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Transport Delivery Specialist
Transport and Connectivity
Inclusive Growth
Birmingham City Council
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19th December, 2019

Dear Saaied,

**EIA Screening Opinion
Dudley Road Highway Improvement Line, Birmingham.**

Introduction

The purpose of this Screening Opinion is to consider the environmental effects of the proposals, within the context of the site and surroundings and to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is required. The documents used to assess this include your EIA Screening Report dated 31st July, 2019.

I have tested your proposed development against the 2017 Regulations (and associated amendments) and Government advice on environmental impact assessments within the National Planning Practice Guidance as follows:-

Assessment Criteria

The proposed development does not fall within the categories of development in Schedule 1 of the Regulations for which an EIA is mandatory.

The proposed development does however fall within Schedule 2 of the Regulations, namely Category 10f – Infrastructure projects and construction of roads, where the works site area would exceed the indicative threshold of 1 hectare. It is therefore necessary to consider whether the development is located in a sensitive area as defined by the Regulations.

Sensitive Area Test

The site does not fall within any sensitive area as defined by Part 1 of the Regulations which includes sites of special scientific interest, land to which nature conservation orders apply, UNESCO sites, national parks, areas of outstanding natural beauty, European sites and scheduled monuments.

On the basis of the above I conclude that the site is not within a sensitive area as defined by the TCP Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2017.

Schedule 3 Criteria

Therefore having regard to the provision of Schedule 3 of the 2017 Regulations:

Section 1 – Characteristic of Development

It is not considered that the proposed development would affect any of the matters listed in Schedule 3 (sections 1a-g) of the Regulations in such a manner that an EIA would be required as follows:

- a) The proposal relates to the alteration of a 5.3KM stretch of Dudley Road and sits within an existing urbanised location where alteration and improvements to the road network would not be unusual.
- b) There are a number of infrastructure projects in the near vicinity of the proposed development. These aim to mitigate potential transportation issues.
- c) The site is unlikely to have any significant impact in relation to the use of natural resources given its context.
- d) The alteration of the road will produce construction and operational waste but this would not be so significant or unusual to require an EIA and it could be managed in the normal manner for a highways infrastructure development.
- e) The proposed works will generate construction pollution, noise and vibration, but this can be mitigated and controlled in the normal manner for a highways infrastructure development. Information available indicates the road alterations have the potential to improve baseline air quality conditions in the locality on a long term basis.
- f) Road safety and Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been considered for operational and construction phases of the development and is not expected to result in any greater risk of accidents or disasters.
- g) Any necessary steps to prevent risks to human health would be secured through other relevant regulations.

The characteristics of the development do not trigger the need for an EIA.

Section 2(a-c) – Location of Development

- a) The land use will not be changed from the current use of the site area, which is an existing key arterial road, forming part of the city's urban infrastructure.
- b) The proposal would not directly affect natural resources.
- c) In terms of the absorption capacity of the area, the proposal would not adversely affect any of the areas listed in Schedule 3(i-viii).

The location of the proposed development is not in a sensitive area as to require rigorous assessment and issued raised can be adequately addressed through the application process.

Section 3 (a-h) – Characteristics of the Potential Impact

- a) The magnitude and spatial extent of the impacts has been considered within each technical assessment. Any potential impacts from the development can be addressed through other regulations and requirements.
- b) The nature of the impact would differ slightly to the existing but as a similar use would not be so significant that it could not be dealt with adequately under highways legislation and other relevant regulations.
- c) The trans-boundary nature of the impact would be zero.

- d) The intensity and complexity of this proposal would be assessed through the normal highways infrastructure controls and other relevant regulations.
- e) The probability of the impact can be assessed through the normal highways infrastructure consideration process. This, along with other legislation, identifies the impacts and considers appropriate mitigation where necessary.
- f) The expected onset duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact can be suitably considered through the normal highways infrastructure process.
- g) A significant impact would not occur and a cumulative impact in association with the proposed development is unlikely to have a significant environmental impact.
- h) The possibility of effectively reducing the impact – any impacts identified through the normal highways infrastructure process are considered to be localised issues only where identified and appropriate mitigation can be sought.

In terms of impacts (a-h) the proposal would not be of more than local significance in terms of its environmental effects.

Conclusion

The proposed development would result in a visual change to the appearance of the site, its immediate environment and short term congestion and disruption. However, in the long term, the proposed highways works would support local infrastructure provision, enhance pedestrian and cycle connectivity, improve linkages within the city and provide safer infrastructure for all road users. I also note that the site is within an urbanised context. Therefore on the basis of the above assessment, I do not consider the proposed highway works would require an Environment Impact Assessment.

I trust the above is found to be useful. If you have any questions please contact Idris Gulfraz to discuss this matter further.

Yours Sincerely,



Peter Barton

Area Planning Manager – North West Team

Enquiries to – Idris.Gulfraz@birmingham.gov.uk

