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Date: 29th June 2016

Dear Mr Barber

**Screening Opinion under Regulation 5 of the Town and Country Planning
(Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011**

**Proposed development comprising of the construction of up to 470 residential dwellings; an area of open space and woodland; children's play area; vehicular access from Newport Pagnell Road; vehicular access to the northern parcel off 'the Green'; the downgrading of 'The Green' into a pedestrian and cycle green link; surface water drainage and attenuation ponds and infrastructure requirements.
At Land at Wootton Fields, Northampton**

I refer to your request for a Screening Opinion regarding the above proposed development received on 1st June 2016 and subsequent agreement to an extension of time.

Decision: An Environmental Impact Assessment is required.

Justification: In accordance with Statutory Instruments 2011 No. 1824 the following tests have been applied:

Schedule 1 Test:

The development does not fall within Schedule 1 of the Regulations.

Schedule 2 Test:

The proposed development falls within Category 10(b), urban development projects, of Schedule 2 of the Regulations for the following reasons:

- (i) The development would include more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not a dwellinghouse in that the development would incorporate approximately 8.7ha of strategic landscaping/open space.

(ii) The development would include more than 150 dwellings (up to 470 dwellings are proposed);

(iii) The overall development area is 23.56ha and therefore exceeds the 5 hectares criteria.

In relation to criteria as defined by 'Annex: Indicative screening thresholds' in Planning Practice Guidance, only criteria (i) applies in that the area of the scheme is more than 5 hectares.

Accordingly, consideration has been given to the criteria set out in Schedule 3 and this assessment has duly influenced the outcome of this screening opinion.

Schedule 3 Considerations:

1. Characteristics of development

(a) Size of development

The overall site area is 23.56ha and straddles the boundary between South Northamptonshire Council (16.8ha) and Northampton Borough Council (6.7ha). The size of the site as indicated above exceeds the thresholds and criteria in relation to site area and number of dwellings proposed for Schedule 2 development.

It is not considered that the size and scale of development alone would warrant an EIA however cumulative impacts are considered below.

(b) Cumulative impacts

The site forms part of a larger site allocated under Policy N6 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy for a Sustainable Urban Development for in the region of 1,300 dwellings, a primary school, local centre and associated infrastructure and green space. Outline consent for a further 300 dwellings has also been permitted to the southwest of the site within South Northamptonshire's boundary.

Whilst the development on its own does not exceed the criteria of 1,000 dwellings as defined by Planning Policy Guidance, it is considered that the cumulative impact of the development, which forms part of the larger SUE allocation, has the potential to result in significant effects upon the environment and as such by reason of cumulative impacts associated with the development an EIA is required.

(c) The use of natural resources:

The proposed development would require the use of natural resources, result in the loss of agricultural land, the grade of which is not yet known, and the loss of some existing vegetation and trees on site. However, given the scale of the development, it is not considered that the impacts on the use of natural resources arising from the development alone would be to such an extent to warrant an EIA.

(d) The production of waste

The proposal would result in the production of waste during construction and during occupation. Details of Waste Management would be assessed as part of the application process and conditioned as necessary to ensure impacts are of an acceptable level agreed with Environmental Health. In view of the scale of the development, it is not considered that the production of waste arising from the development alone is likely to be of such significance that an EIA is required.

(e) Pollution and nuisances:

The proposed development could potentially generate some noise and nuisance and impact on air quality and ground waters during construction which could be mitigated by the

agreement of an appropriate Construction Environment Management Plan agreed by condition and as a consequence, an EIA would not be warranted.

(f) The risk of accidents, having regard in particular to substances or technologies used:

There is nothing to suggest that the proposal would result in a greater risk of accidents that would warrant an EIA.

2. Location of development

The application site comprises of agricultural land on the edge of Northampton situated within the Northampton Borough boundary and extending over into South Northamptonshire, the majority of the site lying within the latter. Outline consent has been granted for the development of the remainder of the SUE site to the west on the edge of Hardingstone and north of Newport Pagnell Road. To the east and southeast of the site are further agricultural fields. Brackmills Wood and Country Park bound the northern most section of the site beyond which is Brackmills Industrial Estate. The site is bordered to the north by a Woodland Tree Preservation Order No. 181. To the southwest is residential development.

Ecological surveys and an Arboricultural Survey would be required to be submitted with any planning application. However, in view of the considered requirement for an EIA due to cumulative impacts, these details should form part of the EIA.

3. Characteristics of the potential impact

The site has not statutory protection and is not in an environmentally sensitive area, nor would it have potentially hazardous environmental effects. However, it is considered that the combined impacts arising from the development of the site in combination with the development of the remainder of the SUE site allocated under Policy N6 of the JCS, of which this site forms part, and taking into account the outline consent for the development of 300 dwellings to the southwest of the site within South Northamptonshire, warrants the submission of an EIA.

For the foregoing reasons, it is hereby confirmed that the proposed development has been screened in accordance with the prescribed Regulations and concluded that an Environmental Assessment is required.

Yours sincerely

Peter Baguley
Head of Planning