STAFFORDSHIRE moorlands DISTRICT COUNCIL

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4th January 2021
Our ref SMD/2020/0243

Mr. John Suckley
Avison Young
Norfolk House,
7 Norfolk Street,
Manchester
M2 1DW

Dear Sirs,

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017
Request for Screening Opinion for change of use of existing building
Moneystone Quarry, Eaves Lane, Cheadle

I refer to your request for a Screening opinion under regulation 6 (1) of the above Regulations as to whether the proposal is EIA development requiring the submission of an Environmental Statement.

The proposal is for the change of use of existing buildings at Moneystone quarry to an activity centre associated with the leisure scheme at Moneystone quarry for which outline planning permission has been granted under SMD/2016/0378. A separate planning application has been made to the Council for the change of use and is pending consideration under reference SMD/2019/0716. The subject building is a former laboratory used in connection with Moneystone quarry. The proposed uses are given to be a sports hall with climbing wall, soft play area, two-lane mini bowl, cinema room; craft room and craft store, bike store and maintenance and bike hire office, cafe, viewing area, WCs, management office and plant rooms. The plans show external alterations to the building and reconfiguration of the existing car park to provide 24no. car parking spaces. No changes are proposed to the area of surfaced car park and no changes are proposed to the access which will use the existing site access onto Eaves Lane.

The proposal falls within the description at paragraph 13b) of Schedule 2 of the above Regulations, being a change to or extension of development of a description listed in paragraphs 1 to 12 of column 1 of the table, where that development is already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed. For such development, an ES may be required if either

(i) The development as changed or extended may have significant adverse effects on the environment; or
(ii) in relation to development of a description mentioned in column 1 of this table, the thresholds and criteria in the corresponding part of column 2 of this table applied to the change or extension are met or exceeded.

As the relevant threshold and criteria in column 2 are exceeded in this case, a Screening opinion is required.

In preparing this screening opinion the LPA has had regard to the selection criteria in Schedule 3 of the 2017 Regulations. The LPA has also had regard to the Indicative thresholds in the Planning Practice Guidance. This advises that key issues to consider for 'holiday villages' of

which this proposal forms a part are visual impacts, impacts on ecosystems and traffic generation. The LPA also has used the recommended Screening Matrix.

The proposal is for the re use of an existing building. Although Staffordshire County Council (Minerals) advise that this building should have been demolished as part of planning permission SM.94/852 which required its demolition within 6 months of work for the winning and working of minerals on site ceasing, they have not sought to enforce its removal and as a matter of fact the building remains on site. No change is proposed to the amount of hard surfacing. The proposal is to operate the uses described above in association with an adjacent and approved leisure scheme and not as a standalone facility.

The site is not within a sensitive area in terms of the Regulations. It is close to but outside of Registered Ancient Woodland and no significant harm to the woodland is envisaged. Furthermore, no landscapes of historic, cultural or archaeological importance would be affected by the proposal.

Although this proposal will form part of the approved adjacent leisure scheme (SMD/2016/0378)and thus there is the matter of cumulative effect to consider, the main uses proposed herein (Sports hall, bowling lanes, soft play and informal cinema) are already consented under Condition 6 of SMD/2016/0378 and this application was subject to an EIA. The additional uses proposed include bike store/bike hire, craft room, stores, management office, toilets and plant and amount to approx. half of the proposed total floor space but all would be used by guests already staying at or visiting the adjacent leisure facility. Thus these uses are unlikely to generate significant additional trips above those already assessed as part of the EIA for SMD/2016/0378, a view shared by the Local Highway Authority.

Given the nature, scale and location of the proposal it is not anticipated to have any significant environmental effects in terms of use of natural resources, waste, noise, pollution, flooding, human health, climate change or traffic nor will it result in a risk of major accidents/disasters. Any potential impact in terms of biodiversity and heritage are not anticipated to be significant and can be mitigated by using reasonable avoidance measures during construction in the case of biodiversity and additional planting in the case of heritage.

In terms of cumulative impact, any approval of the associated planning application would need to be in conjunction with an amendment to Condition 6 of SMD/2016/0378 to prevent duplication of uses and thus additional impact.

While there may be some impact on the surrounding area as a result of this development, it would not be of a scale and nature likely to result in significant environmental impact. EIA is not required.

Yours faithfully,

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

Head of Development Services