

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011

Request for a "Screening Opinion" in respect of the following development:

Proposed Development:

The proposal suggests the development of approximately 2ha of agricultural land to the north west of the village of Yoxall. An outline planning application is being prepared for the development of the site by way of the erection of 40 new dwellings.

The site address is Land at Leafields Farm, Yoxall

Introduction:

The Council has received a request for a formal screening opinion under Regulation 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 in respect of the above proposals.

Schedule 1:

No

Schedule 2:

Yes

The development proposed does not fall within Schedule 1 of the Regulations where an assessment is mandatory. However on the basis of interpreting the Regulations as having "wide scope and broad purpose", I recommend a precautionary approach of assuming the development falls within Schedule 2, Category 10 (b) as an Urban development project, with the area of development of 2 hectares, exceeding the 0.5 hectare threshold.

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011:

In respect of Schedule 2 development, an assessment will only be required if the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location.

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 require regard to be had to Schedule 3 of the Regulations when considering whether an Assessment should be required.

1. Characteristics of the development – size of the development, cumulative effects with other development, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisances, risk of accidents with regard to substances or technologies utilised.
2. Location of the development: the environmental sensitivity of

geographical areas likely to be affected must be considered, in particular

- the existing land use,
- the relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources,
- the absorption capacity of the natural environment, with particular emphasis to the following areas:
 - (i) wetlands
 - (ii) coastal zones
 - (iii) mountain and forest areas
 - (iv) nature reserves and parks
 - (v) areas designated by Member states
 - (vi) where environmental quality standards have been laid down in Community legislation and have been exceeded
 - (vii) densely populated areas
 - (viii) landscapes of historical, cultural or archaeological importance.

3. Characteristics of the potential impact, with regard to :

- The extent of the impact
- Transfrontier nature of the impact
- Magnitude and complexity of the impact
- Probability of the impact
- Duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact

Assessment:

The proposed 2ha housing site would be situated adjacent to the existing village on an area of predominantly undeveloped land. The site is located immediately to the north of Hadley Street, and to the west of A515. Agricultural fields adjoin the site to the north of the site, and sports fields to the west.

Despite the physical scale of the development in comparison to the existing village, it is not considered that the housing development, would have an urbanising effect of such significance to require an Environmental Statement.

On the basis of the information available the site does not fall within or near to a 'sensitive' area as described by Regulation 2 of the 2011 Regulations or that any significant environmental effects are likely, having regard to the relative abundance, quality, regenerative capacity and absorption capacity of natural resources and natural environment in the area. Additionally, on the basis of the information provided, it does not appear that there are likely to be any significant environmental effects in terms of use of natural resources, production of waste or risk of accidents.

The impacts on heritage assets are an important consideration in relation to any application, however the impacts of the proposal can be considered through a normal heritage assessment, and are not sufficient to warrant a formal ES.

The site is within Flood Zone 1 and therefore any drainage and flood related impacts are expected to be localised and of a limited nature, such that an Environmental Statement would not be warranted in this regard.

The potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise pollution are particular environmental impact considerations in this case. It is considered that these impacts would not be significant if considering this development in isolation.

The Regulations however, require the cumulative effects of the development to be considered. There are no developments of a similar scale proposed adjoining this site; however in the wider area permission has recently been granted for a number of significant housing applications, and strategic urban extensions. These developments could result in an increase in traffic using the local highway network, but this is not considered to be to a significant level, and this site is sufficiently detached from other major developments that impacts will be sufficiently dispersed onto the wider network. This site does not lie in an Air Quality Management Area and therefore balancing the above considerations, it is determined that this proposal would not have a significant environmental effect.

Recommendation:

A formal screening opinion be adopted that an Environmental Assessment will not be required

Team Leader / Planning Manager comments:

The following decision is made by the undersigned in accordance with powers delegated to the undersigned under the provision of S101 of the Local Government Act 1972.

A formal Environmental Statement is not required in respect of the development as proposed.

~~Planning Team Leader~~ / Planning Manager

Signature *Alice Miller*

Date *20 December 2013*

