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Our Ref: 182212/SCR
Your Ref: 28876/A5/EIA

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1st February 2019

Your contact is: Mr Jonathan Markwell, Planning

Dear Mr Purvis,

Planning Reference: 182212/SCR

Description of development: Request for an EIA Screening Opinion in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 with regard to the proposed redevelopment of land at Vastern Road, Reading. More specifically, this proposes: the demolition of a number of buildings and structures on the site of the former Scottish & Southern Electricity (SSE) complex on Vastern Road, Reading and the erection of up to 240 residential units, with a maximum height of 11 storeys (up to 36m above ground level) including a new north south pedestrian link, connecting Christchurch Bridge to Vastern Road towards the station as well as drainage infrastructure and landscaping.

Location: Land at 55 Vastern Road (part of the wider Scottish & Southern Energy site), Reading, RG1

Information considered: Letter from Barton Willmore 'Vastern Road, Reading' Ref: 28876/A5/EIA, dated & received 17/12/18; Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report by Barton Willmore, Issue/Rev 02, dated & received 17/12/18.

Screening opinion:

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 including more than 150 dwellings in column 2.

Therefore the Council considers the proposal to be ‘Schedule 2 development’ within the meaning of the EIA Regulations 2017.

Accordingly, the Council has considered if the proposed development is likely to have significant effects on the environment. In determining such effects, the Council has taken into account 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 submission received on 17/12/18, the development could be considered to be likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size and location. More specifically, this is owing to the nature of the location (in particular being adjacent to the River Thames, a Major Landscape Feature) and the potential effects on, in particular, the landscape and visual environment (e.g. locally listed building on site, the adjacent landscape feature and important areas of open space), pollution (light and air quality), biodiversity (species and habitats) and land uses.

Accordingly, in exercise of the powers conferred by Regulation 6 (6) (b) of the EIA Regulations 2017 (the timeframe having been agreed to be extended until 1st February 2019, as per correspondence originally on 17th December 2018 and subsequently on 28th January 2019), the Council hereby considers that the proposed development described in your request and the documents submitted with it is ‘EIA development’, within the meaning of the EIA Regulations 2017, and hence a positive screening opinion is hereby adopted.

Informatives

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.

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.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Markwell

Jonathan Markwell
Principal Planning Officer

RfE