

Our ref: 22-00685

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Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 – Screening Opinion
Request under Regulation 5 at 550 Mauldeth Road West, Chorlton, M21 7AA**

On behalf of our client, Lidl Great Britain Limited ('Lidl'), we have been instructed to submit a Screening Opinion request in accordance with the above cited regulations to determine whether the proposed development constitutes Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development. The details of the request are set out below.

This request is accompanied by a Site Location Plan identifying the Screening Opinion Area, which represents the proposed area for a commercial development. This submission outlines the proposal, the characteristics and location, and any potential impacts on the environment.

INTRODUCTION

This Screening Opinion request is submitted in accordance with regulation 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. The 2017 EIA Regulations set out the parameters which define whether a development is Schedule 1, or Schedule 2, and therefore whether it may require an EIA.

Schedule 1 identifies over twenty different categories of development, none of which relate to the proposed development at 550 Mauldeth Road West, Chorlton, M21 7AA.

Schedule 2 identifies thirteen different categories of development. the nature of the proposal would fall under category 10 'Infrastructure Projects' (b) Urban development projects. The thresholds and criteria for this Class are:

- 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwelling house development; or
- Development includes more than 150 dwellings; or
- The overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.

Schedule 3 of the Regulations sets out selection criteria which must be taken into account in determining whether significant effects are likely and therefore whether the development constitutes EIA development. In

these terms, regard may be paid to the location of the development, its development characteristics, and characteristics of potential impacts.

THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The maximum levels of development which make up 'The Site' are identified as a foodstore of 1,988 sq.m Gross Internal Area (GIA), with a Sales Area of 1,360 sq.m. The access to the proposed development is from Nell Lane, and the site comprises 0.7ha.

LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT

Figure 1 attached to this Screening Opinion request identifies the location of the Site.

The site is approximately 0.7ha and is located to the north of Mauldeth Road West and east of Nell Lane. The site is bound by Mauldeth Road West to the south east, Nell Lane to the south west, Chorlton High School to the north and Mauldeth House office building and associated car park, and Hough End Hall to the west.

The site comprises the Lowry House office building located to the north of the site, with associated car parking to the south, east and north west. The existing vehicular site access is taken from Nell Lane.

The surrounding area contains a mix of uses. Beyond Mauldeth Road West to the east of the site, the area is predominantly residential in character. Chorlton Park is located to the east of the site beyond Nell Lane. The immediate surroundings of the site include Mauldeth House office building, the Grade II* Listed Hough End Hall, and Chorlton High School.

The Site itself is not in a 'sensitive area' as defined by the Regulations and is free from the following constraints:

- National Park;
- Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB);
- Regional/Country Park;
- SSSI or other locally designated wildlife sites (SNCI);
- Ponds;
- Tidal flood risk;
- Reservoir flood risk; and
- Groundwater protection Zone.

DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS AND POTENTIAL IMPACT

The proposals for the site have been progressed in accordance with the baseline studies / reports which have been undertaken to support the planning application. Therefore, the following can be ascertained.

Ecology

The site does not lie within an area designated or classified under international conventions or European legislation or within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone.

On this basis, it is considered that statutory and non-statutory sites will not be impacted as a result of the proposed works.

The site provides opportunity to incorporate appropriate measures to mitigate any potential impacts to ecological features and to demonstrate 'biodiversity net gain in accordance with NPPF and local planning policy.

On this basis, the potential impacts are not considered to be 'significant', warranting an EIA.

Ground Conditions/Contamination/Flood Risk

A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy have been completed for the site which demonstrate that the proposed development would be operated with minimal risk from flooding, would not increase flood risk elsewhere and is compliant with the requirements of national policy and guidance.

The existing building on site will be demolished to facilitate the development proposed. A Phase II Geo-Environmental Assessment Report has been prepared which identified the potential for on-site and off-site contamination.

Overall, the likely impacts are not considered to be 'significant' and do not prevent development coming forward or warrant an EIA.

Archaeology/Cultural Heritage

The site is not identified within an area of archaeological importance. The site does not contain a Listed or Locally Listed building, however Hough End Hall, a Grade II* Listed Building is located immediately adjacent to the site.

A Heritage Impact Assessment has been completed by Purcell. It concludes that the existing building on site (Lowry House) is detrimental to the setting of Hough End Hall and therefore there will be no direct harm from the demolition and loss of the building. The replacement structure will be on a similar footprint to the existing Lowry House but will be considerably lower in height and massing. The proposed building is also set slightly further from Hough End Hall. This reduction in height and slight set back will afford slightly better views of the building from the access road and from Mauldeth Road West. The car parking will take the place of an existing car park and this element of the wider landscape will result in no impact on the significance of the site.

The Heritage Impact Assessment concludes that the overall impact of the scheme to the heritage significance of the site and associated Hough End Hall is low beneficial through a reduction in massing and small increase in views of the buildings.

Overall, the likely impacts are not considered to be 'significant' and do not prevent development coming forward or warrant an EIA.

Landscape and Visual Impact

When set against the backdrop of existing residential and commercial development within the vicinity of the site, the proposed development is not considered to generate 'significant' landscape and visual impacts.

The proposed design and landscape of the scheme have been prepared to ensure that the development is in keeping with the surroundings. This includes new and improved landscape planting in and around the buildings.

On this basis, landscape and visual impacts are not considered to be 'significant', warranting an EIA.

Noise

The development proposal will be located within a predominantly built up area of Chorlton. The introduction of new commercial development in this context is unlikely to generate 'significant' noise impacts.

Noise effects during the construction phase will be temporary, typical of construction sites in urban environments and will cease when construction ends. Noise emissions can be controlled through normal good construction practices set out in appropriate planning conditions. Once operational, there will be some noise from the new users, but the proposed development is not of a scale or nature that will be out of keeping with an urban location.

As such, 'significant' impacts on existing residents during construction are considered unlikely. The likely impacts arising from the proposed development are not considered to be 'significant' sufficient to warrant an EIA.

Transport

A review of baseline conditions and highway safety in the vicinity of the site has been undertaken, which has identified there are no existing safety issues that are likely to be exacerbated by the proposed development.

The site occupies a sustainable location within Chorlton close to existing facilities and where footways are to a high standard and well lit. It is considered that the site has a good level of accessibility by the main non-car modes of transport. Access to the site on foot and by bicycle is of a good standard, and bus and tram connections are also available within close proximity, therefore enabling access to the site from a range of local locations.

The assessment confirms that the proposed site access junction is able to satisfactorily accommodate the levels of traffic likely to be generated. In addition, the assessments have also confirmed that other relevant junctions in the vicinity can satisfactorily accommodate the levels of traffic likely to be generated.

Overall, it is considered there will be a negligible impact on the road network from the development and construction traffic, and therefore EIA of the issue is not required.

Air Quality

An Air Quality Assessment has been undertaken to consider the impact of vehicle exhaust emissions associated with the proposed development, on identified receptor locations within the study area.

The AQA concludes that the air quality changes to existing sensitive receptors are predicted to be negligible and not significant. The proposed development is not expected to have a significant impact on local air quality.

Overall, impacts on air quality are unlikely to be significant. Therefore, an EIA is not required to address these specific concerns.

TYPES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

The above sets out the main environmental aspects that exist in and around The Site which may be impacted on as a result of the proposed development.

Potential impacts, either in isolation or cumulatively would not extend across local authority boundaries in this instance.

Any potential impacts arising from the proposed development will be short term and localised during the construction phase, such as noise, dust, vibration which can be mitigated through the use of planning conditions, construction traffic routing and management and a CEMP. More long term and permanent potential impacts may arise from loss of existing on-site habitat, although this can be mitigated through design, further and improved planting and habitat management.

Potential longer-term impacts through the increase in traffic, noise and pollution relating to the operational phase can be reduced through development design, and encouragement of use of public transport.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the proposed development of a Lidl foodstore (Use Class E) does not trigger the threshold criteria under Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 as the proposed development is on a site of less than 1ha.

The need for an EIA is judged against 'significant environmental effects' occurring as a result of the development. Taking into account the characteristics and location of the development, the expected environmental effects arising from this development are not considered to be significant. Whilst some localised potential impacts have been identified, with or without mitigation, the development is unlikely to result in 'significant environmental effects' sufficient to warrant an EIA. It is considered that the proposed development does not therefore constitute EIA development.

In these terms, it is considered that an EIA is not required for the proposal. A formal Screening Opinion of the Local Planning Authority is, nonetheless, requested to confirm that this proposal is not EIA development and therefore an EIA is not required.

We look forward to receiving your screening opinion response confirming that this is not EIA development, as quickly as possible, and in any event within the 21 days allowed for in the Regulations.

Yours faithfully,


J Ambrus (Nov 30, 2022 16:53 GMT)

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