1. **The Application**
   1.1. This application seeks approval for the making of an Order to be confirmed by the Secretary of State seeking revocation of Hazardous Substance Consent (HS/92/01 – Appendix A) relating to High Wycombe Holder Station, Desborough Road, High Wycombe.

   1.2. The site has been used as a gas works with various associated infrastructure including gas holders. The site remained operational until the 1960s and in 2000 the largest and most recently constructed gas holders were demolished, with the remaining above ground structures removed in 2004. In 2004, National Grid undertook remediation of the site to render it suitable to remain as undeveloped land. Since then the site has remained derelict. At the end of 2014, the ownership of the land passed from National Grid to Inland Homes who are seeking redevelopment.

   1.3. National Grid wishes to revoke the Consent for the storage of gas on the site.

   1.4. Section 14 of the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 gives authorities the power to revoke a Consent by way of making an Order which the Secretary of State has to confirm.

2. **Relevant Planning History**

2.1. The following Hazardous Substances Consent is in force HS/92/01 dated November 1992.

2.2. There have been planning applications to redevelop the site for mixed use development comprising retail and residential but none of these have been implemented:

   00/05788/OUT, Redevelopment of the gas works site and erection of up to 4000 sq m of retail shops within Class A1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, and residential development with associated car parking, servicing, access and landscaping, permitted 7 April 2005.

   08/05875/REM, Reserved matters of access, siting, design, external appearance and landscaping pursuant to outline planning permission ref 00/05788/OUT for redevelopment of the gas works site and erection of up to 4000 sq m of retail shops within Class A1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and residential development (130 units) with associated car parking (143 spaces), servicing, access (including relocation of Rutland Street) and landscaping, bin stores and secure cycle stores, withdrawn 16 December 2014.

2.3. Part of the land is required for the construction of a new link road, which has the benefit of planning permission, linking Desborough Road to Suffield Road.
2.4. More recently, the local planning authority has been involved in pre-application discussions with the new site owners, Inland Homes for the redevelopment of the site for a mixed use development comprising circa 250 residential units and up to 1,600 sq.m commercial floorspace. The submission of a planning application is expected shortly.

3. Issues and Policy considerations

Principle and Location of Development

CSDPD: CS18 (Waste, Pollution and Natural Resources)
DSA: MTWC 1(Delivering the Town Centre Vision), HWTC3 (Connections, Movement and Access), HWTC13 (Lily’s Walk)

3.1. The site is located on the edge of High Wycombe town centre and covered by policy HWTC13 (Lily’s Walk/Former Gas Works Site) which allocates the site for mixed use development comprising main town centre and residential uses. The site is also covered by policy HWTC3 (Connections, Movement and Access) which relates to changes proposed to the town centre highway network as part of the master plan for the town centre.

3.2. Given the allocation of the site for redevelopment within local planning policy and the new landowner’s intention to develop the site, it is considered that it would be expedient to revoke the consent. The power to revoke the Consent is sought under Section 14 (1) of the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990.

3.3. The revocation will facilitate environmental improvement brought by new land uses and aid the redevelopment of an under-used vacant site which has been allocated within development plan policy for mixed use development. The retention of the Hazardous Substances Consent for the storage of gas which is no longer present on the site could unnecessarily restrict and blight the future development of the land.

3.4. The use of the land has changed materially since the original consent was granted and it is clear that the Consent has not been relied upon for many years, if at all.

4. Financial Implications

4.1. National Grid has stated that they would make no claim for compensation to the Council and that no person will suffer damage as a result of the Order by depreciation of the value of an interest. Given that the Consent has not been relied upon for 5 years and the use of the land has changed materially since the Consent was granted, it is considered that the Consent could be revoked with very limited if any risk of compensation being claimed. However, the officers will take such actions as they deem necessary to protect the Council against any claim for compensation including, if appropriate, securing waivers from potential claimants.

Recommendation: To make an Order under Section 14 of the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 revoking the Hazardous Substance Consent ref HS/92/01 and recommending that the Secretary of State confirm the Order.