WORTHING BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Our reference: EIAOPINION – AWDM/0693/23
Please ask for: Stephen Cantwell
Direct Line: 01903 221274
Date: 20th November 2024

Dear Mr Huntley,

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2017

SCREEENING OPINION

Outline planning application for residential development of approximately 90 dwellings, associated car parking, open spaces and landscaping, with primary access from Lyons Way and approximately six of these dwellings accessed via Beeches Avenue and improved pedestrian footpath link to Charmandean Lane; also rationalisation of car parking provision at the existing football ground.

Land At Lyons Way, North of Beeches Avenue, Worthing West Sussex

Further to your screening request received 10th May 2023 in respect the above-mentioned development, I have considered the proposal in respect of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017. I confirm for the reasons set out below that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required in support of the proposed development.

This letter is the formal Screening Opinion of the Local Planning Authority in accordance with these Regulations.

The Regulations require EIA procedures to apply to all applications for Environmental Impact Assessment development which is defined by Regulation 2(1), including Schedule 2 development, which is likely to have significant effects on the environment by reason of factors such as its size, characteristics, location and nature

Characteristics and Location of Development

The development is an urban development project under Schedule 2 (10) but is not in excess of the Regulation thresholds of 150 dwellings, nor 5ha in area.

It is adjacent to and partly visible from the South Downs National Park, and from the urban area, particularly from Beeches Ave, and adjoins well-populated residential areas to the south and west and football ground largely to the east, with shared access through a retail and business area, via the A27.

Site characteristics include a largely greenfield use, including pasture/meadow, with a small area of commercial use and building. Topography is sloping and the perimeter contains mixed vegetation, which affords a moderate degree of visual containment, particularly to the north and west and a lesser degree to the east.

It is allocated for development (Worthing Local Plan Site A1) for a minimum of 90 dwellings, which is required to deliver high quality design, with attention to height, massing scale and relationship to neighbours and their amenities, and to conserve and enhance the setting of the National Park, which is a sensitive and protected landscape, including the International Dark Skies Reserve.

Development is required to incorporate existing and new native vegetation, with net gain of biodiversity; also measures to address air quality impact; sustainable drainage with protection of water resources, which includes groundwater quality; safe access and improved routes into the countryside.

Supporting Technical Reports include:

Air Quality Assessment
Arboricultural Assessment
Contamination Investigation Report.
Design & Access Statement
Design Guide
Ecological Impact Assessment
Energy & Sustainability Statement
Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, and updated March 2024
Transport Assessment
Travel Plan Framework
Landscape & Visual Appraisal
Landscape And Design Summary Document
Lighting Design & Impact Reports
Planning Statement
Parameter Plan – Access & Movement
Parameter Plan – Character Area
Parameter Plan – Density
Parameter Plan – Green Infrastructure
Parameter Plan – Height
Illustrative Site Layout

Types and Characteristics of Potential Impacts

In accordance with the above Regulations, the attached matrix considers whether significant effects are likely including the factors: Natural Resources; Waste; Pollution and Nuisance; Population and Human Health; Water Resources; Biodiversity; Landscape & Visual Impact; Heritage & Archaeology; Transport and Access; Land Use; Land Stability & Climate; Cumulative and Transboundary effects.

Impacts of development will be permanent and of varying intensity, for instance a series of densities is proposed across the site. Development will extend the urban area and require careful design in order to form a sympathetic new edge to the rural National Park landscape. Traffic impacts are also highly probable and permanent. These are cumulative with recently approved retail development at the neighbouring retail park. During the development potential effects are largely temporary impacts, such as development traffic, risk of noise, dust and pollution and visual changes. Effects are considered unlikely to be significant.

Measures to Avoid Significant Effects and Reduce Impacts

Effects on topography and landscape are to be managed through the use of a parameter plans and associated design guide, including heights, density and location of spaces and vegetation, to ensure sensitive integration with the setting of the site, including views between the National Park, urban area and neighbouring properties. This will include layout and designs which have regard to

neighbouring amenities and the design of lighting and light emission to minimise effects on the South Downs International Dark Skies Reserve. Development at the Reserved Matters stage and implementation will be required to be in broad conformity with these plans and guide as conditions of outline planning permission.

Protection of water quality will be achieved by site remediation of any existing contamination as described in the submitted Contamination Investigation Report, to the satisfaction of the Local Authority Environmental Health office. At the reserved matters stage detailed drainage designs. will accord with the outline drainage strategy including pollution management designs. Planning conditions would require conformity with these. Air Quality Impacts of development have been assessed in accordance with West Sussex County requirements. This identifies negligible impact and that air pollutants remain below national targets (a positive outcome). Payment of an air quality effects financial contribution by means of a s.106 Legal Agreement, in accordance with County requirements, will assist with any residual effect

A Construction Environmental Management Plan will also be required by condition of planning condition. This will detail measures to manage development traffic and manage and reduce risks such as noise, dust, lighting and spillages and to manage wastes. Risks from noise and lighting associated with the existing football ground will be manged by adherence to development parameter plans providing an open space buffer, including vegetation, also the layout of new dwellings and use of noise attenuation designs.

A proportion of affordable housing will be secured via s.106 Agreement. This will ensure that a range of housing needs are met in accordance with the Council's adopted policies.

Archaeological investigation will also be required by planning condition at an early stage of the development programme, in order explore and manage any below ground heritage.

Vehicular access will be via Lyons Way, planning conditions will require its provision before dwellings are occupied, including reorganisation of existing parking for continued use at the football ground. Also planning conditions and layout will allow only very limited vehicular access to serve a small number of dwellings via Beeches Avenue and by adherence to parameter plans. A s.106 Legal Agreement will secure a car club and footpath improvements to afford sustainable access to local facilities and via paths to the National Park, to promote enjoyment of the Park

Biodiversity net gain is to be secured through adherence to parameter plans, which include retention of and addition to habitats. Monitoring will be secured by s.106 Agreement. The Agreement will also require reasonable endeavours to link open spaces into the adjoining site to the east, in the event of future development, with further opportunity for biodiversity gain.

Conclusion

The proposal is Schedule 2 development as identified in the above EIA Regulations. It does not fall within the relevant size thresholds, but it adjoins the South Downs National Park, which is a sensitive area under the Regulations.

Accordingly, the Local Planning Authority has screened the proposals and for the reasons described above and in the attached matrix, considers that it does result in likely significant effects on the environment, taking into account the cumulative impact with nearby development, when assessed against the criteria in Schedule 3. As such the Local Planning Authority does not consider that an Environmental Impact Assessment is required in support of the proposed development.

In the detailed design of development at the reserved matters stage, broad conformity will be required to parameter plans and design guide forming part of this outline application. Planning conditions will also shape the detailed design and management of development in combination

with a s.106 Legal Agreement as summarised in this letter. A review will be undertaken of the subsequent reserved matters application to ensure that the conclusion of this Opinion remains consistent and up to date.

Yours faithfully



Gary Peck
Planning Services Manager