



SCREENING OPINION

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (ENGLAND & WALES) REGULATIONS 1999

=====

SITE – Coventry University campus developments at land to rear of 80 - 90 Gosford Street; Sir Frank Whittle Building and car park, Jordan Well; and part of former Gulson Road Hospital, Gulson Road.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT – Multi-storey car park; demolition of Sir Frank Whittle Building and part of James Starley Building and erection of Student Enterprise/New Ways of Working and Learning Institute and associated landscaping; and demolition of existing hospital buildings and erection of Engineering and Computing Centre and associated landscaping.

=====

Individually two of the above proposals (Student Enterprise Building and Engineering and Computer Centre) lie on sites above 0.5 ha and therefore fall within Schedule 2 of the above Regulations (an 'Urban Development Project') for which the City Council is charged to assess (a "screening opinion") whether the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment such that the application should be accompanied by a Environmental Impact Assessment in the form set out in Part I & II of Schedule 4 to those Regulations.

However all three proposals form part of a co-ordinated phase of University campus development to be undertaken over a similar timescale and therefore it is considered that any screening opinion should assess the cumulative impact and implications of the three schemes as a totality.

This screening opinion has been undertaken in accordance with the selection criteria set out in Schedule 3 to the Regulations.

SENSITIVE AREA

The Engineering and Computing Centre site does include a Sensitive Area as defined by Regulation 2(1) as a section of the medieval city wall, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, runs along part of the Gulson Road frontage. However there is no indication that the Scheduled Monument will be affected by the proposals in view of its location in relation to the proposed development.

The other two sites do not lie within a Sensitive Area.

CHARACTERISTICS OF DEVELOPMENT

The multi-storey car park will provide around 450 spaces on 13 half-levels in the form of a steel-framed structure with concrete decks and brick cladding. Access will be provided via ramps using existing gaps between buildings on Godford Street.

The Student Enterprise facilities will comprise 9,000sqm of accommodation comprising a concert venue, bar and back of house areas, informal learning space, a supermarket and bookshop, Student Union offices, refectory, kitchens and support areas such as a faith centre, medical, welfare and employability. These will be accommodated in an L-shaped building adjoining the Herbert Art Gallery and Jordan Well.

The New Ways of Working and Learning building will comprise 3,000sqm of accommodation adjoining Cox Street and Jordan Well frontages. The two buildings will be separated by a pedestrian route. Both buildings will be two storeys, stepping up to four storeys along Jordan Well. The main vehicular access will be provided from Jordan Well, into a service area behind the Herbert Art Gallery.

The Engineering & Computing Centre will provide for a multi-storey teaching accommodation of approximately 15,000 sq m on a site of less than 1 hectare. The accommodation comprises IT/non IT labs and electronics, lecture theatres, first-floor teaching rooms, breakout spaces, accommodation for academic staff and research students, technician and tutorial support areas, administrative offices, reception and café, conference/meeting rooms, common rooms and storage/archive space. The proposals will involve the demolition of all former hospital buildings on the site.

The accommodation will be provided in the form of two L-shaped buildings, which steps up from 2 storeys on the Gulson Road frontage to 6 storeys adjoining the Lancaster library, enclosing open space. Vehicle access will be from the internal road serving the Student Centre and library.

The scale and form of the development is that which would be expected in a City Centre location. Uses and buildings of a similar size and character surround the sites. The scale and form of the proposals, individually or taken as a whole, raise no issues that can be considered more than of local significance (i.e. urban design, privacy/overlooking, traffic flows etc) particularly, as in accordance with the criteria set out in paragraph A18 of Circular 2/99, the new development is not of a significantly greater scale than the previous uses and the types of impact are not of a markedly different nature.

In addition in view of the uses proposed the development will not have any particular impact on the use of natural resources, waste production, pollution/nuisances or risk of accidents regarding any substances or technologies used.

LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT

The proposals are located in an area, which has been previously developed and are surrounded by a variety of existing commercial, residential and community/leisure based uses.

There is no evidence to suggest that any of the sites have any high or unusual levels of contamination and any contamination is of a nature that would be reasonably expected from previously developed sites.

The developments will not have any effect on natural resources and although some of the uses are potentially noisy these environmental factors would be satisfactorily absorbed into the local natural environment through appropriate design and limited mitigation measures and therefore will not impact on neighbouring properties.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POTENTIAL IMPACT

The scale, location and form of the combined development is such that their impact will be no more than local to those properties adjoining the development, their magnitude and complexity would not be of a scale to result in impact beyond the immediate area and any impact is likely to be short lived during the construction period.

CONCLUSION

For the following reasons and under delegated powers it is determined that an Environmental Impact Statement is **NOT REQUIRED** for the above development:

- 1] Although a site is within a “sensitive area” as defined by Regulation 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England & Wales) 1999 it is not anticipated that the proposals would impact on any archaeological remains of the Scheduled Ancient Monument;
- 2] Although major developments the environmental impact would be no more than local significance or importance nor be markedly different to that currently existing;
- 3] The developments will not give rise to high levels of contamination nor result in unusually complex or potentially hazardous environmental effects;
- 4] The developments would not be of a significantly greater scale than that existing within or surrounding the existing campus.

DECISION DATE : 24 September 2008

L. Wroe

Signed :

City Planning Manager