



KRONOSPAN, CHIRK

**NORTH ACCESS ROAD INTO THE KRONOSPAN
FACILITY, LORRY PARK, WEIGHBRIDGES AND
WEIGHBRIDGE BUILDING, WEIGHBRIDGE CAR PARK
AND FACILITIES BLOCK, ROUNDWOOD STORAGE
AREAS, 132KV SUBSTATION, AND ANCILLARY
WORKS**

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT CHAPTER 1.0 – INTRODUCTION

REV A - JULY 2023

The axis logo consists of the word 'axis' in a white, lowercase sans-serif font, centered within a solid dark blue square.

Chester Office | Well House Barns | Chester Road | Bretton | Chester | CH4 0DH

South Manchester Office | Camellia House | 76 Water Lane | Wilmslow | SK9 5BB

t 0844 8700 007 | e enquiries@axisped.co.uk

CONTENTS – CHAPTER 1.0

1.0	INTRODUCTION	3
1.1	Background	3
1.2	The Applicant	3
1.3	Site Location, Description and Context	4
1.4	Overview of the Proposed Development	7
1.5	The Consenting Process	11
1.6	Consultation	12
1.7	The EIA Regulations	19
1.8	Assessment Team and Statement of Competence	21

Figures

(Volume 2 – Bound Separately)

Figure 1.1

Location of the Proposed Development

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 This Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared to accompany a planning application (the Application) made by Kronospan Limited (hereafter referred to as the Applicant) for planning permission for the construction and operation of a north access road into the Kronospan Facility, lorry park, weighbridges and weighbridge building, weighbridge car park and facilities block, roundwood storage areas, 132kV substation, and ancillary works (the Proposed Development) on land immediately north of the existing Kronospan facility, Holyhead Road, Chirk (hereafter referred to as the Site). The location of the Proposed Development is illustrated on **Figure 1.1**.

1.1.2 The Application has been submitted to Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) for a decision whether to grant planning permission under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990).

1.1.3 This ES presents the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the Proposed Development (see **Section 1.5** for further details of the consenting process). The ES has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations), and in accordance with these Regulations, it assesses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on the environment during its construction and operation.

1.1.4 This Chapter provides the general background to the Proposed Development, including details of the Applicant, a description of the Site location, an outline description of the Proposed Development, and defines the structure of the ES.

1.2 The Applicant

1.2.1 The Applicant is Kronospan Limited. Kronospan has been operating for 52 years (manufacturing for 49 years) at its site in Chirk, Wales. It is the world's leading manufacturer of wood-based panels using advanced technology and has pioneered many of the industry's key advances. The products

produced have a wide application across the flooring, furniture, and refurbishment industries.

1.2.2 Kronospan is the UK's leading manufacturer of high-quality wood-based panels and associated products and has been operating in the UK since 1970, and the operation in Chirk was the first outside of Austria. The primary products manufactured by Kronospan at the Chirk site are PB and MDF, from which several secondary products are produced such as laminate flooring, worktops and melamine faced boards.

1.2.3 The Kronospan manufacturing facility is a major local employer within WCBC with the site at Chirk employing over 600 staff. It is estimated that the facility also provides indirect employment to 6,000 people in industries relating to the manufacturing and supply chains associated with the operations at the site.

1.3 Site Location, Description and Context

Application Site

1.3.1 The Site of the Proposed Development is to the north of the existing Kronospan Facility, Chirk (see **Figure 1.1**). It is on the western side of the B5070 Holyhead Road, on land that is presently in agricultural use. The Site has an area of approximately 11.74 hectares (ha). The entirety of the Site is under the ownership of the Applicant.

1.3.2 To the east, the Site abuts the B5070. The boundary with the highway is defined by a clipped hedgerow between 1.5m and 2m in height, which largely screens ground level views. To the east of the road, a series of two-storey residential properties at the edge of Chirk face the south-eastern part of the Site boundary. The north-eastern part of the Site faces a field on the eastern side of the road (which is under the control of Kronospan).

1.3.3 The northern boundary of the Site is defined by the existing access road to Afon Bradley Farm. This is a farm holding under the control of Kronospan, which includes a single residential property and a series of outbuildings.

1.3.4 The Afon Bradley is a small watercourse which runs along the western boundary of the Site and flows northwards into the River Dee. Fields under the control of Kronospan are west of the Afon Bradley. The western edge

of these fields is defined by the railway that runs between Chester and Shrewsbury. West of the railway is the Llangollen Canal which forms part of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site (WHS).

- 1.3.5 A sewage treatment works (owned by Dwr Cymru Welsh Water), a gas governor (owned by Wales and West Utilities), and one property (owned by Kronospan) all abut the southern boundary of the Site, with the wider (existing) Kronospan Facility located beyond these.

Wider Site Context

- 1.3.6 The wider Kronospan site covers an area of approximately 41.2 hectares at the western edge of Chirk. It is a well-established industrial facility in operation since the 1970s, and which includes several large industrial process buildings (some with emissions stacks), storage areas for raw materials, warehouse buildings, offices and car parking. Some of the existing structures are large in scale and height. The tallest structures on site are the emissions stack (70m), the WESP stack (65.5m), the MDF cyclones (57m), and the dryer exhaust stack at the wet electrostatic precipitator (WESP) Chip Dryer (50m). Emission plumes from these stacks are often clearly visible from the surrounding area. Surface water for most of the wider Kronospan site currently drains to two lagoons on the northern boundary. A third lagoon was constructed to take surface water from the log yard.
- 1.3.7 Chirk is a small town off the A5 and just north of the England-Wales border (within Wales). The residential areas of the town mostly lie east of the B5070, with the wider Kronospan site to the west of this road. Dense tree planting, some of which is on an earth bund defines the eastern perimeter of the wider Kronospan site and provides effective screening of views from nearby properties.
- 1.3.8 On the western side of the B5070, to the south-east of the wider Kronospan site is an area of greenspace comprising a private sports club (immediately south of the Kronospan car park) and Chirk Recreation Ground. The Cadbury's (Mondelez) factory is immediately south of the wider Kronospan site. Chirk town centre lies south-east of the wider Kronospan site and

includes various commercial and community buildings and areas of public open space.

- 1.3.9 The wider area is rural. The landform falls steeply, from the hills to the west towards the much lower-lying Shropshire Plain to the east. Local variations in topography are evident, with a marked rise to a ridge east of the town.
- 1.3.10 To the west of the wider Kronospan site, the land rises towards the foothills of the Welsh mountains. The Llangollen Canal forms part of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal WHS. In addition to recognised heritage value, the canal corridor is an important recreational route. The canal passes close to the western boundary of the wider Kronospan site and some of the existing structures and perimeter fencing are visible from it.
- 1.3.11 Beyond the canal, settlement is sparse and land cover comprises a mixture of pasture and small woodlands. Much of this area falls with the boundary of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Chirk Castle and its associated grounds (Grade 1 registered) are a notable feature within the landscape. The Castle is owned by the National Trust and is a well-known and well-frequented visitor destination.
- 1.3.12 The development of the wider Kronospan Facility is ongoing, reflecting changes in industrial processes and in market conditions. Several new facilities have been erected in recent years, including new process buildings, new storage facilities and new railway sidings.
- 1.3.13 A condition was attached to several recent planning consents for development at Kronospan which required the development of a landscape strategy to mitigate the visual impact of the wider Kronospan site from public viewpoints. As such, the Applicant submitted a landscape strategy for the area surrounding the wider Kronospan site to WCBC in 2017. The landscape strategy was approved in 2019, and planting has subsequently been carried out within land owned by Kronospan.
- 1.3.14 A series of new or improved facilities at the wider Kronospan site are proposed as part of the Kronospan Vision 2020 investment and development programme. This comprises several major projects, the following of which are operational, under construction or awaiting construction:

- Log yard silos and recycled wood fibre (RCF) offloading and grading facilities.
- Melamine facing press hall/building.
- Wood chip preparation building and WSEP chip dryer.
- Refurbishment of existing chipper facility.
- Raw board storage (under construction).
- Oriented strand board (OSB) facility.
- North-east Warehouse (under construction).
- Covered loading yard (awaiting construction).
- Engineering stores (new warehouse building at the southern edge of the wider Kronospan site – awaiting construction).
- Two raw materials silos, an extension to the existing chip preparation building and erection of three associated silos (awaiting construction).

1.4 Overview of the Proposed Development

Need and Benefits of the Proposed Development

- 1.4.1 Kronospan has invested significantly in the Chirk manufacturing site in recent years to deliver environmental benefits and maintain the future sustainability and viability of this major regional employer.
- 1.4.2 As Kronospan looks to the future the Company recognises that further investment is required to meet its Vision 2025 ambitions which are to deliver:
- Economic sustainability – delivering a profitable and growing business.
 - Environmental improvement – reducing our impact and supporting UK Net Zero targets through production of sustainable products and operations.
 - Social benefit – maximising the value of our teams and developing our role in the community.
- 1.4.3 Vision 2025 (see **Annex A of the Planning Statement**) will adapt the site at Chirk to changes in the UK market for wood-based panel products ensuring it is able to sustainably fulfil the requirements of its customers and

stakeholders. Some of the larger projects planned to deliver Vision 2025 (excluding those already described at **Section 1.3** of this document as part of Vision 2020) include:

- North access road.
- 132kV connection and solar plant.
- Electrification of the forklift truck (FLT) fleet.
- National network of 'Urban Forest' timber recycling centres.

1.4.4 One of the key constraints limiting the operational efficiency of the Site is the fragility of the local electricity distribution network. The constrained supply of electricity from grid also limits the ability of the business to decarbonise. The proposed new 132kV substation would allow a connection to be made to the nearby strategic high voltage electricity line which runs from Oswestry to Legacy, Wrexham. This brings with it several benefits to local community by reducing the demand on the local network, mitigating the potential for local network failure, improved reliability for other businesses and community facilities and enhancing the opportunity for EV charging and provision of local renewable energy in Chirk. Removing reliance on the local distribution network would mean that Kronospan has a dependable power supply which will improve the operational efficiency of the Site, reduce the current dependence on the onsite fossil fuel-based generation facilities and enable the deployment of renewable technologies such as on-site PV electricity generation.

1.4.5 The provision of the north access road is something which has been requested by the local community for several years. The constraints which previously prevented the delivery of this have now been removed and Kronospan has developed a proposal which would remove approximately 750 two-way heavy goods vehicles (HGV) movements from the residential section of Holyhead Road over a 24-hour period (approximately 600 two-way movements during the daytime period, and approximately 150 two-way movements during the night-time period). This will have a variety of amenity and social benefits to the local community as well as improving the logistics arrangement at the Site.

- 1.4.6 In conclusion, the Proposed Development would provide enhanced facilities which would help maintain the future viability of the business at the site in Chirk. The investment would ensure the business can continue meet customer demands in a competitive manufacturing environment, as well as delivering numerous environmental and social benefits. This investment would help to safeguard the significant direct and indirect employment opportunities supported by the business and the wider local and regional economic benefits which result from a major manufacturing business such as Kronospan.
- 1.4.7 Further details of the need and benefits of the Proposed Development is described at **Chapter 3.0 of the Planning Statement**.

Description of the Proposed Development

- 1.4.8 A detailed description of the Proposed Development is provided at **ES Chapter 4.0 (Description of the Proposed Development)**. A summary of the Proposed Development is set out below.
- 1.4.9 The proposed north access road would require the creation of a new junction in the form of a roundabout from the B5070 approximately 1.2km to the north of the existing site entrance to the Kronospan Facility. This would be at the existing junction with an unnamed road running east near to Lodge Farm Cottage. The new roundabout would allow vehicles travelling to and from the existing Kronospan Facility to enter and exit the B5070 to the north of Chirk, avoiding the requirement for the majority of HGVs accessing the Facility to enter the settlement of Chirk. The proposed route would require the diversion of the existing access to Afon Bradley Farm, which would become an exit from the proposed roundabout. The new access road would lead from the roundabout west and then south across the existing agricultural field, entering the existing Kronospan Facility in the northeast corner of the current operational site.
- 1.4.10 An area (of approximately 0.87ha) for the parking of HGVs is proposed to the east of the proposed access road and to the west of the B5070. The proposed lorry park would cater for up to 45 HGVs and has been designed so that vehicles can enter and exit the proposed parking spaces in forward gear, without the need for reversing.

- 1.4.11 Approaching the existing wider Kronospan Facility there would be four parallel weighbridges to service incoming and outgoing vehicles. In between the weighbridges is a proposed three storey timber clad building with a gantry, allowing timber samples to be taken from incoming vehicles for quality checking.
- 1.4.12 A proposed staff and visitor car park would be to the south of the proposed lorry park and immediately east of the proposed weighbridges. A single-storey facilities block for the lorry park would be north of the staff and visitor car park.
- 1.4.13 From the weighbridge, vehicles would continue south going to the east of the existing Gas Governor, entering the existing Kronospan Facility between the East Logyard (where the new East Warehouse is currently under construction) and Kronoplus. A route north towards the proposed roundabout and out of the Proposed Development Site would be to the west of the Gas Governor, immediately to the north of the Kronoplus building.
- 1.4.14 Vehicles exiting the Site would follow the route described above, with both lanes merging before the 'out' weighbridge', and then routing north to the new roundabout junction. There would be an access to the proposed 132kV substation, described below.
- 1.4.15 The proposed 132kV substation would cover a broadly rectangular area and would be constructed where possible from permeable materials (such as gravels or stones). Bund walls would be constructed around some of the proposed equipment to provide protection from vehicles on the adjacent access road. Two fire walls would be located adjacent to the two main transformers. An access road would be provided around three sides of the equipment, with an area for parking. A substation building and a building for ancillary equipment would also be constructed. The substation would be surrounded by palisade security fencing and floodlights would be provided.
- 1.4.16 Two proposed roundwood storage areas are proposed. One storage area would be immediately north of the proposed 132kV substation and west of the proposed weighbridge and would cover an area of approximately 0.41ha. The second storage area would be south of the proposed

weighbridge car park and south-east of the proposed weighbridges and would cover an area of approximately 0.3ha.

- 1.4.17 Both proposed roundwood storage areas would provide temporary storage for logs (maximum storage height of 4m), prior to being moved to other facilities within the wider Kronospan Facility for processing.
- 1.4.18 The Proposed Development would include landscape and ecological mitigation intended to reduce the visual effects of the new structures and vehicle movements and to enhance biodiversity. Measures to manage surface water flow, including two new drainage basins, would also be provided.
- 1.4.19 It is anticipated that construction would occur between Quarter 2 2024 and Quarter 3 2027. An indicative programme is set out in **ES Chapter 4.0 (Description of the Proposed Development)**. There would be overlap between some of these activities, and the majority of construction works, (i.e. from the start of site clearance to the completion of the roundwood storage areas and weighbridge car park) would last for approximately fifteen months in total.
- 1.4.20 Construction of the proposed 132kV substation would take place after all the other elements are built and in operation.

1.5 The Consenting Process

- 1.5.1 The Application for planning permission is to be made to WCBC under Section 62 of the TCPA 1990. As such, WCBC is the determining authority for the Application.
- 1.5.2 The Proposed Development is a Schedule 2 development as set out in The EIA Regulations. Following the receipt of a formal screening opinion from WCBC, the Proposed Development is considered to fall under Schedule 2 Part 13a (changes and extensions to development of a description listed in Schedule 1) with subsequent reference to Paragraph 18 (b) of Schedule 2 (industrial plants for the production of paper and board with a production capacity exceeding 200 tonnes per day). Further information of the EIA screening process undertaken is provided in **ES Chapter 2.0 (EIA Methodology)**.

1.5.3 It is recognised that other consents/licences may be required for the construction and operation of the Proposed Development. At the time of submission, it has been identified that the following may be required:

- Variation to Environmental Permit.
- Section 278 agreement under the Highways Act 1980 for the proposed permanent works to the B5070 and the proposed roundabout access off the B5070.
- Appropriate waste management licences as required during construction works.
- Protected species licences may be required depending on the outcome of pre-construction badger and otter surveys.

1.6 Consultation

Introduction

1.6.1 Consultation is integral to developing the proposals and related assessments that underpin an application for consent and in particular, the EIA process. The views of stakeholders serve to focus the environmental studies and to identify specific issues that require further investigation, as well as to inform aspects of the design of the Proposed Development.

Pre-Application Advice

Pre-Application 1

1.6.2 A request for pre-application advice (dated 14 February 2020) was submitted by the Applicant to WCBC for the development of a new private road leading from Holyhead Road to the existing Kronospan Facility.

1.6.3 WCBC provided a response (reference ENQ/2020/0044, dated 07 January 2022); please see **ES Chapters 5.0 – 8.0** for a summary of the WCBC responses and the subsequent actions with respect to the assessment topics of landscape and visual, historic environment, biodiversity and nature conservation, and noise and vibration.

1.6.4 A summary of the WCBC response with respect to policy is provided below:

- The proposed development would constitute inappropriate development in a Green Wedge as defined in paragraph 3.75 of PPW11 and would also represent a significant loss of openness of the Green Barrier in this location.
- The proposed access road and associated parking area would represent a significant intrusion of urban development into the rural landscape surrounding Chirk, which is designated Special Landscape Area. The development will also be situated within the buffer zone for the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site and located outside of but within 600m metres of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- WCBC is concerned that the development will represent an intrusion of urban development into the rural landscape surrounding Chirk, potentially harming the setting of the World Heritage Site and AONB. It is acknowledged, however, that the impact of an access road, by itself, would be far less than the proposed put forward in your later enquiry reference ENQ/2021/0315.

1.6.5 The above issues are addressed in the planning application, notably the ES, the Planning Statement (and its appendices), and the Design and Access Statement.

1.6.6 The following were identified by WCBC as being required to support any future planning application (this was replicated in the pre-application 2 response (see below) - all are provided as part of this planning application):

- Drawings and Site Location Plan
- Ecology Report.
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment.
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
- Air Quality Impact Assessment.
- Heritage Impact Assessment.
- Transport Assessment.
- Pre-Application Consultation Report.

Pre-Application 2

1.6.7 A subsequent request for pre-application advice (dated 02 November 2021) was submitted by the Applicant to WCBC for several development proposals to develop and improve the existing industrial facility at Kronospan Limited, Holyhead Road, Chirk. The development proposals subject to the pre-application advice request included the Proposed Development (minus the proposed roundwood storage areas) plus other development proposals that have either had planning applications submitted or granted as follows:

- Covered loading yard.
- Engineering stores (new warehouse building at the southern edge of the wider Kronospan site).
- Two raw materials silos, an extension to the existing chip preparation building and erection of three associated silos (and associated works).

1.6.8 WCBC provided a response (reference ENQ/2021/0315, dated 07 January 2022); please see **ES Chapters 5.0 – 8.0** for a summary of the WCBC responses and the subsequent actions with respect to the assessment topics of landscape and visual, historic environment, biodiversity and nature conservation, and noise and vibration.

1.6.9 A summary of the WCBC response with respect to policy is provided below (policy matters set out in the pre-application 1 response were duplicated and are not repeated here – only additional policy matters):

- The potential benefits of removing some vehicles from Holyhead Road in respect of traffic also residential amenity is acknowledged, the proposals lie outside of the settlement limit of Chirk, within a Green Barrier and a Special Landscape Area.
- WCBC is concerned that the development will have a significant and detrimental impact upon the rural landscape surrounding Chirk and will also harm the setting of the World Heritage Site and AONB. The impact of the development is unlikely to be adequately mitigated by landscaping.

- It is acknowledged that TAN23 sets out specific criteria (paragraphs 2.1.6 – 2.1.14) for assessing proposals that are likely to give rise to environmental harm it is not clear from the information submitted that that economic or other benefits arise from the development to sufficiently outweigh the concerns previously set out.
- It is also acknowledged that policy EM4 of the LDP would permit employment development outside of settlements limits by way of extensions to existing employment sites. Nevertheless, the policy requires it to be demonstrated that there are no suitable alternatives, and that the development forms a logical extension to the existing settlement limit. On the basis of the information before me WCBC does not consider either criterion to have been met. Furthermore, any proposals would also be considered considering LDP policy DM1 which includes similar requirements to policy GDP1 of the UDP in respect of layout, design and landscape impact.
- Whilst it is noted that alternative locations have been considered I do not consider sufficient information has been submitted at this stage to demonstrate that this is the only suitable location for the development or that the need/benefits of the proposals outweigh the harm arising from an incursion of development into the rural landscape, Special Landscape Area and Green Barrier.

1.6.10 The above issues are addressed in the planning application, notably the ES, the Planning Statement (and its appendices), and the Design and Access Statement.

Site Meeting with Landscape and Heritage Stakeholders

1.6.11 A meeting to discuss the principle of the Proposed Development was held on 07 October 2022 with representatives from Cadw, National Trust, and the Canal River Trust. Representatives from the AONB Joint Committee and from WCBC were unable to attend.

1.6.12 The focus of discussions (aside from general discussion about the need, benefits, alternatives, and clarification of aspects of the Proposed Development) centred on the potential for further consideration of off-site landscaping works to further minimise visual impact and provide sensitive

linkages (where appropriate) with notable landscape and heritage features including but not limited to Chirk Castle, and the Registered Park and Garden of Whitehurst.

- 1.6.13 These matters were expanded upon by the stakeholders referred to above and other statutory consultees during the subsequent statutory pre-application consultation stage (see text below for a summary of the pre-application consultation process; further detail (including a summary of comments received and the Applicant's responses) is provided in the Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report and in each topic chapter (**ES Chapters 5.0 to 8.0 (Topic Chapters)**).

Pre-Application Consultation

- 1.6.14 In accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2012 (DMPO 2012), and subsequently amended in 2016 (DMPO 2016), the Applicant has undertaken the necessary public consultation procedures prior to submitting a Major planning application. Subsequent amendments to the DMPO were made in 2020 in light of Covid-19.
- 1.6.15 Article 4 of the DMPO 2016 provides that, where an applicant has been required to carry out pre-application consultation, and submits an application for planning permission, that application must be accompanied by a PAC Report.
- 1.6.16 The PAC Report that accompanies the application provides details of:
- The pre-application consultation requirements.
 - Statutory publicity (including notices, letters, emails, provision of hard copies and links to electronic copies of the draft application).
 - Statutory consultation engagement (including community consultees, and specialist consultees).
 - Consultation responses received.
 - How consultation responses were addressed (including any changes to the design of the Proposed Development and other changes to the application).

- 1.6.17 Where consultation responses resulted in changes to the design of the Proposed Development, this is also summarised in **ES Chapter 3.0 (Alternatives)** and **ES Chapter 4.0 (Description of the Proposed Development)** where appropriate.

Post-Submission Statutory Consultation Responses

Overview

- 1.6.18 During the statutory post-submission consultation stage undertaken by WCBC, several consultation responses have been received by WCBC and subsequently issued to the Applicant for further consideration and comment.
- 1.6.19 All consultation responses have been collated together and submitted via separate cover to WCBC - they detail how account has been taken of each response (including points of further clarification, where the Proposed Development design was amended, or further information provided in the planning application documents).

Alternatives

- 1.6.20 Some of the consultation responses received were with respect to further consideration of alternatives to minimise impact on the surrounding landscape and historic environment; the most notable of which were provided by Cadw.
- 1.6.21 The Applicant and Cadw held a meeting on 20 April 2023 to discuss alternatives in greater detail. The discussion included further clarification of the key design parameters considered (of the various components) during the development of the Proposed Development and the desire to achieve, on balance, a proposal that has the least environmental impact, with particular regard given to consideration of the historic environment, the landscape and visual impacts, local amenity (noise, vibration and air quality), and impacts on the local highway network. A summary of the key discussion parameters discussed with Cadw is provided in **ES Chapter 3.0 (Alternatives)**.
- 1.6.22 The discussion continued to understand the extent to which it would be possible to amend the design of the Proposed Development to reduce

impacts on the historic environment, with a particular focus on reducing/removing the extent of new development located towards the northern extent of the red line boundary. An outline sketch of an alternative Proposed Development layout was produced to address this objective, which Cadw later agreed would likely assist with reducing the impact of the Proposed Development on the historic environment. This sketch was subsequently looked at in greater detail by the Applicant to develop a workable alternative layout for subsequent formal submission to WCBC. The key changes implemented during the development of the alternative layout are discussed in more detail at **ES Chapter 3.0 (Alternatives)** but are summarised below.

- Weighbridges, weighbridge building, and weighbridge car park moved approximately 20m to the south.
- Lorry park footprint reduced by approximately 50% (previously 91 HGV spaces, now 45 HGV spaces) and moved further south.
- Area at the northern extent of the Proposed Development Site now vacated by the reduced lorry park is proposed as further wildflower grassland.
- Roundwood storage areas reduced in size (around 21% collectively) to accommodate the above.
- Additional land on the western boundary of the western roundwood storage proposed for additional new woodland planting.
- The bund along the eastern boundary of the Site amended to a height of approximately 4m adjacent to the proposed lorry park, and to a height of approximately 7m north of the proposed lorry park (when measured from the adjacent internal platform/road level of the Proposed Development) to provide appropriate noise mitigation for the residential receptors at Offa/Wern. This would provide similar noise effects to the original (and now superseded) Proposed Development layout.
- The 5m high acoustic screen along the eastern boundary of the lorry park extended further south to also run adjacent the weighbridge car park area.

Formal Submission of Amended Planning Drawings and EIA Regulation 24

- 1.6.23 The finalisation of the alternative Proposed Development layout represents a clear change to the original planning application made to WCBC. Therefore, several of the original planning documents have been revised and formally submitted to WCBC for further consideration (and formal consultation). This includes an updated ES in accordance with Regulation 24 of the EIA Regulations.

1.7 The EIA Regulations

- 1.7.1 The ES is submitted as part of the suite of documents accompanying the Application. The information presented in the ES describes the findings of the EIA. The EIA adopts a reasonable worst-case assessment basis, based on the Proposed Development design.
- 1.7.2 **Table 1.1** below identifies where the information defined by Regulation 17 of the EIA Regulations can be found within this ES.

Table 1.1: Location of Information Required under Regulation 17 of the EIA Regulations

Specified Information	Where Information is Provided
a) A description of the proposed development comprising information on the site, design, size and other relevant features of the development	ES Chapter 3.0 (Alternatives) ES Chapter 4.0 (Description of Proposed Development)
b) A description of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment;	ES Topic Chapters 5.0 – 8.0 ES Chapter 9.0 (Summary of Residual Effects and Conclusions)
c) A description of any features of the proposed development, or measures envisaged in order to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible,	ES Chapter 3.0 (Alternatives)

Specified Information	Where Information is Provided
offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment;	ES Chapter 4.0 (Description of Proposed Development) ES Topic Chapters 5.0 – 8.0
d) A description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the applicant or appellant, which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, taking into account the significant effects of the development on the environment;	ES Chapter 3.0 (Alternatives)
e) A non-technical summary of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (d); and	ES Non-Technical Summary
f) Any additional information specified in Schedule 4 relevant to the specific characteristics of the particular development or type of development and to the environmental features likely to be significantly affected.	ES Topic Chapters 5.0 – 8.0

1.7.3 In summary, Chapter 2.0 of the ES outlines the approach to the assessment describing the scope and structure of the ES. Chapter 3.0 summarises the main alternatives studied by the applicant. Chapter 4.0 provides a detailed scheme description. ES Chapters 5.0 to 8.0 assess the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases. Finally, Chapter 9.0 summarises the assessment findings.

1.7.4 Each chapter is accompanied by Figures and Appendices where considered necessary.

1.8 Assessment Team and Statement of Competence

1.8.1 As required under Regulation 17 (4a and 4b) of the EIA regulations, the Applicant has engaged competent experts to prepare the ES. As per Regulation 17 (4b), each of the technical assessment chapters (Chapters 5.0 to 8.0) include a statement outlining the relevant expertise and/or qualifications of the experts that prepared the Chapter.

1.8.2 The ES was compiled and coordinated by AXIS, a planning and environmental consultancy based in Flintshire. A team of specialist consultants has provided expert assessment in respect of the following:

- ES Chapter 1.0: Introduction: AXIS.
- ES Chapter 2.0: EIA Methodology: AXIS.
- ES Chapter 3.0: Alternatives: AXIS.
- ES Chapter 4.0: Description of the Proposed Development: AXIS.
- ES Chapter 5.0 Landscape and Visual Effects: AXIS.
- ES Chapter 6.0 Historic Environment: Archaeology Wales.
- ES Chapter 7.0 Biodiversity and Nature Conservation: Avian Ecology.
- ES Chapter 8.0 Noise and Vibration: NVC.
- ES Chapter 9.0 Summary of Residual Effects and Conclusions: Various.

1.8.3 In addition to the ES, several supporting (non-EIA) assessments have been undertaken and are appended to the Planning Statement as follows:

- Planning Statement Appendix A
 - **Agricultural Land Classification Survey**
- Planning Statement Appendix B
 - **Flood Consequence Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy**
- Addendum to Planning Statement Appendix B (following revised Proposed Development design)
- Planning Statement Appendix C
 - **Arboricultural Impact Assessment**
- Planning Statement Appendix D
 - **Lighting Assessment**
- Planning Statement Appendix E

- **Air Quality Assessment**
- Addendum to Planning Statement Appendix E (following revised Proposed Development design)
- Planning Statement Appendix F
 - **Transport Assessment**
- Addendum to Planning Statement Appendix F (following revised Proposed Development design)

1.8.4 The full structure of the ES is set out in **ES Chapter 2.0 (EIA Methodology)**.