



South Tyneside Council

Mr A. Branch
Stephen George & Partners LLP
3rd Floor
33 Park Place
Leeds
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Date: 19/02/2018
Our ref: ST/0055/18/RES
Your ref:

This matter is being dealt with by:
Helen Lynch on 0191 4247408
e-mail address:
planningapplications@southtyneside.gov.uk

Dear Mr Branch

Screening Opinion of the Local Planning Authority

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

- Proposal:** Application for the approval of reserved matters for a Nexus training and maintenance facility with associated buildings, car parking, vehicle access, railway tracks and associated works. Details of layout, scale and appearance submitted for consideration (outline consent approved under reference ST/0639/16/OUT). Details of soft landscaping and boundary / retaining structures remain reserved for subsequent approval.
- Description:** Land North West of South Shields Metro Station
Mile End Road
South Shields

With reference to your recent reserved matters planning application for the above received by the Council on the 08/01/2018, I hereby notify you of the Council's screening opinion as to whether the proposed development requires an Environmental Impact Assessment to be carried under the above regulations and the submission of an Environmental Statement.

The consideration of whether a particular development requires an Environmental Impact Assessment depends upon whether it is classed as Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development, as defined by the regulations. I am satisfied that the development is not a development that falls within Schedule 1 and as such would not automatically require the submission of an Environmental Statement.

With respect to Schedule 2 development the Council, as Local Planning Authority, is duty bound to consider whether any part of the development falls within a 'sensitive area', as defined by the regulations, or whether any applicable threshold or criterion in the corresponding part of Column 2 of Schedule 2 is exceeded, or met, in relation to the development proposed.

The proposed development falls within '10. (b) Urban Development Projects' of Schedule 2 of the regulations. It does not exceed the threshold of more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwelling house development and the overall area of development doesn't exceed 5 hectares, which are stipulated in Column 2, and the proposed development does not lie within a sensitive area, as defined by the regulations.

Therefore, the Council must adopt a screening opinion and consider whether there would be any significant effects on the environment, be they positive or negative and Schedule 3 of the regulations outlines the three criteria that must be taken into account in making this decision.

The reserved matters application is being screened in the context of the proposal being a "subsequent application", as part of a "multi-stage consent"; where in this instance the planning application was subject to a negative EIA screening opinion.

Background

Outline planning permission (ref: ST/0639/16/OUT) was granted on 01/11/2016 for the following: *Outline application for a Nexus training and maintenance facility with associated buildings, car parking, vehicle access, railway tracks and boundary treatments. All matters/details including the siting, landscaping, design, scale and appearance of the development have been reserved for subsequent approval (the details submitted with this application with the exception of access do not form part of this Outline submission and they have been submitted for indicative purposes only).*

An Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion linked to planning permission (ST/0639/16/OUT) was issued on 16 September 2016 and concluded that the proposed development, whilst being a Schedule 2 development under the above regulations, would not, on the basis of all the information provided, have significant environmental impacts for it to require the carrying out of an Environmental Impact Assessment and the submission of an Environmental Statement.

Furthermore, condition 13 to planning application ST/0639/16/OUT was submitted on 06/02/2018 and will be screened in the context of this being a "subsequent application", as part of a "multi-stage consent"; where the parent planning application was subject to a negative EIA screening opinion.

1. The characteristics of the development

The characteristic of development must be considered with particular regard to (a) the size and design of the whole development; (b) cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development; (c) the use of natural resources, in particular land, spoil, water and biodiversity; (d) the production of waste; (e) pollution and nuisances; (f) the risk of major accidents and/or disaster relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate changes, in accordance with scientific knowledge; and (g) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).

The application site is approximately 10,400sq m located to the north west of the existing South Shields Metro Station. Outline planning permission with all matters reserved (except access) was granted for a training and maintenance facility for Nexus with associated buildings, car parking, vehicle access, railway tracks and boundary treatments. Indicative proposals for two separate buildings, a training centre building (approximately 1500sqm and two storeys high) and a maintenance building (approximately 2000sq m and two storeys high), to be located to the northern part of the site were included at the outline stage. Detailed proposals have been worked up and submitted through the reserved matters application.

Various supporting plans, elevations for the training and maintenance building and supporting documents were submitted for indicative and information purposes with the outline application. A number of additional drawings and details, including a design and access statement and sustainability appraisal have been submitted with the reserved matters application. The additional drawings and reports detail the layout, scale and appearance of the proposal. The layout of the scheme has been amended from the indicative proposals; the principle change is the amalgamation of the proposals into a single three-storey building, rather than the two two-storey buildings, one of which was located on the existing Salem Street car park. The single three storey building would be located to the northern part of the site and as such the Salem Street car park would be retained. Additionally the south west set of existing rail tracks would also be retained and would provide additional capacity for the train sidings (the original indicative proposals would have required the tracks to be removed). A car park to the southern side of the railway tracks would also be created providing 8 spaces for Nexus staff. Further staff and visitor parking would be provided adjacent to the proposed building and a cycle store has also been identified.

The applicant has indicated that the proposed hours of operation for the training facility would be from 07.30 to 18.00 and the maintenance facilities would require 24 hour operation. In terms of the type of activity on site, this would include for light maintenance and the cleaning of train carriages.

The development would produce waste in the form of the debris from development of the site. Upon completion, the operation of the site would generate normal refuse / recycling associated with such a use. A storage area for returnable containers has been identified and collection routes detailed for collection vehicles.

Potential pollution (noise and air quality emissions) and nuisance would be associated with all stages of the proposal through to the construction process and then to the impacts of the long term end use.

The construction methods used could give rise to the risk of accidents. The future use of the site would be carefully managed and controlled, due to the nature of activities and trains on site.

2. The location of the development

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development must be considered, having regard, in particular, to— (a) the existing and approved land use; (b) the relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area; (c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas— (i) wetlands; (ii) coastal zones and marine environment; (iii) mountain and forest areas; (iv) nature reserves and parks; (v) European sites and other areas classified or protected under national legislation (vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure; the environmental quality standards laid down in EU legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure; (vii) densely populated areas; (viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

The site is located within South Shields Town Centre immediately north of the Metro Station. The 10,400sq m site comprises underused rail sidings and car parking. There is an existing signal building at the southern end of the site.

The railway sidings are not regularly used and scrub has formed over much of the site. The eastern boundary consist of a steep incline made up in part by granite ballast. Trees and woody vegetation have established within this rough ground. It will be necessary to remove some of the existing trees to facilitate the proposed development. The removal of trees and landscaping proposals were addressed at the outline application stage through conditions and details of landscaping have been reserved for subsequent future approval.

The outline planning application included an Ecological Phase 1 Habitats Survey which identified that within 2km of the site boundary there are 4 statutory and 4 non-statutory sites, the closet of which lies 450m from the site boundary – The River Tyne. The survey identified that vegetation clearance would be required as part of the proposals resulting in the loss or disturbance to low or local value habitat. Furthermore the survey identified small areas of *contoneaster* (a schedule 9 plant species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which will need to be removed carefully to avoid its spread. The Council's Countryside Officer was consulted on the planning application, and has also been consulted on the reserved matters application. A condition was attached to the outline consent requiring the compensation and mitigation measures outlined within the Ecological Phase 1 Habitats Survey to be carried out in accordance with the details. Furthermore Natural England have also been consulted and have advised they have no comments to make on the development.

The site is not located within a Conservation Area and there are no adjacent listed buildings or locally Significant Heritage Asset as detailed within SPD21.

The Tyne and Wear County Archaeologist has been consulted on these proposals both at the outline and reserved matters stage. A desktop study submitted with the outline application identified further investigation (trial trenching) should take place within the Salem Street car park. Due to the detailed proposals omitting development within the Salem Street car park, it has been established, and verified with the Tyne and Wear County Archaeologist that no further archaeological works will be required to the site.

3. Characteristics of the potential impact

In relation to points 1 and 2 above the potential impact of the development is considered to be isolated to the site and its immediate surroundings. This represents both a limited geographical area and affected population. Potential impacts are not anticipated to extend to a wider area or population.

The potential impacts of the development in terms of waste, dust, noise, vibration or potential disturbance during construction are not anticipated to be any different to those experienced on other development sites (for similar development). The same assessment applies in relation to the risk of accidents occurring. The duration of these potential impacts would be limited to a period starting with the commencement of development through to its completion.

Noise disturbance through the end use of the site has been addressed through the Noise Assessment submitted as part of the outline planning application. Residential premises are located adjacent to the application site. The assessment focuses on the key sound sources associated with the proposed development which comprise building services plant, train movements, noise break-out from within the maintenance building and associated deliveries of materials. Recommendations for noise mitigation

have been made, including the specification of noise emission limits for proposed building services plant. A condition was attached to the outline permission in this regard.

In terms of contaminated land issues a site investigation in relation to the site was submitted with the outline application and conditions were attached to the grant of permission.

The proposed highways and transportation demands of the development, including servicing will be considered and assessed through the reserved matters planning application. Details of access were approved at the outline stage.

The waste associated with the end use of the site are not considered to be either unusual or complex in nature and would not give rise to significant environmental effects.

As such it was considered, that the development would have no significant environmental effect on any sensitive location, existing land use, natural resource, or natural environment. The potential impacts were not considered to be significant to the extent that they would trigger the undertaking of an EIA.

Conclusion

It is the Council's opinion that the proposed development, whilst being a Schedule 2 development under the above regulations, **would not**, on the basis of all the information provided, have significant environmental impacts for it to require the carrying out of an Environmental Impact Assessment and the submission of an Environmental Statement.

You should be aware that the comments made regarding the likely environmental impacts of the proposed development relate only to the Council's need to issue a screening opinion under the above regulations. They do not represent the Council's views as to the planning merits of any planning application, or its conformity with development plan policies within the Regional Spatial Strategy, South Tyneside Unitary Development Plan or Local Development Framework.

A copy of this Screening Opinion has been placed on the planning register.

Yours faithfully

Peter Cunningham
Operations Manager (Planning)

We aim to make letters easy to understand. If you found this letter difficult to understand please let us know. Call 0845 145 0100 or email feedback@southtyneside.gov.uk

