

6 Assessment Methodology

6.1 *Introduction*

The EIA process describes and assesses the likely significant environmental effects, which may arise directly or indirectly as a consequence of, *inter alia*, the size, location or nature of the preferred option. The assessment includes the effects of the development on a number of standard environmental receptors, as shown below:

- Flora and Fauna
- Landscape and Visual Amenity
- Land Use
- Soils and Geomorphology
- Water
- Air Quality and Climate
- Noise
- Cultural and Archaeological Heritage
- Traffic and Transport
- Tourism and Recreation
- Human Beings
- Natural Resources

Sections 7 to 18 describe the relevant information pertaining to each environmental receptor in the study area. Each section presents a description of the baseline conditions, an assessment of impacts, potential mitigation measures and residual impacts. Constraints and features within the study area are shown on Figures 7.1 – 15.1.

6.2 *Defining the Issues*

The issues for consideration within this document were identified during the preparation of the Scoping Report and in the Scoping Opinion provided by New Forest District Council and the Isle of Wight Council.

Information about environmental baseline conditions has been obtained through consultation and the collation and review of baseline information.

6.3

6.3.1

Impact Assessment

General

The following procedure was followed to assess and evaluate the environmental impacts of the scheme (except where stated otherwise in the introduction/methodology section of specific environmental receptors): -

- (a) identification of receptors and environmental resources likely to be affected by the implementation of the proposed scheme;
- (b) overlay of the preferred option onto the baseline information;
- (c) identification of the value or sensitivity of the environmental resource according to a five-point scale (i.e. very high, high, medium, low, negligible), where appropriate. The criteria for the valuation of environmental resources are shown in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1. General criteria for classifying the value or sensitivity of environmental resources or receptors.

Value	Criteria
Very High	International importance
High	National importance
Medium	Regional/County importance
Low	District/Parish importance
Negligible	No listed importance

- (d) consideration of the interactions of the development with the environment, to identify the potential likely impacts (physical change) as a consequence of the scheme at both the construction and operational phases, relative to the potential impacts of the 'do nothing' option;
- (e) assessment of the magnitude of the potential effects on receptors or environmental resources using the criteria presented in Table 6.2. Magnitude was assessed on a four point scale (i.e. negligible, minor, moderate or major and included the scale (i.e. large to small) and nature (i.e. positive or negative) of the effect.

Table 6.2. General criteria for classifying the magnitude and nature of environmental effects.

Magnitude	Definition
Major negative	Impact with serious consequences and/or on a large area
Moderate negative	Impact with undesirable consequences
Minor negative	Discernible negative impact and/or on a small area
Negligible	No impact or no discernible impact
Minor positive	Discernible positive impact and/or on a small area
Moderate positive	Impact with favourable consequences
Major positive	Impact provides substantial gains and/or on a large area

- (f) evaluation of the significance of the potential effects on receptors and environmental resources based on the value/sensitivity and magnitude of the potential effects using the criteria shown in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3 *Assessment of significance of environmental effects and residual effects*

Magnitude	Value/Sensitivity			
	Very High	High	Medium	Low
Major negative	Major adverse	Moderate adverse – Major adverse	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse – Moderate adverse
Moderate negative	Moderate adverse – Major adverse	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse – moderate adverse	Minor adverse
Minor negative	Minor adverse – Moderate adverse	Minor adverse – Moderate adverse	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
Negligible	No significant impact			
Minor positive	Minor beneficial – Moderate beneficial	Minor beneficial – Moderate beneficial	Minor beneficial	Minor beneficial
Moderate positive	Moderate beneficial – Major beneficial	Moderate beneficial	Minor beneficial – Moderate beneficial	Minor beneficial
Major positive	Major beneficial	Moderate beneficial – Major beneficial	Moderate beneficial	Minor beneficial – Moderate beneficial

- (g) consideration of the duration (temporary or permanent) of the effect.

- (h) where potential effects were identified (impacts = I), establishment of appropriate mitigation (mitigation = M) and enhancement measures needed to ameliorate or reduce potential impacts to an acceptable level; and
- (i) identification of the potential residual impacts of the mitigated scheme.

Impacts were quantified where possible and consideration was given to those of a permanent, temporary, long-term, short-term, and direct and indirect nature.