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Planning Department London Borough of Camden 5 Pancras Square London N1C 4AG

07 November 2023

Dear Ms Fogarty,

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017 PART 2, REGULATION 6 REQUEST FOR SCREENING OPINION OF THE PLANNING AUTHORITY

KINGSWAY EXCHANGE TUNNELS, 39-40 FURNIVAL STREET, EC4A 1JQ & 31-33 HIGH HOLBORN WC1V 6AX

Introduction

On behalf of our Client, The London Tunnels Ltd, we submit under Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ("the Regulations") a request for a Screening Opinion in respect of the proposed use of the Kingsway Exchange Tunnels ("the Site") as a visitor and cultural attraction ("the Development").

In accordance with the Regulations, this letter provides the following information to allow you to determine whether the above scheme requires an Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA"):

- Site Location Plans (Appendix 1) and description of the Site; and
- A description of the nature and purpose of the Development (below).

Information Required for Screening

To enable the London Borough of Camden to provide a Screening Opinion and determine whether the proposed development is EIA development (as defined in the Regulations), Regulation 6(2) requires that the following information is issued:

- (a) "A plan sufficient to identify the land;
- (b) A description of the development, including in particular
 - A description of the physical characteristics of the development and, where relevant, of demolition works:
 - A description of the location of the development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected;
- (c) A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development:
- (d) To the extent the information is available, a description of any likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment resulting from
 - i. The expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant; and
 - ii. The use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity;



(e) such other information or representations as the person making the request may wish to provide or make, including any features of the proposed development or any measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment."

The Site and Description of the Proposed Development

The Site

The Site was built as a deep-level shelter underneath Chancery Lane tube station in the early 1940s. The Site was originally designed to shelter 10,000 people and has a total floor area of approximately 7,000 sqm.

Although intended for use as an air raid shelter, like many of the deep level shelters it was not used for its intended purpose and was instead used as a government communications centre. The Site was transferred to the General Post Office (GPO) in 1949. The original two-tunnel shelter was extended by the addition of four tunnels at right-angles to the original tunnels. It was completed by 1954, and in 1956 it became the termination point for the first transatlantic telephone cable -TAT1.

Throughout the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s, Kingsway Trunk Switching Centre (as it became known) was a trunk switching centre and repeater station with Post Office engineering staff totalling over 200 at its peak. The Site had a staff restaurant, tea bar, games room and licensed bar.

The tunnels have two existing access shafts, located at Fulwood Place and Furnival Street. As such, the Site straddles the border of both the City of London and the London Borough of Camden.

In addition to the existing tunnels and lift shafts, there is also above ground infrastructure associated with the Development including:

- Fulwood Place headhouse (Camden) 364 sqm
- 39 and 40 Furnival Street (City of London) 1,678 sqm

Fulwood Place falls within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The Site does not contain any statutory or locally listed buildings. No. 31-33 High Holborn is identified as a 'Positive Building' within the conservation area appraisal. However, there are a number of listed buildings in the vicinity of the Site. The nearest statutory listed buildings to Fulwood Place are the Grade II listed Cittie of Yorke Public House and several Grade II listed buildings on Lady Hale Gate.

The Site has excellent connectivity with a Public Transport Accessibility Level ("PTAL") of 6b, which is the highest possible PTAL score and is defined as 'excellent'. Key transport facilities in the vicinity of the Site include Chancery Lane Underground Station, Farringdon Station and City Thameslink.

Planning Policy Designations

The Development Plan for the Site comprises the following:

- The London Plan 2021 ('London Plan')
- City of London Local Plan (2015) ('City Local Plan'); and
- Camden Local Plan (2017) ('Camden Local Plan').

The Site is subject to the following designations under the London Plan and Camden Local Plan:

Central Activities Zone;



- Bloomsbury Conservation Area;
- Local Plan Growth Area Holborn;
- · Local Plan Central London Area;
- LVMF Protected Vista Greenwich Park Wolfe statue to St Paul's Cathedral; and
- Archaeological Priority Area.

The Site is in Flood Zone 1 as defined by the Environment Agency Flood Maps and thus is at low risk of flooding.

Description of the proposed Development

The proposed Development includes the use of the deep level tunnels for a visitor and cultural attraction, including bar. The proposed Development will involve the partial demolition of the existing buildings and structures at 39 and 40 Furnival Street, and the construction of a mixed-use building to comprise offices and retail, in connection with the visitor attraction use (for example staff, security and ticketing facilities).

In addition, the proposed Development will include public realm improvement works, substation, and cycle parking facilities.

The main entrance to the visitor attraction will be located at Furnival Street in the City of London. An existing entrance to the tunnels in the London Borough of Camden (in Fulwood Place) will be used as a secondary entrance, with vehicles expected to use Bedford Row to the rear for pick-ups/drop offs.

The anticipated number of visitors could be up to 2 million per year.

In summary, the proposed Development seeks the following:

- Use of disused deep level tunnels for a visitor and cultural attraction;
- Partial demolition of existing building and structures at 40 and 39 Furnival Street and construction of mixed-use building of up to 5 storeys;
- Use of 39 and 40 Furnival Street as a mixed-use building;
- Change of use of entrance at Fulwood Place to provide secondary visitor attraction entrance;
- · Provision of ancillary cycle parking, substation, servicing and plant; and
- · Landscaping and public realm works.

Planning Application

The following documents will accompany the planning application submission for the Development:

- Application Drawings (Existing, Demolition & Proposed)
- Design and Access Statement
- Planning Statement
- Air Quality Assessment
- Cultural Strategy
- Archaeological Desk Based Assessment
- BREEAM Pre-Assessment Report
- · Transport Statement
- Framework Travel Plan
- Waste Management Plan
- Construction Management Plan
- · Delivery and Servicing Plan
- Energy Statement



- Sustainability Assessment
- · Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Assessment
- Circular Economy Statement
- Overheating Assessment
- Engineering / Structural Report
- · Fire Safety Report
- Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy
- Sunlight & Daylight Assessment
- SUDS Statement & Proforma
- Heritage Statement
- · Geotechnical and Land Contamination Assessment
- Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Socio-Economic Assessment
- Accessibility Statement (to be included in DAS)

Requirements for an Environment Impact Assessment

This letter sets out the process by which it is determined whether an EIA is required for the Development, with reference to Schedules 1, 2 and 3 of the Regulations.

Firstly, it is considered whether the Development qualifies as Schedule 1 development. Secondly, it is considered whether the Development qualifies at Schedule 2 development. This is done by reference to the selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development, as set out in Schedule 3.

Schedule 1 Development

EIA is mandatory for projects listed in Schedule 1 of the Regulations. The Development does not fall within Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations.

Schedule 2 Development

An EIA is required for a Schedule 2 development only if it is considered that the project may create significant environmental effects. If a development is of a type listed in Schedule 2 of the Regulations, and exceeds the relevant thresholds and criteria outlined in the second column of Schedule 2 (also known as the 'exclusion' or 'applicable' thresholds and criteria), the Local Planning Authority ('LPA') is required to undertake screening in order to consider whether it is likely to have significant effects on the environment, and therefore requires an EIA.

It is important to note that the thresholds outlined under Schedule 2 are broad indications of the projects that can normally be readily discarded from detailed EIA screening consideration, rather than being the thresholds beyond which a development is automatically considered to be EIA development. For proposals that exceed the Schedule 2 thresholds, the development proposals should then be considered within the screening process on an individual basis, taking into account the selection criteria in Schedule 3 of the Regulations that are relevant.

It is considered that the proposed Development falls within Part 10 (b) of Schedule 2 'Urban Development Projects'. Schedule 2 states that where the area of development exceeds 1 hectares of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or the development includes more than 150 dwellings, or the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares, it is necessary to consider whether an EIA is required.



The proposed Development has a site area of 1.7ha and proposes a visitor and cultural attraction. As the Urban Development Projects threshold criteria for the site area is therefore exceeded, further consideration against Schedule 3 is necessary to determine whether the proposed Development is likely to give rise to significant environmental effects.

The following section of this letter considers the likely impacts of the proposed Development, with reference to the Regulations Schedule 3 criteria, in order to determine whether the proposed Development does or does not constitute EIA development.

Schedule 3 and the Potential Impacts of the Development

Schedule 3 of the Regulations provides a selection criterion for screening Schedule 2 developments to consider whether the proposed development is likely to have significant environmental effects by virtue of the:

- 1) Characteristics of development:
- 2) Location of development; and
- 3) Types and characteristics of the potential impact.

Under Schedule 3 (3), the likely significant effects of the development on the environment must be considered in relation to criteria set out in paragraphs (1) and (2) of Schedule 3, which relate to the development's characteristics and location. Regard must also be had to the impact of the development on the factors specified in regulation 4 (2), taking into account:

- a) The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- b) The nature of the impact;
- c) The transboundary nature of the impact;
- d) The intensity and complexity of the impact;
- e) The probability of the impact;
- f) The expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
- g) The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/ or approved development;
- h) The possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

The factors specified in Regulation 4(2) are as follows:

- a) Population and human health
- b) Biodiversity, paying particular attention to protected species and habitats
- c) Land, soil, water, air, and climate
- d) Material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape; and
- e) How these factors interact with each other.



Table 1: Schedule 3(1) Characteristics of Development

The characteristics of development must be considered with particular regard to: The proposed Development to:		Likely Significant Effects	Specific Mitigation Measures for Reducing Significant Effects				
(a) The size and design of the whole development;	The Site area covers 1.71 hectares (ha) of land. The proposed Development seeks the use of the Kingsway Exchange deep level tunnels for the creation of cultural and visitor attraction. In addition to the tunnel areas, there will be further development at above ground level where ticketing, security, lift lobby and some retail, catering and staff facilities will be accommodated.	The deep level tunnels already exist. The proposed use of the tunnels as a visitor attraction will generate additional footfall in this part of London. However, the size and design of the Development is considered reasonable given the surrounding context. It is not considered that the Development will lead to material impacts and specifically not impacts of a more than local nature.	No mitigation is required at this time. Any potential impacts of the proposed Development can be mitigated through planning conditions or through a S106 agreement.				
(b) Cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development; The Site is located within the Central Activities Zone, where development growth is considered suitable. The majority of construction works will take place on Furnival Street. There are no relevant identified cumulative developments in the immediate vicinity of the Site.		Any future development proposals will ensure appropriate measures are in place to prevent adverse effects arising as a result of cumulation with other developments.	Any developments coming forward will ensure appropriate mitigation measures are in place to prevent any significant adverse effects arising from individual development projects.				



(c) The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;	There will not be any unusual use of natural resources in the construction and future operation of the Site that is already associated with standard developments of this nature.	This is not considered applicable to the proposed Development.	This is not considered applicable to the proposed Development.
(d) The production of waste; There will not be any unusual production of waste arising from the completed Development.		This proposed Development is not considered to give rise to any adverse effects in relation to waste.	A Waste Management Plan will be produced to ensure the appropriate disposal of waste during the construction phase. Post construction, the buildings will be provided with a dedicated area within the building for the provision of refuse and re-cycling facilities, tailored to operational requirements. The proposed Development can provide for the careful and sustainable disposal of wate during and post construction.
e) Pollution and nuisance;	Consideration has been afforded to the potential for the proposed Development to give rise to pollution and nuisance (such as noise and air quality) and the potential effects of such impacts on human and other environmental receptors.	Noise emissions from the proposed Development are not expected to result in adverse effects. The proposed use is not considered to be detrimental to the residential amenities of the local population.	The scheme will be designed to ensure that acceptable air quality and noise levels are maintained, ensuring there are no significant observable impacts on nearby receptors. Construction phase environmental impacts will be controlled by the use of best practice construction



	High Holborn is the dominant source of noise and air quality pollution in vicinity of the Site.		methods, including agreed construction working hours, maintenance of construction plant and dust management, to be implemented as part of a Construction Management Plan ("CMP"). The Proposed Development is not associated with hazardous substances or toxic emissions to air.
(f) The risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge; and	No processes involving hazardous substances or potentially dangerous activities are proposed on Site. The risks of accidents in association with the Development is considered to be negligible and to have no significant environmental bearing or effect. The Site is in Flood Zone 1 and thus is at a low risk of flooding.	The risk of major accidents and/or disasters in relation to the Development will be considered throughout the design development and construction of the scheme, thereby preventing any likely significant effects.	Mitigation measures and safety features will be incorporated into the design of the Development to reduce the risk of major accidents or disasters, particularly in relation to fire. During the construction phase, the contractor would implement measures in accordance with Health and Safety legislation/requirements, and best practice to minimise the risks of accidents that would have effects on people or the environment. Any required mitigation measures to manage flood risk impacts will be identified within the Flood Risk



			Assessment that will accompany the planning application.
(g) The risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).	The risks to human health in association with the Development is considered to be negligible and to have no significant environmental bearing or effect.	There are no anticipated risks to human life associated with water or other contamination or air pollution.	Appropriate assessment will be undertaken and submitted to the LPA, together with appropriate mitigation measures to take place if subsequent risks are identified.



Table 2: Schedule 3(2) Location of Development

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development must be considered, with particular regard, to:	The proposed Development	Likely Significant Effects	assessments. Any potential significant effects can be mitigated through mechanisms such as planning conditions or a S106 agreement.		
(a) The existing and approved land use	It is understood that the Site's current, lawful use is Sui Generis. The tunnels are currently vacant. The site is located within Flood Zone 1.	The proposed Development seeks a change of use to provide a visitor and cultural attraction. The proposed Development is not considered to be in an area at risk of flooding. The proposed Development would be compatible with the surrounding uses and would not have an adverse effect on the surrounding environment.			
(b) The relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and underground	The Site is previously developed land. There are no known natural habitats on Site or any other natural resources that would be directly affected by the proposals.	There are not considered to be any natural resources that would be directly affected by the proposal.	No mitigation is considered to be required at this time. Any potential significant effects can be mitigated through mechanisms such as planning conditions or a \$106 agreement.		



(c) The absorption capacity of the The Site does not form part of any The Site does not form part of any No mitigation is considered to be natural environment, paying particular attention to the following wetland, coastal zone, mountain area required at this time. Any potential significant effects can be mitigated wetland, coastal zone, mountain area or natural reserves and parks. or natural reserves and parks. The areas: (i) wetlands, riparian areas, proposed Development will ultimately through mechanisms such as river mouths; (ii) coastal zones and enhance the character and planning conditions or a S106 appearance of the surrounding area and will have a positive effect on the the marine environment: (iii) agreement. mountain and forest areas; (iv) nature reserves and parks; (v) surrounding area. European sites and other areas classified or protected under national legislation; (vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered there is such a failure; (vii) densely populated areas; (viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or architectural significance

Table 3: Schedule 3(3) Types and Characteristics of the Potential Impact

3. Characteristics of the potential	The proposed Development	Likely Significant Effects	Specific Mitigation Measures for
impact: The potential significant			Reducing Significant Effects
effects of development must be			
considered in relation to criteria set			
out under paragraphs 1 and 2			



above, and having regard in particular to:			
The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The Development impact is considered likely to only affect the Site and its immediate surroundings.	Any impact to the population arising from the Development would likely occur at the construction phase and as such, any impacts are considered to be temporary.	No mitigation is considered to be required at this time. A suite of technical reports will support the planning application, which will provide a detailed consideration of any potential impacts that the proposed Development may have. Any potential significant effects can be mitigated through mechanisms such as planning conditions or a \$106 agreement.
The nature of the impact;	The Development may impact on noise, air quality and traffic. However, this is likely to only occur during the construction phase.	Any impact to the population arising from the Development would likely occur at the construction phase and as such, any impacts are considered to be temporary.	A construction management plan can be secured through planning conditions to manage any potential impact.
The transboundary nature of the impact;	The Site straddles two LPAs, the City of London and the London Borough of Camden.	Any impact arising from the proposed Development is likely to impact both the City of London and the London Borough of Camden. However, this is considered likely to only affect the Site and its immediate surroundings	Pre-application discussions are taking place with both the City of London and London Borough of Camden to ensure both authorities are aware of all potential impacts. No further



			mitigation is considered to be necessary.		
The intensity and complexity of the impact;	The impacts of the Development are not considered to be of such a magnitude or complexity to warrant an EIA.	This is not considered applicable to the proposed Development.	This is not considered applicable to the proposed Development.		
The probability of the impact;	The proposed Development is not considered to cause significant impacts.	Any impact arising from the Development would likely occur at the construction phase and as such, any impacts are considered to be temporary.	as planning conditions or a \$106 agreement. Any potential impacts of the		
The expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;	Any potential significant effects can be mitigated through mechanisms such as planning conditions or a S106 agreement.	Any impact arising from the Development would likely occur at the construction phase and as such, any impacts are considered to be temporary.			
The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development;	The Site is located within the Central Activities Zone, where development growth is considered most suitable. There are no identified cumulative developments in the immediate vicinity of the Site.	Any future development proposals will ensure appropriate measures are in place to prevent adverse effects arising as a result of cumulation with other developments.	Any developments coming forward will ensure appropriate mitigation measures are in place to prevent any significant adverse effects arising from individual development projects.		
The possibility of effectively reducing the impact.	Any potential impacts of the Development can be mitigated	Any potential impacts of the Development can be mitigated	Any potential impacts of the Development can be mitigated		



through securing planning conditions or through a S106 agreement. through a S106 agreement. through a S106 agreement. through a S106 agreement. through a S106 agreement.



Conclusion

Having considered the scale and nature of the Development, the proposed use of the Site, and having regard to the Regulations and the NPPG, it is considered that the Development does not constitute EIA development. Taking each of the selection criteria for screening as set out in Schedule 3 of the Regulations, we are of the view that there is sufficient justification that an EIA is not required in this case. It is considered that the proposed Development would not give rise to any significant environmental effects that would warrant preparation of an Environmental Statement.

A future planning application would be accompanied by detailed supporting documents, which would address the potential impacts of the Development, propose mitigation measures in accordance with planning policy requirements and provide the information required by the LPA to determine the application.

The proposed Development will ultimately provide a significant enhancement to the local area, in the form of the opening up of a unique historic asset to the public, enhanced public realm, increased activity and vibrancy, as well as significant social, cultural and economic benefits. Further detail on the significant benefits will be provided in the planning application.

We trust that the information supplied is sufficient for you to screen these proposals against the Regulations.

In conclusion, we request that the London Borough of Camden formally adopt a Screening Opinion in accordance with the Regulations which confirms that an Environmental Statement is not required for the Development.

Should	you	require	any	further	information,	please	do	not	hesitate	to	contact	either	Peter	Bovill
(), l	ouis	sa Sr	mith (/
) or Ga	briell	a Bexso	n ().	
Yours s	incere	elv.												

MONTAGU EVANS LLP

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