

John Brindley MRTPI
Town Planning Director
CMYK(Planning & Design)
6 The Gavel Centre
Porters Wood
St Albans
AL3 6PQ

Our ref: EIA/21/0001
Your ref: None
Date: 12 April 2021

Dear John Brindley,

Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended)

Land at Mercer Road, North Horsham, West Sussex

Thank you for your request of 26 February 2021 for the Council to provide a formal Screening Opinion to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required in respect of a forthcoming planning application for up to 350 dwellinghouses and around 1Ha commercial land at Mercer Road, North Horsham.

Following a review of the information provided, this Council considers the proposals to fall under Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations, item 10b (Urban Development Projects). The proposal exceeds the criteria outlined in Schedule 2 of the Regulations, and is therefore necessary to consider whether the development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. In making this assessment the Council has taken into account Schedule 3 of the EIA regulations paying attention to the development characteristics, location and nature of the impacts. The results of this assessment are included with this letter for information. When forming this Screening Opinion, the Council has drawn on information set out in your Screening Request report, and other available guidance.

Whilst the threshold for site area is exceeded in Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations (2017) the effects of development on the environment are considered not to be significant in isolation, or in combination with existing and approved development (including the strategic scale development of Land North of Horsham, permitted in Outline under planning application reference DC/16/1677). There would be some impact on natural resources including biodiversity, and the production of waste and pollution during the construction phases, however with appropriate mitigation in place, these are considered to not be significant in relation to the types and characteristics of the potential impact.

The site is not sensitively located, and is unlikely to have a significant impact on any wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths, coastal zones or the marine environment. The development site is closely located next to an area of Ancient Woodland (to its northern boundary), therefore a 15m buffer must be applied to all development boundaries close to this woodland. The development of the site will not affect an AONB or National Park or any areas/locations of historical, cultural or archaeological significance. There are no transboundary effects.

The site proposed works would not result in unusually complex or hazardous environmental effects. Most effects of the proposed development will be of local significance only and can be addressed in supporting information to accompany a planning application. These effects are

capable of being carefully considered as part of the normal planning application process through careful masterplanning, and appropriate mitigation secured by condition or legal agreement.

During construction, the potential increases in traffic, emissions and noise will be temporary, commensurate with a typical construction site. Construction phase effects would be mitigated through the implementation of standard mitigation measures through a CEMP and best practice which would need to be considered in conjunction with works within the adjacent North Horsham site.

Despite its proximity to the approved North Horsham strategic development, provided the proposal at Mercer Road comes forward ahead of the commencement of Phase 3 of the North Horsham site (later 2020's), it would have no likely significant effects in isolation, or cumulatively and would, therefore, not require an Environmental Statement. It is therefore considered that, whilst the development is Schedule 2 development, it has been demonstrated that the proposed development will be unlikely to cause significant environment effects (either in itself, or cumulatively), and in this case, EIA is not required.

I confirm that this letter forms Horsham District Council's formal screening opinion and will be placed on the public register.

Yours sincerely,

Angela Moore
Senior Planning Officer