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Please ask for: Raymond Cole

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Your Ref:

Our Ref: BN/102/20/ESO

Dear Ms Knott,

Screening opinion for development of approximately 200 dwellings, associated green infrastructure provision and access from Marshall Close.

Land South of Barnham Station Barnham

Screening Opinion

The Group Head of Planning has determined under delegated powers that the above proposal does not require the submission of an Environmental Statement, as any impacts as there are on the environment are not likely to be of a magnitude to be covered by the Regulations. The following environmental issues are considered relevant to this proposal and have been considered in reaching this decision:

On 17 September 2020, a request was made for a Screening Opinion under Regulation 6(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, to determine whether significant effects on the environment are likely and hence whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for a development proposal.

The proposed development is described as "Development of approximately 200 dwellings, associated green infrastructure provision and access from Marshall Close". The site is land to the south of Barnham Station, Barnham.

The Council considers the above proposal to be an Infrastructure Project (Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas) within section 10(b) of Schedule 2 of the Regulations.

With regard to the stated Schedule 2 thresholds and criteria, it is noted that the site area of approximately 13 hectares exceeds the applicable threshold of 5 hectares and approximately 200 dwellings exceeds the applicable threshold of 150 dwellings.

Therefore, it is necessary to consider the proposal against Schedule 3 of the Regulations. This

schedule sets out the criteria to consider in determining whether development falling within Schedule 2 will require an EIA. The criteria include the characteristics of the development (e.g. its size, use of natural resources, production of waste and pollution); the environmental sensitivity of the location; and the characteristics of the potential impact (e.g. its magnitude and duration).

This screening continues in the context of the Schedule 3 headings.

1. Characteristics of the development

a. Size of the development

The application site comprises approximately 13 hectares of existing agricultural land and the proposed development will comprise approximately 200 dwellings. The size of the dwellings has not been stated but it is anticipated that they would not be out of scale with existing residential development surrounding the site. The assessment of design within the application process will provide sufficient control to avoid any significantly adverse effects on the environment.

b. Cumulation with other development

The land to the west of the site, on the opposite side of the railway, has been designated a Strategic Housing Allocation (SD5), Barnham/Eastergate/Westergate (BEW), in the Arun Local Plan 2011-2031. The proposal the subject of this screening opinion does not form part of that allocation and would be capable of proceeding independently.

c. Use of natural resources

The development would not use natural resources such as land, water, material or energy in excess of that reasonably considered to be associated with the construction of a residential development. None of these comprise non-renewable sources or are in short supply.

The planning submission should consider the use of soils and biodiversity within the supporting documents. The supporting documents should demonstrate how the use of soils has been considered and how net gains in biodiversity will be achieved.

Adequate controls exist within the planning process, primarily through the use of conditions, to limit/reduce the use of non-renewable resources.

d. Production of waste

The development will produce wastes predominantly through the construction phases of the development. Arun District Council is able to control the construction phases of development through the use of appropriately worded conditions.

Additionally, the Council has a separate set of requirements for the disposal of operational waste post-construction.

e. Pollution and nuisances

The development will be likely to result in the release of pollutants, but is unlikely to result in any particularly hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to the air. These will primarily occur in the construction phases of the development. The pollutants released are not anticipated to be significant or exceed limits reasonably associated with the construction of a residential development of this nature.

The local planning authority can control such impacts associated with the construction phases,

including dust emissions, in accordance with best practice by imposing a condition requiring the submission and approval of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). Such an approach accords with National Planning Practice Guidance which advocates controls via conditions and obligations.

f. Risk of major accidents and/or disasters, including those caused by climate change

Risk of major accidents and/or disasters comprise a risk during the construction phases of the development. The applicant will be required, under separate legislation, to implement measures in accordance with best practice Health and Safety legislation.

The storage of any hazardous materials used in the construction phases of the development will be governed by separate Health and Safety legislation and the Local Planning Authority is able to control such risks through the imposition of a CEMP condition.

g. Risks to human health

Risks to human health would occur from dust and emissions generated during the construction phase of the development. Such risks could be mitigated through the CEMP.

The site is not known to be at risk of contamination from a former use. In the event of more detailed surveys being carried out and indicating otherwise, any necessary remediation measures could be secured through the use of a planning condition, as advocated by National Planning Practice Guidance.

The application submission should consider air pollution from traffic, having regard to this development, the neighbouring BEW development and predicted housing development from windfall sites. The cumulative impacts on air pollution from traffic will need to be considered in the supporting documentation. Mitigation measures and/or controls to reduce the impacts identified will need to be provided where applicable.

h. Other characteristics

Transport impacts, for the purposes of screening, should be considered in the context of National Planning Practice Guidance on committed development, as set out above. The submission of a Transport Assessment will provide sufficient consideration and controls to ensure that no wider highways impacts will result.

The cumulative highways impacts will need to be considered in a Transport Assessment as part of more detailed design proposals. The Transport Assessment will need to consider impacts on the Strategic Road Network (SRN), in addition to local junction improvements identified by ongoing West Sussex County Council work, and the trigger points for when capacities are reached, and upgrading is required.

Given the proposed size of the development, the impacts upon the SRN are likely to be limited. However, the cumulative impacts from this development, the neighbouring BEW development and predicted housing development from windfall sites will need to be considered within the Transport Assessment. This would provide adequate consideration and control over transport issues.

2. Location of the development

a. Existing and approved land use

The application site comprises approximately 13 hectares of agricultural land, including a small cluster

of ancillary buildings. At a site visit, undertaken on 25 September 2020, it was noted that a substantial part of the site was being used for keeping horses.

The proposed residential use will have no significant adverse effect on existing surrounding land uses which essentially comprise transport infrastructure (railway lines and station), agricultural land and residential development.

b. Relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area and its underground

The application submission should consider soil resources and how any access to this and/or extraction could be safeguarded, if appropriate.

Further information will need to be provided on any groundwater protection zones.

An Ecology Statement should consider all ecological designations and provide for appropriate mitigation, where required.

Additionally, any application should consider protected trees, including a full assessment of their health and contribution to the amenity of the wider area and any protection measures required.

c. Absorption capacity of the natural environment

The potential impact of the proposal upon features of nature conservation interest and opportunities is capable of being addressed within supporting habitats and ecology reports in accordance with the Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment, developed by the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

There has been historical fluvial flooding of the site from the main river, which has extended into Marshall Close; the location of the proposed access. It is expected that the site also features a high groundwater table. A comprehensive Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, which will be required as part of the application process, ought to be able to address any potential impacts.

There is a public right of way that crosses the site. This will need to be safeguarded in perpetuity and upgraded where appropriate.

Construction phases of the development could give rise to changes in traffic movements. However, these could be controlled by way of a CEMP condition and in consultation with the local highway authority. Transport movements associated with the development would be addressed through a Transport Assessment to ensure that no adverse impacts would result. The Transport Assessment should consider the cumulative impact arising from this development, the neighbouring BEW development and predicted housing development from windfall sites.

In principle, it is likely that vehicle movements associated with approximately 200 dwellings could be accommodated within the wider road network, subject to improved access points and highways improvements. Such improvements would be secured by the local planning authority by way of a s.106 obligation or community infrastructure levy (CIL).

The site and its immediate setting are not the subject of any national or local landscape designations (e.g. National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). However, there are some long ranging sensitive views into, out of, or across the site towards the South Downs National Park and more locally towards the Barnham Church Lane Conservation Area. These will need to be considered in a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment accompanying the application. General design considerations and negotiation during the planning process could control impacts on these receptors.

The Barnham Church Lane Conservation Area is a designated heritage asset that lies to the south of the site and includes several listed buildings. A Heritage Statement will need to be submitted with the planning application, describing the significance of these assets and assessing the impact of the proposal in accordance with paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The construction and occupation of the development is unlikely to give rise to any unacceptable noise impacts. Construction phases of the development are likely to result in the largest source of noise. However, a CEMP would mitigate any such impacts and could be secured by way of a planning condition.

The site is not known to be susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme or adverse conditions such as temperature inversions, fogs or severe winds that would present environment problems.

3. Characteristics of the potential impact

a. Extent and nature of the impact

The site comprises an area of 13 hectares which is surrounded by transport infrastructure (railway lines and station), agricultural land and existing residential development. Notable areas of sensitivity are the public right of way and the neighbouring dwellings, particularly those located in Marshall Close. These receptors would mainly be affected during the construction phases of the development through the generation of noise and dust. These impacts could be controlled adequately through a CEMP.

b. Transboundary nature of the impact

The development would not result in any transboundary impacts that would require the Secretary of State to check Environmental Standards.

c. Magnitude and complexity of the impact

The development would result in a change from greenfield land to residential land.

No valuable or scarce features or resources will be affected; nor is it anticipated that the development would result in the breach of any environmental standards.

d. Probability of impact

The impacts described and anticipated above can be clearly established and predicted. The probability of any effects can be determined with reasonable confidence and therefore the controls that can be secured by planning conditions and obligations would be sufficient.

e. Expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact

The expected onset of the associated impacts would be incurred following the discharge of pre-commencement conditions attached to any planning permission. The most severe impacts would only last through the construction phases of the development and would be intermittent in nature. The operational impacts associated with the development would be continuous but of a limited nature, as detailed above.

Noise, dust and emissions arising from the construction phases would comprise reversible impacts. Impacts that could be irreversible are able to be adequately controlled to ensure that their nature is reversible (i.e. storage of waste and hazardous materials in accordance with separate legislation).

f. Possibility of effectively reducing the impact

The likely impacts arising from the development are commensurate with the amount of development proposed. Most impacts will arise from construction activities on the site, for example, groundworks, the operation of plant and machinery, HGV movements and the delivery of materials. These are unlikely to be effectively reduced if the proposed development was reduced as they do not follow economies of scale.

Nevertheless, the Transport Assessment should consider the cumulative impact arising from this development, the neighbouring BEW development and predicted housing development from windfall sites.

The Transport Assessment should set out any mitigation measures required in order to reduce the impact, including both local and strategic highway network improvements.

Conclusion

The above Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion has been undertaken in the context of Schedules 2 and 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and has concluded that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

In accordance with Regulation 5 paragraph (5)(b) of the Regulations this Screening Opinion has set out several measures to avoid, or prevent, what might otherwise have been, significant adverse effects on the environment.

This determination that an environmental statement is not required should not be seen as an indication of the Council's view on the planning merit of the proposal.

Yours sincerely



Neil Crowther
Group Head of Planning