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23 September 2021
Delivered by email

Development Management
Scottish Borders Council
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose
Scottish Borders
TD6 0SA

For the attention of Scott Shearer

Dear Scott,

PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE 21/00829/PREAPM - REQUEST FOR SCREENING OPINION

GROUNDS OF KINGSMEADOWS HOUSE, PEEBLES

We act on behalf of Granton Homes Ltd regarding the emerging planning application for the above site.

Pursuant to Regulation 8 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (the regulations) we write to formally request a Screening Opinion from the Council as to whether the proposed development constitutes Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development (as defined by the regulations) thereby requiring the submission of an Environmental Statement (ES).

In accordance with the regulations, we attach a Site Location Plan and set out below a brief description of the nature of the proposed development.

1.0 THE SITE & THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The site is located within the grounds of Kingsmeadows House, which is listed Category B and was refurbished to provide 12 residential apartments in 2016. The proposed development will comprise circa. 14 apartments and 5 dwelling houses, associated access and landscaping. In total, the site covers an area of approximately 4.41ha.

The site is located approximately 1km from Peebles Town Centre, to the south-east of Peebles. It is bounded by the River Tweed to the north and is surrounded by existing woodland to the south, east and west. There is existing housing adjacent to the site, on Kingsmeadows Road to the south, whilst Kingsmeadows Nursery and various business units are located on Cavalry Park to the east.

2.0 DETERMINING WHETHER EIA IS REQUIRED

The determination of whether EIA is needed requires consideration of whether the development:

ema ARCHITECTURE+DESIGN Limited

CHARTERED ARCHITECTS

42 Charlotte Square Edinburgh EH2 4HQ Tel : 44(0)131 247 1450
info@ema-architects.co.uk www.ema-architects.co.uk

Registered in Scotland No. SC256769
Directors EC McIntyre, KG Ross, JB Fraser, GK Kernohan

- Is **Schedule 1** development – in which case EIA is necessary; or
- Is **Schedule 2** development – in which case EIA is necessary if the development is likely to have significant environmental effects (guidance on assessing whether a development would have significant environmental effects is contained in Schedule 3 of the regulations).

The proposed development does not meet any of the categories in Schedule 1 of the regulations for which EIA is always required. It does however fall within one of the categories of development set out in Schedule 2, namely Category 10 '*Infrastructure Projects*', being classified as an Urban Development Project with a site area less than 5 hectares.

Accordingly, it is therefore necessary to consider whether the development would be located in a 'sensitive area' as defined in the regulations as to whether it would meet the relevant thresholds and criteria contained in Schedule 2 of the regulations. If it does the development would be deemed 'Schedule 2' for the purposes of the regulations and it would then be necessary to consider whether it would be likely to have 'significant' environmental effects.

Sensitive Areas

The regulations define 'sensitive areas' to include:

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (including their consultation areas);
- Land to which Nature Conservation Orders apply;
- International conservation sites;
- National Parks;
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- World Heritage sites; and
- Scheduled monuments.

The site is not located within a 'sensitive area', as defined by the regulations, however the site is adjacent to the River Tweed which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Schedule 2 Thresholds and Criteria

Relevant threshold and criteria for categories of development listed in Schedule 2 are contained in the second column of the Schedule. The urban development project category has a threshold of 5 hectares, which in this case is not exceeded (gross site area is approx. 4.41 ha). The proposed development is solely for apartments and dwellinghouses and does not include more than 150 dwellings. It is therefore considered that the development will not have a significant effect on the environment.

3.0 SCHEDULE 3 SELECTION CRITERIA

As set out above, in considering whether the proposed development is EIA development, regard should be had to the following criteria set out in Schedule 3 to the regulations, which are considered in greater detail below:

- The characteristics of the development;
- The location of the development; and
- The characteristics of the potential effects

Characteristics of the Development

The scheme comprises a residential development on a site which comprises large areas of woodland to the extremities of the site. Given the scale of the development, it is considered that the proposals will have an element of impact on the setting and the local infrastructure. The site is adjacent to a number of existing residential developments and is already suited to residential use. The scheme will provide a range of storey heights, a 3-4 storey flatted block and 1.5 storey housing scheme, in keeping with the local context.

Location of Development

The site is located in the Peebles area of the Scottish Borders, approximately 1km from Peebles Town Centre. It is situated in a predominantly residential area, with good transport links and access to local amenities.

The site is currently under residential use.

Characteristics of any Potential Effect

The main effects of the proposed development on the environment will be associated with:

- The physical and visual impact of the development;

These elements will be dealt with through the normal planning application process whereby individual consultant reports will be produced. Below is a list of the reports that will be provided in support of any application:-

- Design and Access Statement
- Ecology Baseline Report
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Estate Management Plan
- Archaeology
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Drainage Strategy

4.0 CONCLUSION

In the light of the above it is concluded that the principal effects of the proposed development are not likely to be significant and will affect only the site and its immediate surroundings. Furthermore it is not likely that the proposed development would result in unusually complex or hazardous environmental effects. It is our view that an EIA is not required.

We request that the Local Planning Authority adopts a Screening Opinion to confirm this position. In accordance with regulation 5(5) we look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Should any matter require clarification, or should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully



EMMA GARLAND
For EMA Architecture + Design Limited