

Application ref: 2024/1587/P
Contact: Sam Fitzpatrick
Tel: 020 7974 1343
Email: sam.fitzpatrick@camden.gov.uk
Date: 13 June 2024

Development Management
Regeneration and Planning
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Judd Street
London
WC1H 9JE

Phone: 020 7974 4444

planning@camden.gov.uk

www.camden.gov.uk/planning

Montagu Evans LLP
70 St Mary Axe
London
EC3A 8BE
United Kingdom

Dear Sir/Madam

DECISION

**Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017
Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 (as amended)**

Request for Screening Opinion EIA Not Required

Address:

**Chancery Station House
31 - 33 High Holborn
London
WC1V 6AX**

Proposal:

Request for screening opinion under Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 2017 for the change of use of existing deep level tunnels (Sui Generis) to visitor and cultural attraction (F1), including bar (Sui Generis); demolition and reconstruction of existing building at 38-39 Fournival Street; redevelopment of 40-41 Fournival Street, for the principle visitor attraction pedestrian entrance at ground floor, with retail at first and second floor levels and ancillary offices at third and fourth levels and excavation of additional basement levels; creation of new, pedestrian entrance at 31-33 High Holborn, to provide secondary visitor attraction entrance (including principle bar entrance); provision of ancillary cycle parking, substation, servicing and plant, and other associated works.

Drawing Nos: Request for Screening Opinion in respect of the proposed use of the Kingsway Exchange Tunnels as a visitor and cultural attraction (prepared by Montagu Evans, dated 07/11/2023); 01820-WEA-XX-01-PD-A-0050 Rev 00; 01820-WEA-XX-ST-PD-A-0051 Rev 00.

The Council has considered your application and offers the following opinion:

The application site consists of an existing underground tunnel system and two above ground sites, located at 31-33 High Holborn and 38-41 Furnival Street. The site is split between the London Borough of Camden and the City of London. The proposed development involves the change of use of the tunnels to a cultural attraction including an underground bar, as well as demolition and construction of a new visitor entrance, retail, and office space.

It has been assessed whether the development falls within any category of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development, as set out in Schedules 1 and 2 of the EIA Regulations 2017. It is considered that the proposed development would not fall within any category of development within Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations. However, the development would fall within category 10(b) of Schedule 2, and be defined as an 'urban development project'. The proposal would need to meet the following criteria in order to be a Schedule 2 development and necessitate consideration of whether an EIA is required:

- (i) the development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or
- (ii) the development includes more than 150 dwellings; or
- (iii) the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.

As set out in the request for screening opinion letter, the total site area of the proposed development would be approximately 1.7 hectares, and as such would meet the threshold criteria, requiring further consideration against Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations 2017 to determine whether the proposed development is likely to give rise to significant adverse effects on the environment.

Schedule 3 establishes that consideration must be given to the characteristics and location of the proposed development, as well as the types and characteristics of the potential impact on the factors specified in regulation 4(2). These factors specified include population and human health, biodiversity, land, soil, water, air, and climate, material assets, cultural heritage, and the landscape – as well as how these factors interact with each other.

The impacts of the proposed development are assessed in Table 1 of the request for screening opinion letter submitted to the Council, which demonstrates that the documents submitted as part of the planning application would be able to suitably address the expected effects of the development. It is likely that the most significant impact of the proposed development would be the generation of additional footfall in the area, as well as the potential risk to public health and safety, particularly given the majority of the experience would take place underground, where there are additional considerations regarding evacuation in the event of an emergency – particularly relating to fire safety, flooding, and ventilation issues. Concerns in this area would be able to be addressed by way of the appropriate documentation and detail at application stage, and any impacts could be managed through planning conditions and controls in order to mitigate harm and generate benefit.

Therefore, it is considered that, although the proposed development is, by definition, a Schedule 2 development, it is expected that the characteristics, type, location, and expected impact of the development on the environment would not be significant enough so as to warrant an EIA.

The Council hereby considers that the proposed development described in your request and the documents submitted with it, is not 'EIA development' within the meaning of the 2017 Regulations. Therefore, the Screening Opinion adopted is that an EIA is not required.

In dealing with the application, the Council has sought to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way in accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DPope', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Daniel Pope
Chief Planning Officer

It's easy to make, pay for, track and comment on planning applications on line. Just go to www.camden.gov.uk/planning.

It is important to us to find out what our customers think about the service we provide. To help us in this respect, we would be very grateful if you could take a few moments to complete our [online planning applicants' survey](#). We will use the information you give us to monitor and improve our services.