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14th November 2018

Your contact is: **Mr Jonathan Markwell, Planning**

Dear Mr Lawson,

Planning Reference: 181753/SCR

Description of development: Request for Screening Opinion for mixed use development for hotel accommodation, office accommodation and ground floor retail space set across 22 storeys (including ground floor). The proposed floorspace is up to 9,964sqm (GEA). No parking is proposed but servicing is provided to the rear, accessed from Garrard Street.

Location: 29-35 Station Road, Reading, RG1 1LG

Information considered: Letter from Turley '29-35 Station Road, Reading', dated & received 05/10/18; Site Location Plan A-02-001 Rev A, as received 05/10/18; Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Preliminary Note for EIA Screening by Nicholas Pearson Associates, dated September 2018, as received 05/10/18; Daylight, sunlight, overshadowing, light pollution and solar glare - No. 1 Reading Screening Request.

Response:

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 can be considered to fall within the description at paragraph 10(b) of Schedule 2, as an urban development project, but it is noted that it does not exceed any of the thresholds / criteria in Column 2 (as detailed below - officer comments in *italics*):

(i) The development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development (*Officer comment: The Letter from Turley '29-35 Station Road, Reading', dated & received 05/10/18 specifies the site is 0.092ha in size*); or

(ii) the development includes more than 150 dwellings; (*Officer comment: The Letter from Turley '29-35 Station Road, Reading', dated & received 05/10/18 makes no reference to any dwellings being proposed; instead only hotel, office and retail uses are specified*) or
(iii) the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares (*Officer comment: The Letter from Turley '29-35 Station Road, Reading', dated & received 05/10/18 specifies the site is 0.092ha in size*).

It is also noted at this juncture that the site is not considered to be located within 'a sensitive area'. Part 1 (2) of the EIA Regulations 2017 states in full:

"sensitive area" means any of the following—

- (a) land notified under section 28(1) (sites of special scientific interest) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981(a);*
- (b) a National Park within the meaning of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949(b);*
- (c) the Broads(c);*
- (d) a property appearing on the World Heritage List kept under article 11(2) of the 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage(d);*
- (e) a scheduled monument within the meaning of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979(e);*
- (f) an area of outstanding natural beauty designated as such by an order made by Natural England under section 82(1) (areas of outstanding natural beauty) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000(f) as confirmed by the Secretary of State;*
- (g) a European site;*

Officers consider that the site is not located within any of the areas noted by (a), (b), (c), (d), (f) or (g). In terms of (e) it is noted that although there is a Scheduled Monument within c.270m of the proposed site in the form of the Reading Abbey (a Cluniac and Benedictine monastery and Civil War earthwork part of which is located within the Forbury Gardens Registered Historic Park and Garden), it is evidently not within the site. Nor would the proposed development, from the evidence provided, appear to impact on the Scheduled Monument. Therefore in respect of all areas (a - g) the site is not considered to be located within a sensitive area.

Following on from the above, it is consequently also noted that Paragraph: 017 (Reference ID: 4-017-20170728 Revision date: 28 07 2017) of the EIA Planning Practice Guidance states:

Projects which are described in the first column of Schedule 2 but which do not exceed the relevant thresholds, or meet the criteria in the second column of the Schedule, or are not at least partly in a sensitive area, are not Schedule 2 development.

Bearing in mind this guidance it is therefore considered that the proposal, as described, is not a Schedule 2 development.

Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required (subject to Secretary of State's power to make directions). Put another way, it is confirmed that a Screening Opinion

under Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 is not required. Although it is noted that your submission formally requests a screening opinion, owing to the context outlined above, this is not considered to be necessary in this instance. I hope this letter is suitable for your purposes.

However, notwithstanding the above, given the indicated scale and nature of the development, it is considered to be essential that any planning application is accompanied with a wide range of supporting environmental information.

Please note that this letter is provided without prejudice to the formal decision of the local planning authority on this or any other application which may subsequently be submitted at this site.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Markwell

Jonathan Markwell
Principal Planning Officer

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