

Development Management

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Mr Matt Pyecroft
Major Projects Officer – Economic Growth
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PLEASE ASK FOR: Adam Davies
DIRECT DIAL/EXT: 0300 300 5191
EMAIL: planning@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
DATE: 18 November 2013
YOUR REF:

Dear Mr Pyecroft

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT)
REGULATIONS 2011
SCREENING OPINION UNDER PART 2 OF THE REGULATIONS IN RESPECT OF:

Reference: CB/13/03589/SCN
Location: Woodside Ind Estate surrounding area inc Eastern Avenue
Proposed EIA/Screening Opinion: Local Development Order for Woodside
Development: Industrial Estate and surrounding area.

I refer to your request for a Screening Opinion in respect of the above, received on 28/10/2013. The site is identified on the plan accompanying your request.

In considering your request the following tests have been applied:

Schedule 1 Test:

The proposed Local Development Order (LDO) does not fall within Schedule 1 of the Regulations.

Schedule 2 Test:

The proposed LDO falls within Schedule 2 of the Regulations.

The relevant category of the Regulations is Category 10(a) of Schedule 2, for industrial estate developments where the area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectare.

Schedule 3 Considerations:

1. Characteristics of the development

The proposed LDO constitutes part of a strategy to encourage industrial growth and boost employment opportunities within the area. The content of the proposed LDO aims to modify the established permitted development rights to allow and facilitate a range of developments within a designated area including the Woodside Industrial Estate, land at Eastern Avenue and the surrounding area without the need to apply for planning permission. The modified development rights would allow for the following developments without the need for express planning permission within the proposed LDO area:

- Changes of use to B1 from B2 or B8 and to B8 from B2
- Subdivision of units
- Alterations to existing premises including recladding, shutters, doors etc.
- Mezzanine floors
- Solar/PV panels
- Signage as per existing controls to be clarified in LDO
- External lighting including lighting columns up to 5 metres in height (subject to controls to prevent light pollution to residential neighbours)
- Fencing up to a height of 3 metres in height unless adjacent to residential property (2 metres in height) or adjacent to a highway (1 metre in height)
- Ancillary structures (single storey ancillary structures allowed for specifically identified uses)
- Extensions of up to 1200sqm or 25% of the building, whichever is the greater (and within the Apex Business Centre 35% of the building)
- New build of up to 1200sqm

The LDO would be subject to standard conditions to ensure the protection of neighbour amenity and the environment. These would include controls over height, noise pollution, land contamination and other aspects of the development as deemed appropriate to address visual amenity impacts, land contamination risks, noise impacts and other environmental and safety considerations.

It is proposed that the LDO would be in place for a period of five years, at which time it would be extended, amended or allowed to lapse.

2. Location of the development

The proposed LDO site comprises two land parcels; the larger incorporating the Woodside Industrial Estate and surrounding land north of Luton Road; the other incorporating land at Eastern Avenue south of Luton Road. It is located close to the centre of Dunstable, within the Luton – Dunstable – Houghton Regis conurbation and surrounded by other commercial and residential development. This includes residential property immediately to the north, east and south of the site and between the two proposed LDO land parcels at Luton Road and Bramley Court.

The site is close to the A505, the newly opened Luton – Dunstable Guided Busway and the proposed route of the Woodside Connection link road which is to provide a direct connection between the Woodside Industrial Estate and the M1 motorway to the north east.

The site does not fall within an Archaeological Notifiable Area and does not include any designated heritage assets. The north western edge of the site is adjacent to the Grade II* listed Houghton Hall Park which forms part of the Houghton Regis Conservation Area. To the south east of the proposed LDO site, approximately 400 metres from the proposed boundary with Boscombe Road, lies the western edge of Dunstable Conservation Area which is centred around the Town Centre. This also incorporates a number of listed buildings including the Grade I listed Priory Church.

The site does not include any significant ecological features. To the south east, beyond the settlement boundary, lies the Blows Downs County Wildlife Site and Site of Special Scientific Interest. Several smaller sites to the south east of Blows Downs form part of a network of County Wildlife Sites.

A number of definitive rights of way cross through the adjoining landscape to the south from which there are elevated views of the Woodside Industrial Estate and the other commercial and residential areas surrounding the estate. The industrial estate and surrounding area are

also visible from the public cycleway which follows the line of the Luton – Dunstable Guided Busway.

The entire LDO site falls within Flood Zone 1 where all uses of land are appropriate in terms of flood risk.

3. Characteristics of the potential impact

It is acknowledged that there are a number of sensitive receptors within the wider area including neighbouring residential property, several designated heritage assets and publically accessible natural landscape and wildlife areas to the south of the town. Within the context of the established industrial estate, which is located close to the centre of Dunstable, and well located in relation to the existing and planned road network, it is considered that the proposed LDO is unlikely to result in significant environmental impacts which would trigger the need for an EIA. Having regard to the criteria set out in the above Regulations and to the information submitted with this screening request, it is considered that the main environmental effects arising from the proposed LDO would relate to visual amenity and noise impacts, land contamination risks as well as issues of transport and parking impacts. In this instance, these impacts could be adequately addressed through the use of appropriate controls to be imposed as part of the proposed LDO.

Conclusion

Having considered the proposal against the main selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development it is considered that the proposed Local Development Order would not have significant effects on the environment sufficient to trigger the need for an EIA. There is unlikely to be any unusually complex or potentially hazardous environmental effects.

The Local Planning Authority hereby adopt an opinion that an EIA is not required.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Hale', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

David Hale
Planning Manager South

