

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		26/02/2013	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		N/A	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Gavin Sexton				2013/0806/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
Abbey Co-op housing sites at Casterbridge, Snowman, Emminster & Hinstock and Abbey Co-op Community Centre and Belsize Road car-park Abbey Road London NW6 4DP				Refer to decision notice			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal(s)							
Request for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Opinion for redevelopment of the site known as Abbey Coop, Abbey Road. Redevelopment proposals apply to c.2.2 hectares of land in order to provide up to 299 residential units, up to 1300sqm of commercial floorspace (Class A1-A5), up to 1000sqm of business floorspace (Class B1), up to 2250sqm of community and health floorspace (Class D1) and associated space for plant, parking, servicing, ancillary storage and energy centre.							
Recommendation(s):		EIA not required					
Application Type:		Request for Screening Opinion					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	00	No. of responses No. electronic	00 00	No. of objections	00	
Summary of consultation responses:	N/A						
CAAC/Local groups* comments: <small>*Please Specify</small>	N/A						

Site Description

The application site is split into three parcels of land across the junction of Abbey Road and Belsize Road, in Kilburn ward (and on the boundary with Swiss Cottage ward). The overall application site measures approximately 2.2 hectares. Two of the parcels comprise the Abbey Road Co-op Housing Estate which includes the 8-storey Emminster and 5-storey Hinstock blocks on the triangle site and Snowman House and Casterbridge which are 20 storey towers on the east of Abbey Road. The remaining parcel comprises the existing Belsize Road Multistorey Car Park building. All of the buildings date from the late 1960s. Casterbridge and Snowman towers were reclad in recent years. The estate Council owned but managed by the Abbey Housing Cooperative.

The triangle site is bounded by Belsize Road to the south, Abbey Road to the east and the rear of properties along Priory Terrace diagonally to the northwest, the site is currently occupied by two affordable housing blocks, Emminster and Hinstock providing a total of 74 flats. At street level Hinstock and Emminster host a small parade of commercial units. This site also houses the Belsize Priory Health Centre and the Abbey Community Centre (both use class D1).

The tower site to the north-east of the Abbey Road / Belsize Road junction contains two residential towers, Snowman and Casterbridge which contains 204 residential units.

The carpark site is dominated by the concrete framed 6 storey carpark building with basement, built in the late 1960s to provide 564 parking spaces for private vehicles. Elements of the building have been adapted and used for a range of commercial activities. Many of these are car-related such as car hire, MOT and chauffeur companies, however there is also a small number of other workshop-based uses such as an upholstering firm and a picture framer.

The application site is located to the west of the borough on the boundary with the City of Westminster to the south. It is situated between three designated centres: Kilburn Town Centre to the west, Finchley Road / Swiss Cottage Town Centre to the east and West Hampstead Town Centre to the north. The site is bounded to the north, east and west by existing private residential properties and to the south by the West Coast mainline and London Overground train lines. Further to the south beyond the railway lines is the Grade II* listed Alexandra and Ainsworth Estates and the Abbey Estate, predominantly owned and managed by the LB Camden.

Relevant History

August 2011: A screening opinion was issued to the applicant on the basis of "Partial redevelopment on site of 2.5 ha of land comprising demolition of Belsize Rd car park, plus Emminster and Hinstock residential blocks and associated structures (with the retention of Snowman and Casterbridge residential blocks), provision of up to 250 net additional residential units with undercroft parking, provision of approximately 1300sqm retail space (c.600sqm net additional), c.400sqm of employment floorspace, c.2250sqm of community facilities, provision of a range of open space. Proposed development to have a height ranging from 3-12 stories in height". It was considered that an EIA was not required.

2012/0096/P: Outline planning permission was **granted** in July 2012 for "Outline application for phased redevelopment of site to provide up to 296 residential (Class C3) units (including up to 133 affordable units), up to 1,300 sqm of commercial floor space (Class A1-A5), up to 1,055sqm of business floorspace (Class B1), up to 2,500sqm community and health floorspace (Class D1) and associated space for parking, plant, servicing, ancillary storage and energy centre, all in five buildings as follows: Block C (up to 2 and 3 storey community and health uses), Blocks A, B, D and E (predominantly up to 6 and 7 storeys residential and commercial uses) and Block A (up to 6 to 12 storeys of residential and commercial uses); provision of open space and landscaping; alterations to existing highway layout and creation of new vehicular and pedestrian access routes; all following demolition of Belsize car park building, Abbey Coop Community Centre and Hinstock and Emminster blocks (including Belsize Priory Health centre, residential and commercial units), site-wide walkways and pedestrian railway bridge. Application provides detail for approval of layout and access only and not scale, appearance or landscaping. "

In **Dec 2012** an application for variation of conditions was granted (**2012/5648/P**) for “Amendments to conditions 9 (matters reserved), 15 (residential privacy), 18 (refuse and recycling), 19i (play strategy), 20 (open space strategy), 21 (protection of trees), 23 (slab levels), 33 (servicing management plan), 34 (cycle parking), 35i & 35ii (public realm improvements), 40 (environmental improvements), 42 (level plans), 43 (car club bays), 45 (acoustic report), 47 (drainage & SUDs), 52 (biodiversity strategy), 54 (ducting and ventilation), 57 (contamination assessment), 58 (site investigation and submission of a remediation scheme), 61 (local wind environment), 62 (telecoms impact), 66 (KX working), 67 (archaeology), 69 (piling method statement), 70 (community safety), 71 (open space contribution), 72 (education) and 73 (Legal agreement) of planning permission dated 12/07/2012, ref 2012/0096/P (Outline application for phased redevelopment of site). Amendments relate to timing of submission of relevant details in order to allow enabling works of demolition. “

In **January 2013** the applicant advised the Council that the demolition of the pedestrian footbridge had been completed over the Christmas period and that this constituted implementation of the outline permission.

Relevant policies

Town & Country Planning Act 1990

Development Management Procedure Order 2010

Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011

NPPF 2012

Circular 02/99: Environmental impact assessment

Assessment

Introduction

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Opinion has been submitted for consideration in respect of the redevelopment of the site known as Abbey Coop , Abbey Road.

The proposed development would provide substantially the same quantum of units and floorspace as the approved outline scheme, and in any event would not exceed the approved scheme by more than 10%.

Assessment

The 2011 EIA Regs define EIA development as being either:

- (a) Schedule 1 development; or
- (b) Schedule 2 development likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location.

The development does not fall within any of the descriptions given in Schedule 1 and thus cannot be considered a Schedule 1 development.

The proposal does however fall within Schedule 2 10(b) as an “*urban development project...*”, where the applicable threshold and criteria is the development area being above 0.5ha. Consequently the development is required to be considered against the selection criteria specified within Schedule 3, for screening Schedule 2 development.

Schedule 3 comprises three main ‘selection criteria’ areas: the characteristics of development, the location of development (environmental sensitivity) and the characteristics of the potential impact from the proposed development.

Circular 02/99 is also of relevance, with the following being of most relevance:

The need for EIA for Schedule 2 development General considerations

Paragraph 33: *The Secretary of State's view is that, in general, EIA will be needed for Schedule 2 developments in three main types of case:*

- a. for major developments which are of more than local importance;*
- b. for developments which are proposed for particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable locations; and*
- c. for developments with unusually complex and potentially hazardous environmental effects*

Paragraph 34 identifies that the “*number of cases of such development will be a very small proportion of the total number of Schedule 2 developments. It is emphasised that the basic test of the need for EIA in a particular case is the likelihood of significant effects on the environment. It should not be assumed, for example, that conformity with a development plan rules out the need for EIA. Nor is the amount of opposition or controversy to which a development gives rise relevant to this determination, unless the substance of opponents' arguments reveals that there are likely to be significant effects on the environment.*”

Development in environmentally sensitive locations

Paragraph 36. *The relationship between a proposed development and its location is a crucial consideration. For any given development proposal, the more environmentally sensitive the location, the more likely it is that the effects will be significant and will require EIA. Certain designated sites are defined in regulation 2(1) as 'sensitive areas' and the thresholds/criteria in the second column of Schedule 2 do not apply there.”.*

The site does not fall within any of the designations identified in paragraph 36 .

Development with particularly complex and potentially hazardous effects.

Much of the total site is occupied by existing housing. The submitted document ‘Indication of Possible Effects on the Environment’ summarises the nature, scale and risks associated with various impacts on the environment. These include :

- Cumulative impact with other development (including transport impact)
- Use of natural resources
- Production of waste
- Pollution and nuisances
- The absorption capability of the natural environment with particular consideration paid to certain areas
- *Potential for significant impacts on population, flora/fauna, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, landscape/townscape*

The summary concludes that the development would likely give rise to very low risks and impact.

Furthermore the summary concludes that the development would not be of a significantly greater scale than the existing uses and activities on the site, it would not result in markedly different impacts to the existing use in terms of traffic, emissions or noise, is not likely to give rise to high levels of contamination and does not have the potential for likely significant environmental effects.

The characteristics of development considerations are: (a) the size of the development; (b) the cumulation with other development; (c) the use of natural resources; (d) the production of waste; (e) pollution and nuisances; (f) the risk of accidents, having regard in particular to substances or technologies used.

A) Size of development

In terms of the size of the development it is not considered that the proposals, in themselves are of such a size to warrant an EIA being required. In respect of the indicative criteria/thresholds given in Circular 02/99 (Environmental Impact Assessments), Annexe A, paragraph A 18 and 19, the proposed development would not be of a significantly greater scale than the previous use, the site area is less

notably than 5 hectares, the amount of new commercial floorspace would be significantly less than 10,000sqm and would not urbanise a previously non-urbanised area, for example it would not exceed 1,000 new dwellings in such a location.

B) Accumulation of development

This screening opinion relates only to the site known as the Abbey Road Co-Op Site at Abbey Rd and Belsize Rd, London, NW6. However it is understood that consideration is being given to opportunities to improve the Abbey Estate plus the Alexandra and Ainsworth Estate in a masterplan drawn up on behalf of Camden's Housing Department. This might include some areas of new build, refurbishment, change of use or conversion over a 20 year period.

No clear decisions have been made with regard to proposals for these areas, although from the information available at the date of this screening opinion there are no clear proposals that would suggest the development would be of a significantly greater scale or would create a substantial number of new dwellings or commercial floorspace, for example, such as to warrant the need to submit an Environmental Impact Assessment in the light of the regulations and the advice in Circular 02/99 and the relevant indicative criteria/ thresholds in Annexe A.

Notwithstanding the above, the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment must be kept under review if and when further proposals within or close to the masterplan area come forward. There are no other known developments in the immediate vicinity that are considered to cause significant impacts that would warrant any major area of consideration of future cumulative impact in combination with the proposed development.

C) Use of natural resources

The proposal would result in a development that has no significantly greater impact on use of natural resources than the existing development on the site.

D) The production of waste

The proposal would result in a development that has no significantly greater impact than the existing use.

E Pollution and nuisance

The proposal would result in a development that has no significantly greater impact than the existing use, including traffic emissions and noise. Consideration and appropriate control would be required in respect of construction impacts, however these would not have significant impacts having regard to the sensitivity of the environment and in the context of the regulations. The whole of the borough of Camden has been declared as an Air Quality Management Area, however there is no reason to suggest that the proposal would have any significant impact upon air quality.

F) Risk of accidents

The proposal would not result in any significant increase in the risk of accident relative to the current use, having regard in particular to substances or technologies used. The site is not in an area of high flood risk.

Location of development

The site does not fall in a sensitive location, as defined in the regulations. The proposed development would not fundamentally change the existing uses across the site (though it would enable a more intensive use) and would provide mainly residential use in a locality where residential is already a common use. The development does not significantly threaten the relative abundance, quality or regenerative potential of natural resources in the area, and the natural environment would appear to have the capacity to absorb the impacts of the development without significant impacts, paying particular attention to areas such as nature reserves, parks, densely populated areas and historical areas and buildings such as listed buildings and gardens and conservation areas in the vicinity.

Characteristics of the potential impact

The proposed development would not have any significant trans-frontier impact. The extent of the impact (considering geographical area and size of the affected population); the magnitude, complexity and probability of the impact, as well as the duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact have been considered in assessing the potential significant effects of development in relation to 1 and 2 (characteristics and location of development) above. They are not considered to be such as to warrant submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Consideration of demolition

The proposals would include the demolition of Belsize Rd car park, plus Emminster and Hinstock residential blocks and some minor associated structures. The demolition would be largely contained within a single part of the site, in close proximity to a limited number of sensitive receptors. The applicant has previously demonstrated within the application for outline permission that the demolition would result in limited short term and negligible long term impacts.

In respect of these matters the proposals would not result in such impacts ('significant effects') to warrant progression of the EIA to the scoping stage. This is primarily owing to the scale of the proposals in relation to the EIA regulations.

Conclusion:

The proposed development falls within Category 10(b) of Schedule 2 of the Regulations and is therefore a development, which may require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Having carried out an assessment against the criteria within Schedule 3 of the Regulations and additional advice contained within paras A18 and A19 of Annex A of Circular 02/99 (Environmental Impact Assessments), it is the Local Planning Authority's view that the proposed development as submitted would not merit the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment.

As such, though the development is, by definition, Schedule 2 development, it is not considered to be EIA development as defined by Regulation 2(1) of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 (SI 2001 no. 1824).

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