

Town & Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017  
**Secretary of State Screening Direction – Written Statement**

Application name:	Land north of Long Copse Lane, Emsworth
SoS case reference:	PCU/EIASCRC/X1735/3223923
Schedule and category of development:	Schedule 2 10(b)

**Full statement of reasons as required by 5(5)(a) of the 2017 EIA Regulations including conclusions on likelihood of significant environmental effects.**

The Secretary of State has considered whether the above proposal is likely to have significant environmental effects. He has undertaken this screening, taking into account the criteria set out in Schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

Planning Practice Guidance includes indicative thresholds. In terms of urban development projects this states that Environmental Impact Assessment is unlikely to be required for the redevelopment of land unless the new development is on a significantly greater scale than the previous use, or the types of impact are of a markedly different nature, or there is a high level of contamination. Sites which have not previously been intensively developed: (i) area of the scheme is more than 5 hectares; or (ii) it would provide a total of more than 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> of new commercial floorspace; or (iii) the development would have significant urbanising effects in a previously non-urbanised area (e.g. a new development of more than 1,000 dwellings). Key issues to consider are; the physical scale of the development, potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise.

The Secretary of State considers the Schedule 3 selection criteria for Schedule 2 development are the main matters to be addressed:

1 (a) – (f) regarding characteristics of development

The Secretary of State recognises that the development would significantly increase the built form and extend the urban area beyond Long Copse Lane. However, given the scale of the proposals and the existing residential development in the vicinity, he does not consider that the visual impact in itself, in terms of populations likely to be affected, would be of the magnitude necessary to suggest a significant environmental effect is likely.

In terms of the risks of pollution and contamination, the Secretary of State notes that in its advice to the council, Natural England stated that there would be the potential for waste water from the development to introduce an additional source of nutrient loading to the Chichester and Langstone Harbours Special Protection Area (SPA)/Ramsar catchment, and recommended that the scheme achieves nutrient neutrality. The council recently approved a position statement on nutrient neutral development which states that, any residential development would lead to an increase in nitrogen and thus would be likely to cause a significant effect. It also states that an avoidance and mitigation package will be necessary for almost all proposals. The Secretary of State is not persuaded however, that the risk of contamination arising from development of this nature and scale would be of the magnitude necessary to suggest that a significant environmental effect is likely for this reason. He considers these matters would be addressed through the planning application process, including in any Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Having regard to the nature of the proposals, the Secretary of State does not consider that a significant environmental effect is likely, in terms of impacts from noise; pollutants to air; production of waste; risk of major accidents or risks to human health.

2 (a)-(c) (i) – (viii) regarding location of development

The Secretary of State notes that while the site is not in a sensitive area, it is near the South Downs National Park (SDNP), and the surrounding landscape includes the Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Ramsar Site and Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Secretary of State notes that in its advice to the council, Natural England stated that it considered that the site not likely to significantly affect the interest features for which any SAC, AONB, SPA or SSSI has been designated. The Secretary of State subsequently consulted Natural England to help inform his screening direction. In its response, Natural England expressed concern that the proposed development could have significant direct and indirect impacts upon the SDNP and its setting, and it considers that further assessment is required. Representations were also received from the SDNP Authority which considers that the development could potentially reduce the quality of the landscape character within the SDNP's setting, and that EIA is required.

However, on the basis of all the information, the Secretary of State is not persuaded that there would be a significant environmental effect on the designated features of any sensitive areas. While the site is close to the SDNP, it appears that any impact would be mainly visual and, given the scale and nature of the proposals, he is not convinced that the features for which the SDNP has been designated would be affected to the extent that a significant environmental effect is likely. The Secretary of State is satisfied that any visual impact could be addressed as part of the planning application process.

The Secretary of State considers that while protected species, including bats, have been recorded on the site, it appears that mitigation measures could be implemented. Overall, the site is not designated for its importance to protected species and he does not consider that populations of protected species would be affected to the extent that a significant environmental effect is likely for this reason in itself.

3(a) –(e) regarding characteristics of potential impact

While the site is not in a sensitive area, the Secretary of State recognises it is close to sensitive areas. Mitigation measures are proposed to reduce potential impacts from the development. Having regard to the proposal in cumulation with existing development, the main issue appears to be the potential impact on surface water/drainage. However, the development would not be in an area at high risk of flooding and the Secretary of State does not consider that the additional impact of a proposal of this scale, in cumulative terms, is of the magnitude necessary to suggest that a significant environmental effect is likely, and he considers that these matters could be handled as part of the planning application process. In addition, he is not persuaded that cumulative impacts would harm populations of protected species to the extent that a significant environmental effect is likely. Further, he does not consider that a significant environmental effect is likely in terms of the intensity or complexity of any impact. The duration of any impacts would be for the lifetime of the development.

Is an Environmental Statement required?	No
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