

NG/GG/P.0127

5th May 2009

Head of Planning Services
Coventry City Council
City Development Directorate
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Dear Sir / Madam

**Bannerbrook Park (formerly AGCO / Massey Ferguson), Banner Lane,
Coventry**
Town and Country Planning Act (Environmental Impact Assessment)
(England and Wales) Regulations 1999 – Regulation 5 Request for
Screening Opinion

The Bannerbrook Park (formerly AGCO/Massey Ferguson) site has been the subject of an outline planning permission (App no: 52000) and Reserved Matters applications and consents for various parcels of development in the south of the site. Clearance across the whole site of previous buildings and hard standing associated with the former use has been completed with residential development and occupation progressing in the approved areas.

The northern area of the site was originally proposed for employment uses in the form of a business park. Following a review of employment land and strategic requirements for the Coventry MUA, the Submission Core Strategy proposes that the northern part of the site, together with the adjoining Bestway Site, should now be allocated for housing.

It is, therefore, the intention of Persimmon Homes to prepare and submit an outline planning application for the residential development of this portion of the site to replace the outline consent for employment use.

With respect to the development proposals, we write to request a screening opinion under Regulation 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 to determine whether the production of an Environmental Statement is required to accompany the outline planning application submission.

This request is accompanied by a plan identifying the context and location of the site, a brief description of the nature and purpose of the development and of its possible effects on the environment as required under this Regulation.

Following this request, it is required under sub-paragraph No.4 of Regulation 5, that the Council shall adopt a screening opinion within 3 weeks beginning with the date of receipt of a request made and, therefore, we look forward to receiving your response within the specified time frame.

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Development Proposals

The site extends to approximately 14.8 hectares in the northern part of the former AGCO/Massey Ferguson site which was granted outline permission for employment development under Application no: 52000. All previous industrial buildings on the site have been demolished and the site cleared. To the south of the site (part of the original outline permission) building works are in progress with residential properties in occupation.

The outline planning application is for residential development with associated road infrastructure, public open space and strategic landscaping. The net residential area will provide circa 320 dwellings. A separate full planning application is proposed for land that formed part of the proposed business park south of the local centre, comprising 1.5 hectares and circa 40 dwellings and open space, including demolition of the existing tower block.

Potential Impact of the Proposed Development

Within the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999, the proposed development subject of each application may fall within the definition of a Schedule 2 development, under Section 10 (b) Urban Development Projects, given that the sites are each over 0.5 hectares in area. A Schedule 2 development is one which is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location. It is therefore appropriate to screen the proposed development under Regulation 5 to determine whether an Environmental Statement is required to accompany the application.

In terms of the impacts, it is acknowledged that there are potential environmental issues arising from the proposed development and these aspects are to be addressed through the provision of supporting reports to the planning application. It is considered, however, based on the previous assessments undertaken that the magnitude and duration of the impacts relating to residential development would not be 'significant' to warrant the submission of a formal EIA.

The reports which will accompany the planning applications submission are:

- **Transport Assessment:** to consider the traffic and transport implications of the proposed development in terms of residential traffic rather than employment generation.
- **Noise Report:** For the outline application only a PPG24 assessment to consider the noise constraints of the site for residential development in the event of ongoing industrial operation of the Bestway site to the east.
- **Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Statement:** to address any issues arising from the scheme in terms of flooding as required by PPS25 and to provide a suitable drainage strategy for residential development.
- **Landscape Strategy:** given the site clearance works and retention of appropriate boundary vegetation, a masterplan for the provision of landscape and public open space provision within the development

would be prepared and submitted. Any ecological mitigation features would be included within this plan.

- **Contamination:** a report would be prepared to review the suitability of the site for residential development and to update the position on ground investigation/remediation completed to discharge previous conditions.
- **Ecology Survey:** an update of the previously submitted reports which did not identify significant interests in the northern part of the site.
- **Economic Statement:** justification of the loss of employment in the context of existing policies.
- **Sustainability Assessment:** in accordance with the City Council's SPD.

As outlined above, it is considered that those environmental parameters which are important in the consideration of residential development of this site will be properly addressed by the supporting documentation. Given that such reports will be part of an application package, it is not considered that it would be necessary to prepare an Environmental Statement to accompany the application.

EIA Requirement

In the classification of such a development, there are a number of threshold criteria to determine whether the submission of a formal Environmental Statement is required. Three broad criteria are detailed in para 33 of the Circular 2/99 (Environmental Impact Assessment) to be considered in determining whether an EIA is appropriate:

- The characteristics of the development
- The environmental sensitivity of the location
- Characteristics of the potential impact

The guidance given in Annex A of Circular 2/99 (Environmental Impact Assessment) determines that for sites which have not been previously intensively developed then the requirement for an EIA will be determined by:

- The site area of the scheme is more than 5 hectares; or
- It would provide a total of more than 10,000sqm of commercial floorspace; or
- The development would have a significant urbanising effect in a previously non urbanised area (e.g. a new development of more than 1,000 dwellings).

The site at Bannerbrook Park is not Greenfield in nature and is subject, as discussed previously, to an outline planning consent for development. Whilst the development site extends to approximately 14.8 hectares, the residential scheme will provide only around 320 dwellings which therefore will not fulfil the criteria for having a significant urbanising effect of more than 1,000 dwellings.

The principle of the development at this site was established through the grant of planning consent for high quality business park use of this portion of the site. The original outline application for the larger area was supported by

an Environment Statement across the whole site to determine likely significant effects. There exists, therefore, a grant of planning permission for the employment development of the land, the subject of this application.

The likely significant effects need to be considered in terms of the context of the site, which has outline permission for employment use and impacts which would result from the change of development type to residential. It is not considered that this would generate 'likely significant effects' as required in the EIA Regulations to require the preparation of an Environmental Statement.

The nature of the proposed development is mixed use in nature in terms of residential and complementary community and infrastructure uses and would not result in unusually complex and potentially hazardous environmental effects. It is our view therefore that the scale and characteristics of this development would not justify the submission of an EIA in terms of the generation of likely significant effects.

Furthermore, the location of the proposed development is not considered to be a sensitive area under the definition of such given in Regulation 2(1) as land lying within SSSI's, National Parks, World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, AONBs and sites covered by international conservation designations. The site is not subject to any national statutory or non statutory designations as detailed in Regulation 2(1), therefore does not represent an environmentally sensitive location.

Conclusions

As outlined above, the environmental parameters which are considered to be important will be thoroughly addressed by means of supporting documentation to the submission. Given that such reports will essentially review assessments submitted with the previous application that did not identify any likely significant effects, it is considered that it would not be necessary to prepare an Environmental Statement to accompany the application per se.

Notwithstanding the above, this is a formal request of the Council to establish whether an Environmental Statement would be required and I trust that the information provided in this letter, together with the plan, is sufficient for you to formulate an opinion. However, should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



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Director

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Enc.

cc: K Tait, Persimmon Homes