05 September 2012

Our Ref: BAM 14-50-1
Your Ref:

Dear Sirs

UP TO 98 RESIDENTIAL UNITS AT LAND TO THE NORTH-WEST OF SHILTON LANE, COVENTRY TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2011 REQUEST FOR SCREENING OPINION

Following recent discussions with your Planning Officers, we are currently finalising preparations to submit a planning application on behalf of Hallam Land Management Limited, in relation to the above proposed development.

The purpose of this letter is to seek a formal screening opinion from Coventry City Council, pursuant to Regulation 5 of the 2011 Regulations, for the purpose of which we now enclose the following:

- A plan identifying the land;
- A brief description of the nature and purpose of the development and its possible effects on the environment;
- A copy of the Inspector’s Report to the Coventry Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Matter 13b – New Sites, paragraphs 3.427 – 3.436); and
- A copy of Screening Opinion from Coventry City Planning Manager for the same development proposal on the same site dated 22 January 2010.

Site Description

The site is roughly a triangular, flat and featureless field which covers an overall area of 5.0 ha and is located east of the Barlow Lane Industrial Estate, north-west of
City Planning Manager
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Shilton Lane and south-west of the M6 motorway. It lies on the north-eastern edge of the City but is not designated as greenbelt.

The land is a former private sports ground, with small changing rooms, and is well screened from the industrial estate to the west and the houses on Shilton Lane, close to the south-west corner, by established vegetation. A similar, albeit narrower strip, also separates the site from the motorway, which lies approximately 2m below the site level and is unlit.

The land lies within an area designated as Flood Zone 1 and therefore, whilst a specific flood risk assessment would be required prior to any development, the Inspector’s Report on the Examination into the Coventry Core Strategy Development Plan Document (submitted for Examination on 30 June 2009) considered that “there is nothing to indicate that surface water drainage, in common with water supply and sewerage, could not be adequately addressed”.

The Inspector also found the site to be in a sustainable location, with a Sustainability Assessment confirming at that time three primary schools within one kilometre, a District Centre within 2 kilometres, and regular bus services along Shilton Lane, thus encouraging walking/cycling and public transport use, rather than private car mileage.

The Council acknowledged, at the Examination, that an access to serve residential development on the majority of the site on to Shilton Lane, just north of the Boat Inn, would be safe and satisfactory in principle. Moreover, the Inspector stated that “Shilton Lane should be capable of taking the relatively limited increase arising from around 100 dwellings in relation to existing flows without material harm to highway safety in the locality, bearing in mind the 30 mile per hour speed limit”.

Relevant Planning History

Representations were made to promote the above site through the Council’s Core Strategy and raised by the Inspector’s report on the Examination into the Coventry Core Strategy Development Plan Document. The Examination hearings were held between 10 November and 4 December 2009. The site subject of the forthcoming application was dealt with at matter 13b – New Sites, paragraphs 3.427 – 3.436. In consideration of the site, the Inspector stated the following, “Therefore, subject to the retention and enhancement of the existing peripheral vegetation, the revision of public open space, incorporating new footpath, on both the western and north-eastern boundaries as suggested, I suggest the site is realistically and practically capable of delivering around 100 new dwellings (rather than 42)”.

Furthermore, attached to this correspondence is the City Council’s Screening Opinion in respect of a similar proposed development (22 January 2010). The attached
correspondence illustrates that for the reasons given within the City Council’s Screening Opinion, an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required for redevelopment of the site for residential development (use Class C3) comprising a lesser quantum of dwellings with associated access, landscaping and public open space.

The Proposed Development

The attached Masterplan illustrates that the proposal aims to redevelop the site for residential development comprising 98 dwellings with associated access, landscaping and public open space. The development would cover the full extent of the site (at 5.0 ha), although the residential element would extend to only 3.0 ha.

The proposed access to the site would be from Shilton Lane. Existing trees and woodland to the site boundaries with the M6 motorway, Aldermans Green Industrial Estate and Shilton Lane would be retained and enhanced with additional planting, inclusive of a noise attenuation boundary to the north eastern boundary with the M6.

The proposals would comprise a publically accessible habitat area of 1.3Ha and SUDS feature covering 0.11Ha provided in the south-west corner of the site. An area of 0.7Ha public open space would be provided adjacent to the Noise Boundary. An equipped play area is also proposed to the western side of the site and the full extent of the site boundary is traversed by pedestrian linkages offering permeability and extensive opportunity for active and casual surveillance.

Request for EIA Screening Opinion

The proposed development falls within Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011, being an urban development project in excess of 0.5 ha, and as such may require an Environmental Impact Assessment if the development is:

"... likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size and location?" (Regulation 2(b)).

In our opinion, however, the proposed development is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment. This is consistent with the findings of the Inspector in his report on the Examination into the Coventry Core Strategy Development Plan Document (April 2010). Furthermore, the City Council have also arrived at this conclusion, having regard to the Screening Opinion sent to the applicant on 22 January 2010 and enclose for the Council’s ease of reference.

The Potential Impacts of the Development
The proposal would result in a site, currently designated as greenfield land, being built upon, although some significant open space (40% of the site area) would be retained as part of any proposed development (circa 2.0Ha). No part of the site is covered by any local or national landscape, or nature conservation designation. In terms of landscape features, the vast majority of existing trees within the site are to the site boundaries and it is anticipated that such planting would be safeguarded and reinforced as part of any redevelopment.

The site does not form part of a conservation area, nor does it directly involve any listed buildings. Therefore a heritage assessment is not required. The hydrological impact of the proposals will be considered. As previously acknowledged by the Inspector, this impact will not be significant and it is anticipated that it will be fully addressed as part of the Flood Risk Assessment that will accompany the application.

The impact with regard to transport and traffic is considered not to be of significance within the meaning of the Regulations. Any impact will be addressed in the Transport Assessment that will accompany the planning application.

Any nature conservation value that may be present on the site, particularly within the areas of tree planting, will be addressed through the provision of a Phase 1 Habitat Survey. As previously stated, such areas of planting are earmarked for retention and reinforced planting.

Matters related to air and acoustic pollution, and the impact of the M6 motorway will be assessed through noise and air pollution assessments to be submitted with the proposals.

The Design and Access Statement will demonstrate how the design of the proposed development has been conceived after careful consideration of urban design considerations and the constraints and opportunities bearing on the site’s redevelopment.

The Planning Policy Statement will demonstrate how the proposals accord with the relevant policies of the Development Plan, together with current national planning policy guidance.

The full scale and extent of the background reports to accompany the application will be agreed with Officers during the course of pre-application discussions.

**Summary and Conclusions**
City Planning Manager
05 September 2012

The Council is requested to provide a screening opinion in relation to the proposed
development being an urban development project.

With a site area in excess of 0.5 ha, for which an Environmental Impact Assessment
may be required.

The site comprises a long abandoned private sports pitch and the proposed
development would not have impacts of a significantly greater scale than, nor of a
markedly different nature to, development proposals which have already been
considered by the Council with regard to Screening Opinion.

It is also noted that the Wilsons Road site (Longford), a comparable development
proposal, was recently granted planning permission by the Secretary of State without
the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment. In light of the above, the Council
is invited to agree and confirm that the development is not likely to have any
significant effect on the environment by virtue of such factors, as its nature, size or
location and that, as such, an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

If you have any queries on this matter please do not hesitate to contact Alasdair Jones
or Brian Mullin at this office.

Yours faithfully

MARRONS

Enc

cc. Hallam Land Management Ltd.