hedgerows; wetland complex (Lowland Fen and Rush Pasture); unimproved acid grassland (Lowland Dry Acid Grassland); ponds; invertebrates; nesting birds; foraging birds; badgers; foraging and commuting bats; roosting bats (trees and Home Farm buildings); otter and hedgehog.
- 2.5.18 In parallel to this EclA the Defra 2.0 Biodiversity Calculator has been used to assess the habitat value in biodiversity units before and after development and to calculate the change as a percentage. The result is Biodiversity Net Gain of: Habitat units, 39.91 (13.84%); Hedgerow units 8.79 (38%) and, River units 0 (0%).
- 2.5.19 Although negative significant residual effects are anticipated on improved grassland and brown hare, the development will result in enhancement of ecology overall, due to the extensive areas of new habitat being created. This is further evidenced by the result of the Defra 2.0 Biodiversity Calculator.
- 2.5.20 Table 7.14 of the main ES provides an overall summary of the findings of the ecological impact assessment.

Transport

- 2.5.21 The Highways and Transportation Chapter considers the environmental impacts of the traffic associated with the proposed development. The assessment has been undertaken in line with Department for Transport (DfT) and Institute of Environmental Assessment (IEA, formerly IEMA) guidelines. IEMA guidelines sets thresholds where environmental effect can be felt by a receptor or location. IEMA provides a significance threshold of 30% increase in traffic or 10% increase in traffic if the location is particularly sensitive to change. Any changes in traffic below this will not be significant or perceptible to other road users.
- 2.5.22 Environmental impacts from changes in traffic movement can cause effects to perceptions of severance, delay to drivers, pedestrians and public transport, pedestrian and cyclist amenity levels, accident patterns, dust and dirt from large vehicles, and issues with transporting hazardous loads. The impact of the proposed development on these different elements has been fully examined in the Chapter 9. The assessment has been undertaken in line with best practice and standard assessment methods.
- 2.5.23 To provide a more detailed examination of the transport effects of the proposed development a Transport Assessment has also been produced. The Transport Assessment is included in Appendix 8.1 of the ES.
- 2.5.24 The assessment looks at the scale of the impact for both the construction phase and the operational phase of the proposed development. It also examines what will happen when the proposed development impacts are combined with the effects from other future developments in the area that are programmed to come forward in the future. The developments included in this assessment scenario either have planning permission or are identified in the Local Plan.
- 2.5.25 To allow a comparison, the existing and future base conditions of the surrounding transport, access and highway networks have also been examined. This audit includes a review of traffic flows, road safety information and access to the site by walking, cycling and public transport.
- 2.5.26 The impact of construction traffic has been considered. The effects from the construction phase will be short in duration and will be mitigated by a Construction Management Plan. This Plan will clearly set out measures to minimise impacts in the local area. This will include strategies to keep other road users safe, reduce large vehicle impacts and reduce the dust and dirt from large vehicles affecting other areas. Following the introduction of site practices through the Construction Management Plan, the effects during construction will be negligible. These residual effects will be limited in duration and are limited in impact.

- 2.5.27 A forecast has been made of the traffic flows that will be generated by the proposed development. Chapter 8 shows that when compared to the future traffic flows already on the highway network the level of change will not be significant when assessed in the context of IEMA guidance. It is shown that at all locations, including the Hampson Roundabout, the level of change in traffic will be below 10%.
- 2.5.28 The assessment shows that the impact of the proposal will be either minor-adverse, negligible or minor-beneficial during the operational phase. This is due in part to development traffic increases below IEMA significance thresholds and also because of the safety enhancements embedded in the proposed vehicle access proposals. Further mitigation is proposed including the adoption of a Travel Plan and the introduction of a bus link to the centre of Lancaster. A summary of residual effects is also set out in table 8-9 of the ES.
- 2.5.29 The proposed mitigation measures have the effect of reducing significance of all adverse impacts to negligible for both the construction and operational phases. The proposal will have moderate-minor-beneficial and minor-beneficial effects on road safety and pedestrian/cyclist amenity.
- 2.5.30 The cumulative effects of committed developments and Local Plan site allocations is included in the main assessment, as is standard practice for assessing traffic impacts. Therefore, the conclusions drawn above are the same.

Air Quality

- 2.5.31 The Proposed Development has the potential to cause air quality impacts as a result of fugitive dust emissions during construction and road traffic exhaust emissions associated with vehicles travelling to and from the site during operation. In addition, the proposals have the potential to expose future occupants to any existing air quality issues at the site. An Air Quality Assessment was therefore undertaken in order to determine baseline conditions, consider site suitability for the proposed end-use and assess potential effects as a result of the scheme.
- 2.5.32 During the construction phase of the development there is the potential for air quality impacts as a result of fugitive dust emissions from the site. These were assessed in accordance with relevant guidance. Assuming good practice dust control measures are implemented, the residual significance of potential air quality effects from dust generated by earthworks, construction and trackout activities was predicted to be not significant.
- 2.5.33 The Proposed Development has the potential to expose future occupants to elevated pollution levels and impact existing air quality in the vicinity of the site during operation. Dispersion modelling was therefore undertaken in order to predict pollutant concentrations as a result of emissions from the local highway network. Results were subsequently verified using local monitoring data.
- 2.5.34 Impacts on pollutant concentrations as a result of operational phase road vehicle exhaust emissions were predicted to be negligible at all sensitive receptor locations.
- 2.5.35 Following consideration of the relevant issues, air quality effects as a result of the operation of the development were considered to be not significant.
- 2.5.36 In order to further limit vehicle exhaust emissions associated with the development, a number of mitigation measures will be adopted in accordance with the requirements of the Lancaster City Council 'Low Emissions and Air Quality' Planning Advisory Note. As the site is not located within an Air Quality Management Area and predicted impacts as a result of operational phase road vehicle exhaust emissions were predicted to be negligible at all receptor locations, it is considered that standard mitigation measures will be sufficient to reduce any potential air quality impacts to a minimum. As the current planning application is for outline consent with all matters reserved, except for access, some specific measures cannot be finalised at the time of this assessment. As such, it is recommended that a condition is attached to any forthcoming permission requiring a Low Emissions Strategy to be produced prior to occupation.

- 2.5.37 Based on the assessment results, the overall significance of potential air quality effects was classified as negligible, which is considered to be not significant.

Cultural Heritage

- 2.5.38 The Archaeological and Cultural Heritage assessment prepared by Greenlane Archaeology assesses the potential for the development to give rise to effects on the archaeological resource. It also devises suitable mitigation methods to reduce any adverse effect and enhance any beneficial effect. This examined the known and unknown archaeological resource of the surrounding area and was carried out through the examination of both primary and secondary sources, including the Lancashire Historic Environment Record. A brief site visit was also carried out in order to assess the condition of remains identified during the desk-based assessment and identify any constraints to further archaeological work.
- 2.5.39 A study area around the proposed development site was examined, which is notably cut through by the line of the canal running between Preston and Kendal via Lancaster, and bounded on the north side by a branch leading to Glasson Dock. There are therefore many features relating to this within the study area such as accommodation bridges and locks, but earlier remains are present, from the Neolithic onwards, including a number of earthworks forming parts of earlier field systems, some of which may relate to a medieval grange that probably formerly stood on the site of what is now called Home Farm but was originally Ellel Grange. The area saw some substantial alteration in the later 19th century when a new mansion, the current Ellel Grange, was constructed, which also probably led to the construction of the present Home Farm.
- 2.5.40 The mapping evidence shows that the site has been largely open fields since at least the early 19th century, but the available Lidar data shows a number of earthworks that either relate to these or to earlier field systems as well as the line of the North West Ethylene Pipeline, which was laid through the centre of the site between 1988 and 1993. The site visit revealed a small number of additional features of archaeological interest within the proposed development area, as well as allowing an opportunity to examine those revealed in the Lidar data and identify the extent or presence of any constraints to further archaeological work, the most significant of which is the ethylene pipeline.
- 2.5.41 An assessment of the significance and potential of the site with regard both known and unknown archaeological remains suggests that the majority of known archaeological finds or features within the proposed development area are of relatively low significance, with the exception of the larger areas of earthworks forming small field systems and the probable medieval grange that stood on the site of the present Home Farm. There is clearly, based on the known archaeology of the wider area, the potential for other, as yet unknown, remains to be present and since it is evident that any development of the site would adversely affect both known and unknown archaeological remains, some further mitigation would be worthwhile. Without mitigation any archaeological remains that are present within the development area, both known and unknown, would be likely to be severely affected or even destroyed.
- 2.5.42 The most efficient form of initial mitigation over such a large area would be geophysical survey of the more suitable areas, but topographical survey of the extant earthworks, and recording of the standing buildings at Home Farm, assuming they were not to be retained or were to be substantially altered, is also recommended. Further archaeological investigation in the form of archaeological evaluation and subsequent excavation may also be considered necessary, particularly depending on the results of the geophysical survey. Such mitigation work would provide a record of the archaeological remains that are present and also have the potential to add to the wider understanding of the local archaeology, as set out in the Research Framework.
- 2.5.43 The above mitigation measures are designed to reduce the adverse effect of the proposed development on identified sites of archaeological interest from 'Major' to 'Minor' by providing suitable preservation by record of any surviving remains. As a result, the residual effect will be 'Minor'.

Climate Change

- 2.5.44 Proposed mitigation measures will minimise greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These include sustainable re-use of soils and aggregate, re-use (where possible) of materials and waste generated during construction, use of materials with lower embodied carbon (such as those with a higher recycled content), procuring locally sourced materials and careful consideration of material quantity requirements to avoid over-ordering and generation of waste materials, whilst also reducing transportation-related emissions. However, there will be unavoidable GHG emissions resulting from the construction of the Proposed Scheme. These effects are likely to be minor and not significant.
- 2.5.45 There is expected to be a minor adverse impact at initial opening of the Proposed Scheme on the total GHG emissions however over the lifetime operation of the scheme there is expected to be a minor beneficial impact due to anticipated improvement in vehicle emissions technology.
- 2.5.46 The Proposed Scheme has the potential to be impacted by a changing climate during construction and operation; however, mitigation measures are in place to reduce these risks. Proposed mitigation measures include, for example, consideration of the dangers associated with working in more extreme weather conditions; the use of construction materials with superior properties; consideration of climate change projections within maintenance plans and drainage systems; inclusion of flood compensation areas to account for climate change; and the application of engineering design standards for safety of road users and structural stability.
- 2.5.47 The Proposed Scheme aligns with applicable legislation and national, regional and local planning policy to minimise GHG emissions and support the transition to a low carbon economy and to reduce the vulnerability of the Proposed Scheme to the impacts of climate change, such as flooding.

6. Conclusions

- 2.6.1 The development proposals represent an opportunity to contribute towards a range of different growth priorities across Lancaster and Lancashire, including job creation and improved visitor numbers. This, in turn, will attract investment as well as capturing the tourism potential of visitors travelling to nearby areas.
- 2.6.2 The proposals represent sustainable development, both through the mitigation (embedded and offsite) for impacts arising but also through the creation of what represents a genuinely sustainable holiday destination.
- 2.6.3 The main ES sets out the approach followed by the consultant team. It demonstrates that the individual work streams have been considered in a collaborative manner, particularly in respect of ecology and landscape/visual impacts.
- 2.6.4 The application to which the ES relates is supported by a range of additional reports and documents which, when considered as a single suite, demonstrate that the development can be considered to have a positive impact and, where negative impacts might occur, they can be mitigated, via deliverable mitigation on applicant controlled land, in perpetuity.

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