

## **Cornhill Masterplan Development Site EIA Screening Opinion**

(i) Is the proposed development Schedule 1 development as described in Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations?

No

(ii) Is the proposed development Schedule 2 development as described in Column 1 of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations?

Yes

(iii) If YES, under which description of development in Column 1 i.e. Nos. 1-12?

Section 10 (b) Urban Development (ii) – based on drawing (03)025 the development at 2.146ha includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwelling house development.

Is the development within, partly within, or near a 'sensitive area' as defined by Regulation 2 of the EIA Regulations?

No

(iv) If YES, which area?

(v) Are the applicable thresholds/criteria in Column 2 exceeded/met?

Threshold exceeded.

(vi) If yes, which applicable threshold/criteria?

Includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwelling house development.

Conclusion: the proposed development exceeds the trigger threshold set for urban development infrastructure projects of Schedule 2 to the EIA regulations and therefore must be screened to determine whether EIA is required.

Using the screening checklist below none of the listed 27 features of the project or of its location has been found likely to result in a significant effect in EIA terms. This is consistent with the Government's published indicative criteria and thresholds which suggest that proposals are only likely to be significant if the area of the scheme is more than 5 hectares – in this case it is less than half that at 2.146 hectares; or it would provide more than 10,000m<sup>2</sup> of new commercial floor space – in this case the figure is c.3,825m<sup>2</sup>.

On this basis it is concluded that EIA is not required.

### **SCREENING CHECKLIST**

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

**Brief Project Description:**

Cornhill regeneration area including access road and industrial units

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

Questions to be Considered	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 water bodies, etc)?	Yes but if the development works with the land levels broadly as existing the changes should at most be moderate.	No – subject to working generally with the existing levels the effects would not be significant.
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 – construction raw materials and energy; operational energy requirements.	No significant effect at the site location – the consumption of raw materials to create the built structures and to supply development in operation would be sourced elsewhere.
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 indication of this.	No
4. Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes – at decommissioning	No
5. Will the Project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Yes – traffic emissions	No – on the currently envisaged scale the intensity / amount of use is unlikely to lead to significant effects.
6. Will the Project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes – noise in particular and possibly vibration will occur during construction.	No – the amount / intensity of noise or vibration is unlikely to give rise to a significant effect upon the surroundings of this site and control measures such as operating time restrictions could be imposed if necessary.
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	No – subject to appropriate safeguards and mitigation as part of the normal planning process.
8. Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project which could affect human	Yes – all activities carry risks.	No – such risks are likely to be very low being controlled by established construction and

health or the environment?		operating methods and procedures including legislation.
9. Will the Project result in social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	Yes – limited term additional employment during construction; some additional employment in operation.	No – Some employment would be created during construction and subsequent operation but not at a level significant in EIA terms to the locality.
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 – the development could open up further future possibilities for neighbouring land	No – other development would generally be within existing developed areas and it can be judged would be unlikely to raise significant changes.
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 – The nearest identified protection constraints are Cauldon Canal Leek Arm Conservation Area (100m at closest) and the Grade II Listed John Rennie aqueduct (225m distant); also Ladderedge County Park and Local Nature Reserve comes to within c.80m at its closest point. However none of these are considered likely to be significantly affected.
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?	Yes – River Churnet comes to within 150m to SW. A tributary water course – Birchall Brook defines the southerly limit of the proposal area for some 400m.	No – subject to appropriate safeguards, mitigation and controls – draft option plans make provision for the open retention of the water course in a conserved semi natural or natural state.
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?	Yes – preliminary surveys suggest some habitat interest of local significance is present.	No – compensatory alternative provision is likely to be readily achievable.
14. Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes – Birchall Brook on southern edge of site.	No – subject to appropriate stand-off distances and safeguards which can be implemented as part of normal planning process to protect during development and

		retain thereafter without loss of the brook and brook margin habitats.
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	
16. Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes – the former railway bordering the western site edge is used and maintained as a Council-owned informal recreational space open to walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Birchall Playing fields lies adjacent alongside the southern site edge.	No – there is no indication that these facilities would be significantly adversely affected. Some 'desire-line' access appears to be enjoyed through the site between the livestock auction site and the playing fields. If necessary and considered appropriate it appears likely that replacement pedestrian access links could be created.
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?	At peak times Congestion arises on the adjacent A520 Cheddleton Road to the east.	No – the scale of development appears unlikely to result in significant additional impacts on a level to warrant EIA. Traffic impacts will nonetheless be a material planning consideration.
18. Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes – to a degree, although with part of the site at a low level at the western end and by its relationship to existing surrounding development on three sides (N/E and W) it may tend to be assimilated.	No – the separation distances involved and in the context of the surroundings (extant planning permissions and Barnfields Industrial Estate) the development is not considered significant in EIA terms.
19. Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	No – The nearest identified protection constraints are Cauldon Canal Leek Arm Conservation Area (170m at closest) and the Grade II Listed John Rennie aqueduct (280m distant); also Ladderedge County Park and Local Nature Reserve comes to within c.120m at its closest point. However none of these are considered likely to be significantly affected.
20. Is the project located in a previously	Yes	No – although at least parts of

undeveloped area where there will be loss of Greenfield land?		the proposal area appear as previously undeveloped green field the areas involved are small and the scale of impacts would not warrant EIA.
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?	Yes	No significant adverse effects are likely as the site provides adequate scope to enable appropriate planned spacing which along with building scale, design and function can be controlled at the planning application stage without EIA.
22. Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	
23. Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project?	No	
24. Are there any areas on or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities, which could be affected by the project?	No	
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, that could be affected by the project?	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?	No	
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	

The screening checklist provides a list of questions to help identify where there is potential for interactions between a project and its environment.

There is no specific rule that can be used to decide whether the results using the screening checklist should lead to a positive or negative screening decision (i.e. that EIA is or isn't required). In theory, if there is one "YES" answer to the question is it likely to result in significant effect, EIA may be required, however as a general principle, the greater the number of "YES" answers and the greater the significance of the effects identified, the more likely it is that EIA is required. "?" answers indicating uncertainty about the occurrence or significance of effects, should also point towards a positive screening decision (i.e. that EIA is required) because the EIA process will help clarify the uncertainty.

Finally, the questions below have been considered for each "YES" answer in the screening checklist and the conclusions and reasons for it noted in the checklist. Having regard to the above advice, the questions are designed so that a "Yes" answer will generally point towards the need for EIA and "NO" answer to the 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?

#### **Frequent**

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