

**THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS
2017 SCREENING MATRIX**

1. CASE DETAILS			
Case Reference	212034/SCR	Brief description of the project / development	Screening Opinion in relation to Land at Leaderboard Golf Centre, Richfield Avenue, relating to the full planning application for the demolition of existing driving range structures and the development of a new 3 storey 8 form entry school for years 11-16, including a 300 place 6th form
Applicant	Nexus on behalf of EFA		
LPA	Reading Borough Council		
2. EIA DETAILS			
Is the project Schedule 1 development according to Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations?		No	
If YES, which description of development (THEN GO TO Q4)		Click here to enter text.	
Is the project Schedule 2 development under the EIA Regulations?		Yes	
If YES, under which description of development in Column 1 and Column 2?		Part 10 (Infrastructure projects) (b) (<i>Urban development projects</i>). Site overall exceeds 5 ha (5.43ha).	
Is the development within, partly within, or near a 'sensitive area' as defined by Regulation 2 of the EIA Regulations?		No	
If YES, which area?		Click here to enter text.	
Are the applicable thresholds/criteria in Column 2 exceeded/met?		Yes	
If yes, which applicable threshold/criteria?		Exceeds 5ha overall	
3. LPA/SOS SCREENING			
Has the LPA or SoS issued a Screening Opinion (SO) or Screening Direction (SD)? (In the case of Enforcement appeals, has a Regulation 37 notice been issued)		Not to date	
If yes, is a copy of the SO/SD on the file?		N/A	
If yes, is the SO/SD positive?		N/A	
4. ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT			
Has the appellant supplied an ES for the current or previous (if reserved matters or conditions) application?		N/A	

WHEN COMPLETING THIS DOCUMENT IN RELATION TO AN ENFORCEMENT APPEAL, THE UNDERSIGNED OFFICER HAS HAD REGARD TO THE PROJECT AS ALLEGED IN THE RELEVANT ENFORCEMENT NOTICE WHEN REFERRING TO THE PROJECT / DEVELOPMENT.

Question	(Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)		(Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)	
	Briefly explain answer to Part 2a and, if applicable and/or known, include name of feature and proximity to site (If answer in Part 2a / 2b is 'No', the answer to Part 3a / 3b is 'N/A')		Is a significant effect likely, having regard particularly to the magnitude and spatial extent (including population size affected), nature, intensity and complexity, probability, expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact and the possibility to effectively reduce the impact? If the finding of no significant effect is reliant on specific features or measures of the project envisaged to avoid, or prevent what might otherwise have been, significant adverse effects on the environment these should be identified in bold.	
1. NATURAL RESOURCES				
1.1 Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the topography of the area?	No	Unlikely to be significant (ie; flood alleviation measures) based on information provided	N/A	
1.2 Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy which are non-renewable or in short supply?	No		N/A	
1.3 Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project, e.g. forestry, agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?	No		N/A	

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2. WASTE				
2.1 Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes	During the construction and operational phases.	No	Likely to be able to be managed. The applicant has detailed that best practice will be followed via a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and that operational waste would be disposed of in line with RBC’s requirements and managed in accordance with all applicable legislation.
3. POLLUTION AND NUISANCES				
3.1 Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Yes	Possible – the site is a former domestic waste landfill, permitted site.	No	Likely to be able to be managed. The applicant has appointed consultants and information submitted concluding that the principal issues with regard to contaminated land are ground gas and exposure to contaminated soils. Taking the development as a whole, and considering the requirement to minimise off-site disposal the most suitable options for remediation would be ground gas management measures where required and provision of capping layers/cover system for areas of landscaping and sports pitches. The intention therefore would be to increase site levels where required thus minimising the need for off-site disposal of soils. During the construction phase dust and emissions, generated in association with plant and vehicles, would be managed in accordance with standard best practice mitigation measures, implemented through a CEMP, in

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			accordance with all relevant legislation, and is not anticipated to generate significant adverse effects. There will be emissions from vehicles travelling to and from the site. The applicant has provided a Transport Assessment to support this. The proposed education use would not be associated with hazardous substances or toxic emissions.
3.2 Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes	Possible – some noise caused by outdoor activities by school children but not significantly different to previous potential leisure use Some external lighting to car park areas. The nearest houses are on the north bank of the Thames almost 400 metres away from the application site.	No The existing noise climate is relatively quiet although there is noise from traffic on Richfield Avenue and the adjacent main railway line and train depot. Noise may result during construction and generated by users of the school outdoor play areas. The nearest sensitive receptors are residential properties on the north of the Thames. Construction effects will be managed through the CEMP and are not anticipated to generate significant adverse effects. The operational phase of the proposed development is for school use within typical school hours and limited use at weekends. It is not considered that this would have significant adverse effects. The applicant states that with respect to lighting that it would be designed carefully in

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				accordance with relevant British Standards and Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) (2011) Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light. Lighting would also be designed to avoid adverse effects on habitats and species, including the River Thames.
3.3 Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Yes	Potentially - the site is a former domestic waste landfill	No	The applicant has advised that the site is governed by EA regulations and there is an ongoing regime of monitoring and reporting to the EA. The applicant advises that such measures will be managed through a CEMP, which would be used to prevent accidental spillages of contaminations during construction and operational phases, in accordance with all relevant legislations and there would be an FRA and SUDS. The RBC Environmental Protection Team response did not specify any explicit inherent concerns regarding contamination.
3.4 Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	?	Not known	?	The RBC Environmental Protection Team response did not specify any explicit inherent concerns.

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4. POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH				
4.1 Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?	Yes	Potentially – the site is within a flood risk area.	No	The Environmental Agency interactive flood map identifies that the majority of the site falls within Flood Zone 2, with smaller parts in the southwest and northwest falling into Flood Zone 3a. As directed by the NPPF the design has positioned the proposed building within the area of the site which is at the lowest risk of flooding, the Flood Zone 2 area. The developed site will comprise the majority soft landscaping, as well as new surfaced parking (the parking bays will use permeable paving) as well as a MUGA and the hard surfaced area around the school and the footprints of the school buildings themselves. The FRA shows that flood risk can be effectively managed through the proposed design parameters and the proposed school is suitable for the proposed location and will be flood resilient. The development is unlikely to increase flood risk elsewhere as a result of the development, on account of a loss of floodplain storage, impedance of flood flows or increase in surface water runoff.
4.2 Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)	No		No	

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5. WATER RESOURCES				
5.1 Are there any water resources including surface waters, e.g. rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?	Yes	A drainage ditch crosses the site and the River Thames lies about 120 metres to the north of the north boundary of the site and nearer to 300 metres from the school building site.	?	The likelihood of a significant effect occurring will depend on the FRA, SuDS strategy and related matters, which will be considered at application stage.
6. BIODIVERSITY (SPECIES AND HABITATS)				
6.1 Are there any protected areas which are designated or classified for their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, or any non-designated / non-classified areas which are important or sensitive for reasons of their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, located on or around the location and which could be affected by the project? (e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water-bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, undesignated nature reserves or parks. (Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local))).	No	The site does not fall within any statutory designated sites and that there are no statutory designated sites such as Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA), or Special Area of Conservation (SAC) nearby the site. There are non-statutory, locally designated sites within 1000 m of the site, including The Warren Woodlands Complex Local Wildlife Site and Cow Lane Depot Local Wildlife Site, areas of identified biodiversity interest in the Local Plan.	No	The Ecological Assessment noted that the site contains no badger setts and the site offers moderate potential for supporting foraging badgers. Existing buildings are of negligible suitability for supporting bats, and trees offer low suitability for roosting bats, while the site offers low quality habitat for commuting/foraging bats. The site offers negligible potential for supporting dormice, water vole and otter. The site exhibits high potential for supporting small numbers of common and widespread breeding birds. The site offers low potential for supporting small numbers of more widespread reptiles. The drainage ditch did not appear to offer suitable breeding habitat for most amphibians, including great crested newts, but that it may be used by common frog or common toad in areas of limited or no flow. The boundary vegetation offers some low suitability habitat for amphibians. A set of ecological mitigation and enhancement measures have been proposed and include

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				construction phase precautions, biodiversity enhancements and design mitigation. It is therefore not considered that the Proposed Development would cause any significant environmental impacts in terms of ecological interest and mitigation measures are proposed in order to protect any relevant species.
6.2 Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?	?	See response to 6.1 above.	Yes	See response to 6.1 above.
7. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL				
7.1 Are there any areas or features on or around the location which are protected for their landscape and scenic value, and/or any non-designated / non-classified areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project? ¹ Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	Yes	The site currently comprises largely open land and is situated within a Local Green Space (LGS) and within the Thames Valley Major Landscape Feature.	No	The proposed building is part two and part three storeys in height and is similar in height to that of the leisure centre, this assists the scheme assimilate into the landscape and means that the development will not result in an overbearing or dominant built form. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the character or prevailing landscape form of the surrounding area. As a result, it is not considered that the development of the Site would lead to significant visual impacts that would warrant an EIA.
7.2 Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many	Yes	Given the location of the site, which is adjacent to the River Thames c120 metres to the north	No	The proposed siting of the school and the design is intended to mitigate any harm from

¹ See question 8.1 for consideration of impacts on heritage designations and receptors, including on views to, within and from designated areas.

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people? (If so, from where, what direction, and what distance?)		at its nearest point with the school building nearer to 300 metres away and Richfield Avenue to the South and may be seen from longer views from the Thames Path to the west the site is visible to members of the public.		these views and additional boundary planting is proposed as necessary.
8. CULTURAL HERITAGE/ARCHAEOLOGY				
8.1 Are there any areas or features which are protected for their cultural heritage or archaeological value, or any non-designated / classified areas and/or features of cultural heritage or archaeological importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project (including potential impacts on setting, and views to, from and within)? Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	No	The site is a former domestic waste landfill and not identified as having cultural heritage or archaeological value	No	
9. TRANSPORT AND ACCESS				
9.1 Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	Cow Lane leads to the Thames Promenade and Richfield Avenue leads to the leisure centre to the east.	No	The impacts could be significant, but a CEMP could mitigate the potential impact of construction traffic movements. There is likely to be an increased number of vehicles using the access shared with Cow Lane during construction and once the proposed development is operational. However, the new development is likely to make this route more attractive/secure for pedestrians to use than the current situation.

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9.2 Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	Richfield Avenue east and west bound is a busy commuter route and towards the east congestion can build up from the Caversham Bridge roundabout at peak times.	No	The CMP should manage the consequences of development traffic and car park management and travel plan should manage the traffic generated by the end user.
10. LAND USE				
10.1 Are there existing land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project? E.g. housing, densely populated areas, industry / commerce, farm/agricultural holdings, forestry, tourism, mining, quarrying, facilities relating to health, education, places of worship, leisure /sports / recreation.	Yes	There is a garden centre and leisure centre to the east and the Thames Promenade to the north; a popular recreation area. The Thames is used for boating.	No	The proposed school use is not incompatible in this context.
10.2 Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No		No	
11. LAND STABILITY AND CLIMATE				
11.1 Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	No		No	
12. CUMULATIVE EFFECTS				
12.1 Could this project together with existing and/or approved development	No		No	

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result in cumulation of impacts together during the construction/operation phase?				
13. TRANSBOUNDARY EFFECTS				
13.1 Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects? ²	No		N/A	

² The Regulations require consideration of the transboundary nature of the impact. Due to the England's geographical location the vast majority of TCPA cases are unlikely to result in transboundary impacts.

5. CONCLUSIONS – ACCORDING TO EIA REGULATIONS SCHEDULE 3

It is considered that the proposal does not fall within Schedule 1 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (hereafter referred to as the EIA Regulations 2017). The proposal falls within the description at paragraph 10(b) of Schedule 2 and exceeds the threshold of the site area being 5 hectares in column 2. Therefore, the Council considers the proposal to be 'Schedule 2 development' within the meaning of the EIA Regulations 2017.

The Council has therefore considered if the proposed development is likely to have significant effects on the environment. In determining such effects, the Council has considered the criteria for screening Schedule 2 development set out in Schedule 3 of the Regulations. These are the characteristics of the development, its location and the types and characteristics of the potential impact. Based upon the description of the development provided and the information provided in your submissions it is concluded that the development while being Major in size and lying adjacent to the River Thames within the locally designated Thames Valley Major Landscape Feature and potential biodiversity sites it would not introduce such a significant change to the site appearance or lead to potentially harmful effects on the environment.

Accordingly, in exercise of the powers conferred by Regulation 6 (6) (b) of the EIA Regulations 2017 the Council hereby considers that the proposed development described in your request and the documents submitted with it is 'not EIA development', within the meaning of the EIA Regulations 2017, and hence a negative screening opinion is hereby adopted.

Please note that this screening opinion is provided without prejudice to the formal decision of the Council on this or any other application which may subsequently be submitted.

You are advised, by virtue of Part 2 Regulation 6 (10) (b) of the EIA Regulations 2017 that you have the option to make a request to the Secretary of State to issue a Screening Direction if you disagree with this Opinion.

6. SCREENING DECISION

If a SO/SD has been provided do you agree with it?	Yes
Is it necessary to issue a SD?	No
Is an ES required?	No

7. ASSESSMENT (EIA REGS SCHEDULE 2 DEVELOPMENT)

OUTCOME

Is likely to have significant effects on the environment	ES required	
<u>Not</u> likely to have significant effects on the environment	ES not required	✓
More information is required to inform direction	Request further info	

NAME	Julie Williams – Acting Planning Manager
DATE	07 February 2022