

Our Ref: 17/03535/SCREEN
Your Ref: TE/KN0087/16

Walsingham Planning
Bourne House
Cores End Road
Bourne End
Buckinghamshire
SL8 5AR

04 August 2017

Dear Mr Edmunds

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

EIA Screening Opinion in relation to the demolition and redevelopment of the Hartwell Garage site, Newbridge Road, Bath, BA1 2PP for a mixed-use development comprising 99 residential units, 177 student bedrooms, retail unit and an A3 unit.

Thank you for your letter dated 21 July 2017 requesting an EIA screening opinion pursuant to Regulation 6 of the above regulations.

The local planning authority has assessed whether there are likely to be significant environmental impacts as a result of this proposed project. You will be aware that in cases where significant effects are likely to occur a planning application will need to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement. Where required, an Environmental Statement is prepared to explain the findings of the EIA. This is to make sure that, before new development is allowed to go ahead, the likely significant environmental effects have been assessed and that mitigation measures envisaged to remove, reduce or offset adverse effects are described.

The LPA is of the opinion that the proposed development does not fall within Schedule 1 of the above Regulations, rather it falls within Paragraph 10 (Infrastructure Projects) (b) (urban development projects) of Schedule 2 of said Regulations. The site is located within a 'sensitive area' as defined by the above Regulations, this being the City of Bath UNESCO World Heritage Site. The development has therefore been screened for EIA, using the selection criteria set out in Schedule 3 as a guide, and this assessment is set out as follows:

Characteristics of the Development

This proposal involves the redevelopment of a previously developed site measuring 1.68ha in area. It is proposed to demolish, in its entirety, the existing commercial garage building on the site and replace it with various buildings including purpose-built

student accommodation, residential and retail.

The development is described in the submission as comprising up to 177 student cluster bedrooms; 99 apartments (non-student); a retail unit of 4000sqft and a 150sqft A3 unit. It is proposed (at this stage) that the aforementioned uses will be accommodated within 2-5 storey buildings.

The use of natural resources will be limited to those used in the initial demolition/construction phase and those expended by the future occupants of the building as part of everyday living. The residential and retail uses will produce domestic waste. It is likely that an element of pollution in the form of noise for example will be generated by the development as a direct result of the comings and goings of students, residents and shoppers (and deliveries etc.). It is possible that a degree of contamination exists on site given the site's existing/historic use.

The risk of major accidents and disasters is considered to be low; residential and retail forms of development are not inherently at a high risk of accidents and there are no particularly high risk uses nearby. It is noted however that an industrial estate is situated to the immediate south of the site and the existing concrete batching plant (located immediately to the west and beneath the site) will remain; be that as it may there is not considered to be a high risk of accidents. Risks to human health are likely to be limited to air pollution and any emissions from adjacent industrial uses.

Location of Development

The site is currently developed and is occupied by a two large buildings in commercial use (motor trade). The buildings appear to date from the mid to late twentieth century.

The site is in an urban location, which is densely populated and mixed industrial/residential in nature. Residential uses are situated to the North (Newbridge Road) within conventional dwelling houses as well as to the east and west also within conventional dwelling houses. The site frontage to Newbridge Road is overwhelmingly residential in character. As mentioned commercial/industrial uses are located to the immediate east (concrete batching plant) as well as to the south. Part of the site forms part of a former railway line.

The site is within the City of Bath World Heritage Site and the Conservation Area. The site is identified by the Council as having a *potentially* contaminative historical use but the site is not on the Contaminated Land Register.

Characteristics of the Potential Impact

Having regard to the characteristics of the development and the nature of its location as set out above it is considered that the geographical extent of the impact will be localised. The direct impacts of the proposed development are likely to be limited to the site itself and its immediate neighbourhood. There will be a potential visual impact is from more distant vantage points but these are unlikely to be significant in EIA terms. The indirect impact of the proposed development (those resulting from the associated increase in resident student numbers) will be city-wide. There will be no trans-frontier impacts

The magnitude and complexity of the direct impacts will be low. The direct impacts will be localised and are likely to be limited to matters such as impact of the buildings on the character of the area, localised contamination, impact on heritage assets, impact on amenity, highway impact, ecology, as well as the economic impacts associated with the loss (relocation) of the commercial use and potential retail impact. These are not complex issues but straightforward matters for assessment. The scale of the development is such that the magnitude of these impacts will be minimal. The fact that the development involves the redevelopment of a previously developed site also limits the magnitude of the impacts. A development of this scale and suburban location is unlikely to have a significant impact on the World Heritage Site; the magnitude of any impact on the WHS will be low.

The magnitude and complexity of the indirect (city-wide) impacts will also be low. Whilst residential student numbers will increase as a result of the development; this will be an insignificant proportion of the population of a city of the size of Bath.

The probability of the proposed development's impact is high, particularly the potential direct impacts such as the impact on the character of the area, amenity issues and the economic impact on existing commercial occupiers. The duration of many of the impacts will be permanent i.e. for the life time of the development and will not be reversible. The probability of effectively reducing the impact is high however through the use of negotiation, planning conditions and planning obligations.

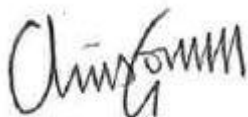
Conclusion

It is considered that the development is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects in EIA terms. Whilst there are a number of important issues and potential impacts to consider, none of these are likely to be significant as defined by the EIA Regulations. All noticeable impacts are likely to be localised to the site itself or the local vicinity. These issues are not of more than local importance. The developments' expected impacts will not be unusually complex nor potentially hazardous. Whilst the site is within the World Heritage Site it is unlikely that the development will have a significant environmental effect on the WHS in EIA terms

It is concluded, for the reasons set out above, that the development does not constitute EIA development. It is not necessary therefore for a subsequent planning application to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

Please note that the adoption of a negative screening opinion is **not** an assessment of the planning merits of your proposal rather it is purely an assessment of whether significant environmental impacts, under the terms of the EIA regulations, would be likely to occur.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Gomm', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Gomm
Principal Planning Officer