

Polly Clifton
Principal Consultant
Waterman Infrastructure and Environment Ltd

BY EMAIL

29th December 2015

Dear Ms Clifton

Re: Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 5 (1) 2011 and Amendment Regulations 2015: Request for EIA Screening Opinion for the redevelopment of Minavil House, Rosemont Road, Alperton HA0 4PZ

Thank you for your letter dated 22nd December 2015, received by e-mail on that date in which you requested that the planning authority adopt a screening opinion of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011, as amended, in respect of a forthcoming planning application for the proposed redevelopment of the aforementioned site.

The proposed development is for the redevelopment of Minavil House described as: *'Demolition of existing buildings and the construction of a mixed use building up to twenty six storey development. The scheme comprises of a supermarket and a mix of 263 residential units comprising a mix of one, two and three bedroom flats, a café/community facility and an office.'*

Having considered the proposals as detailed in your letter, Brent Council is of the opinion that the application does not fall within Schedule 1 Development of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2011 but within Schedule 2 Development, Part 10, Infrastructure Projects (b) – Urban development projects (ii) the development includes more than 150 dwellings. Brent Council has also given consideration to the characteristics of the development, its location and potential impact as set out in Schedule 3 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2011 and Planning Practice Guidance. Planning Practice Guidance indicates the types of case in which, an EIA is more likely to be required. It states:

'Environmental Impact Assessment is unlikely to be required for the redevelopment of land unless the new development is on a significantly greater scale than the previous use, or the types of impact are of a markedly different nature or there is a high level of contamination.'

EIA is more likely to be required where:

- '(i) the area of the scheme is more than 5 ha; or*
 - (ii) it would provide a total of more than 10,000m² of new commercial floorspace; or*
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(iii) the development would have significant urbanising effects in a previously non-urbanised area (e.g. a new development of more than 1,000 dwellings).’

‘Account is also to be taken of the physical scale of such developments, potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise.’

(Reference: National Planning Practice Guidance, Environmental Impact Assessments, Annex: Indicative Screening Threshold Paragraph 58)

Taking into account the scheme’s scale, nature and location, the Council considers that the new development is on a significantly greater scale than the previous use and permissions for the site and due to its height it is anticipated it will result in significant environmental effects. Therefore, the Local Planning Authority considers that the forthcoming application for this site requires an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Ecology and Nature Conservation

Planning Practice Guidance states, in general, the more environmentally sensitive the location, the lower the threshold will be at which significant effects are likely. Environmentally sensitive locations are considered to comprise:-

- a) Sites of Special Scientific Interest, any consultation areas around them (where these have been notified to the local planning authority under article 10 (u)(ii) of the GPDO), land to which Nature Conservation Orders apply and international conservation sites; and
- b) National Parks, the Broads, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, World Heritage Sites and scheduled monuments.

There are no areas which have an ecological designation (as listed above) on or immediately around the site. I am of the view that the proposed development would not cause any significant adverse impacts.

Traffic related impacts-Movement and Safety

The council does not consider that the development will result in significant impacts on highway capacity to warrant an EIA related to this issue. The council accepts that the development will lead to some traffic and air pollution within the vicinity of the development but that the impact is not significant when taking into account the existing situation should the existing building be occupied.

Contamination

It is considered that there is slight risk of contamination at the site but on the basis of experience with other application sites it is not considered to be large enough, complex or unusual enough to require an EIA related to this issue.

Archaeology and Architectural Context

The site is not located within an Archaeological Priority Area (as defined on the UDP proposals map). It is not located within a conservation area, the nearest are Wembley High Street in Brent and Brunswick and Hangar Hill Conservation Areas in LB Ealing. These conservation areas due to the topography and the presence of extensive areas of suburban housing and employment uses between it and the application site is considered to have limited views to the south. There are no listed buildings in close proximity and as such it is considered that impact on the setting of those closest is unlikely to be significant.

Overall, the scale and height of the proposed buildings means it is unlikely to have significant impact on the setting of features of historic or cultural importance and warrant an EIA in respect of this issue.

Air Quality and Noise

The site falls within Brent's Air Quality Management Area. The development is not likely to release significant pollutants or hazardous, toxic or noxious substances into the air and the proposed use is not predicted to have a significant effect upon air quality or traffic generation in the area which would require an EIA related to this issue.

It is anticipated the proposal will result in an increase in noise levels during construction. However, the noise levels are not considered to be significant enough to warrant an EIA in respect of this issue.

Other impacts

The council has assessed other possible impacts (as set out in the attached screening checklist) and effects of the development, and considers that whilst on the majority of criteria it will have no or limited impact to warrant an EIA, the visual impact effects related to the height and scale of the proposed building compared to the existing townscape in the immediate locality and further afield are significant enough to warrant an EIA. Consistent with paragraph 35 of National Planning Practice Guidance the Environmental Statement should focus on the "significant" environmental effects to which a development is likely to give rise. Impacts which have little or no significance for the particular development in question will need only very brief treatment to indicate that their possible relevance has been considered.

Date of Decision: 29th December 2015

On behalf of the Council of the London Borough of Brent



Paul Lewin
Planning Policy & Projects Manager
Planning and Regeneration
Brent Council

SCREENING CHECKLIST

(taken from Guidance on EIA: Screening, European Commission, June 2001)

Summary of features of project and of its location indicating the need for EIA

Questions to be Considered For further guidance on factors to be considered see the more detailed questions listed in the Scoping Guidance	Yes / No / ? Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Yes/No/? – Why?
1. Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the Project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc)?	Yes – the site will change from a predominantly low rise commercial use to a predominantly high rise residential use.	Yes, the form of development is a significant variant from that which exists as it proposes a residential tower of up to 26 storeys, whilst the existing building is 2 storeys. The limited existing provision of tall buildings and in particular buildings of this height mean that proposed building will be visible from considerably further distance than is currently the case from a number of directions.
2. Will construction or operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes – only those typical of construction activities within an urban area, but limited amounts of non-renewables such as oil based fuels. The majority of materials are existing materials are likely to be recycled which is also true of the new materials required should the proposed building be redeveloped in the future.	No – the construction of this proposed development in this location is not predicted to have a complex or unusual effect and therefore would not have a significant effect on natural resources.
3. Will the Project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	No - the proposed development will not involve the use, storage, transport or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to people or the environment.	No – as the proposed use for the redevelopment of the site will not have a significant effect on human health or the environment.
4. Will the Project produce solids during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes –There will be waste produced from construction.	No – mitigation to be agreed prior to works.
5. Will the Project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	No – The existing building which will have to be removed because of its age may contain substances that are regarded as toxic. There are no elements of the proposed development that will result in the generation or release of noxious, hazardous or toxic substances to air.	No – Method statements for removal of potential toxic materials would be followed in the demolition and removal of the building. It is likely the developers will be use the Considerate Constructors scheme consequently there will not be any environmental nuisance in respect to significant release of pollutants or contaminants.
6. Will the Project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Noise and some vibration may be generated by construction and demolition, but this can be managed by	No – The effects are not predicted to be significant or unusual. Noise, and light will be generated but these

	conditions.	effects are not predicted to be significant in this context.
7. Will the Project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	No, although the ground has historically been used for industrial purposes and is in parts made up it is not considered to have significant potential to release pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters and ground water.	No – The level of contamination would not be so significant enough to warrant an EIA.
8. Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project which could affect human health or the environment?	No – the construction and operation of the site do not involve the use of high risk substances or the use of high risk technologies.	No – It is considered that there would be no significant risk of accidents as a result of the end use of the development.
9. Will the Project result in social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	No, the amount of housing proposed and loss of existing commercial floorspace will not result in social change.	No in the context of Alperton Growth Area and Brent, the changes in floorspace are not significant.
10. Are there any other factors which should be considered such as consequential development which could lead to environmental effects or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	Yes – whilst each application for development has to be assessed on its impacts, the scale of the development proposed would create a step change in the height of buildings in this part of Alperton against which other sites identified as suitable for tall buildings/applications for tall buildings will be compared/considered against.	Yes – whilst assumptions about potential for tall buildings within Alperton have been considered through the development plan adoption process, the height of buildings for this part of Alperton assumed was considerably lower than that which is proposed in this application.
11. Are there any areas on or around the location which are protected under international or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the project?	No.	No
12. Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the project?	The canal is identified as a Metropolitan Site of Nature Conservation Importance.	No, the size of the site, set back from the canal edge and its orientation mean impacts are unlikely to be significant.
13. Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the project?	No	No
14. Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	No
15. Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	No
16. Are there any routes or facilities on or around	Yes, the site is on a	The main potential effects

<p>the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?</p>	<p>prominent street with high levels of public transport accessibility/movement that is used by the public for access to a range of everyday facilities and surrounding built up areas.</p>	<p>are considered to be impact on micro-climate particularly in the areas at the base of the development related to wind turbulence and overshadowing. Prior to assessment it is not known how significant this impact could be in terms of effect on pedestrian comfort/experience in the area, although impact is likely to be local, rather than large scale.</p>
<p>17. Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?</p>	<p>The Ealing Road is heavily trafficked and at peak times experiences high levels of congestion. Given its scale, a comparatively low level of parking is provided with the housing development essentially being car free. The site has good levels of public transport accessibility (PTAL5) to a variety of public transport routes (tube and bus).</p>	<p>No, in the short term construction traffic and its movement/management may have an impact on the local highway network, but this is not considered to be significant.</p>
<p>18. Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?</p>	<p>Yes – the site is on a busy thoroughfare as well as major public transport routes. The topography of Brent is such that the proposed height of the building associated with its massing means that potentially views of it will extend miles in most directions, but particularly from the south and in the arc from the west to the east when viewed from the south.</p>	<p>Yes, this is considered to be significant. Locally the height of the building, particularly when viewed from adjacent relatively low density sub-urban areas, plus along corridors like Ealing Road will mean it will be highly visible and represent a significant departure from the existing urban form. For medium to longer distance views from some view points the proposed building might well be viewed in association with a background formed of taller buildings that either exist, such as 372 Ealing Road, Fairbanks Court Atlip Road and Venice/Cosgrove Houses on Ealing Road. The current background is more limited in relation to the skyline containing tall buildings. The building's scale means that as such it would appear to have significant impact as a relatively isolated feature much elevated above the existing urban form to which</p>

		the eye would be drawn.
19. Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	There are no listed buildings in the near vicinity of the site. Alperton Station in close proximity is a locally listed building. The Brunswick and Hangar Hill Conservation Areas to the south in the LB Ealing are the nearest conservation areas. At this stage it is not known how visible the development would be from these locations.	No it will be appropriate to undertake a desk-top assessment to examine potential for archaeological remains on the site however, impacts on listed buildings and conservation areas are not considered to be significant due to the distance and their characteristics for designation.
20. Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	No	No
21. Are there existing land uses on or around the location e.g. homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying which could be affected by the project?	The site has existing commercial uses on it (largely vacant). It is also located in an area with a mix of commercial and residential uses, together with social infrastructure such as primary and secondary schools.	It is considered that the main issues in relation to existing uses is likely to be visual impact and at a very local level the micro-climate around the base of the development and in adjoining areas due to increased wind and loss of sunlight.
22. Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes. The site is part of an identified growth area with numerous site specific allocations (including this site), plus now also being recognised as a GLA Housing Zone.	The site is adjacent to allocations A1 Alperton House and A3. Former B&Q and Marvellairs House. The proposed development if built as proposed could prove to be a catalyst for bringing forward site A1 as it will change the context of the area both in terms of investor perception and future scale and massing of buildings which realistically are likely to be higher density than might have otherwise been considered due to the precedent set by this proposal. The Brent Local Plan has a residential dwellings target, which this proposal would make a valuable contribution towards.
23. Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project?	The area surrounding is populated but apart from directly adjacent along Ealing Road with relatively low density suburban housing.	Local scale visual impact of the development is likely to be the main effect on the area.
24. Are there any areas on or around the location	There are sensitive uses such	No, the occupied building's

which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities, which could be affected by the project?	as the Alperton community schools within 100 metres of the site.	operational use is not likely to significantly impact on this sensitive use.
25. Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, which could be affected by the project?	No	No
26. Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	Yes – the site is within an Air Quality Management Area.	The impacts are unlikely to be significant. The impact of the construction phase will be temporary and dealt with via a construction management plan or conditions related to a transport assessment so as not to increase congestion. Although it has a comparatively low level of parking provision in relation to the residential use, after the construction phase the development could increase the amount of private car transport/congestion impacts related to the site due in particular to its proposed retail use.
27. Is the project location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	No	No

The **Screening Checklist** provides a list of questions to help identify where there is the potential for interactions between a project and its environment.

These questions have been considered for each “Yes” answer in the **Screening Checklist** and the conclusion and the reasons for it noted in the checklist. The questions are designed so that a “Yes” answer will generally point towards the need for EIA and a “No” answer to EIA not being required.

Questions to be Considered

1. Will there be a large change in environmental conditions?
2. Will new features be out-of-scale with the existing environment?
3. Will the effect be unusual in the area or particularly complex?
4. Will the effect extend over a large area?
5. Will there be any potential for transfrontier impact?
6. Will many people be affected?
7. Will many receptors of other types (fauna and flora, businesses, facilities) be affected?
8. Will valuable or scarce features or resources be affected?
9. Is there a risk that environmental standards will be breached?
10. Is there a risk that protected sites, areas, features will be affected?
11. Is there a high probability of the effect occurring?
12. Will the effect continue for a long time?
13. Will the effect be permanent rather than temporary?
14. Will the impact be continuous rather than intermittent?
15. If it is intermittent will it be frequent rather than rare?

- 16. Will the impact be irreversible?
- 17. Will it be difficult to avoid, or reduce or repair or compensate for the effect?