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Application V/25/99987
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By Email only

25 September 2025

Dear Sir

The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, Part 2, Regulation 6 Screening Opinion

Application No: V/25/99987
Description: EIA Screening Request for the proposed development of up-to a maximum of 3,400 dwellings, a new primary school and early years facilities, a local centre including a mix of uses, a mobility hub, a network of multifunctional green infrastructure, landscaping, public open space, new pedestrian, cycle and vehicular accesses, and SuDS features.
Site: LAND NORTH EAST OF FAIR OAK, EASTLEIGH
Applicant: Boyer Planning
Date Submitted: 28 August 2025
Agreed Screening determination date: 25 September 2025

You have requested an EIA Screening opinion for the above proposed development under the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the Regulations).

Site Description

The proposed site, comprising approximately 115 hectares, is located in the countryside north east of Fair Oak, and is currently predominantly agricultural land including hedges and trees and adjoining woodland known as Hall Lands Copse and Tippers Copse. These woodlands are designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and include areas of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW). The topography is undulating, with land draining towards existing streams which in turn predominantly feed into the internationally designated River Itchen and

Solent. A small part of the site at its south-western corner falls within the 15km catchment zone of the New Forest SAC/SPA. On site boundaries are some existing residential properties and offices, including Listed and Locally Listed dwellings. Part of the site, known as Fair Oak Park, is recorded on the Hampshire Historic Parks and Gardens register.

The site does not lie within, but is near the following 'sensitive areas' as defined by Regulation 2 of the Regulations :

- South Downs National Park
- Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- River Itchen SSSI and SAC
- Solent and Dorset Coast SPA
- Solent and Southampton Water SPA and RAMSAR
- Lee-on Solent to Itchen Estuary SSSI
- New Forest SAC/SPA/Ramsar

The site does not lie within any statutory or non-statutory designated landscape but is potentially visually prominent in parts due to its topography and its eastern edge is located approximately 1km from the South Downs National Park. The site is approximately 4.8km from Eastleigh town centre and 4.8km and 4.4km from the nearest railway stations at Eastleigh town and Hedge End respectively. There are parts of the site at risk from surface water flooding and it lies within Flood Zone 1 (low risk of flooding from rivers and the sea). The majority of the site is assessed as Grades 3a/3b agricultural land, with 14% falling within classifications Grades 1 and 2. Limited sources of contamination are expected on this predominantly agricultural land. Much of the site lies within a Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA) identified by the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (2013).

The site is currently part of Strategic Development Option A (parts A1-A3) of the current Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review "Issues and Options" consideration for which preferred sites have not yet been selected.

Proposed Development

The proposed development, as described above, would include a construction phase of approximately 15 years and would be implemented in phases. Mitigation would address the demolition, construction and operational phases.

Screening Assessment

The Regulations define 'EIA development' as development which is; "likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location". The EIA Regulations (the Regulations), in conjunction with the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) set out the legal framework in relation to EIA. The EIA Regulations contain two development schedules (Schedule 1 development and Schedule 2 development). Schedule 1 contains a list of development where EIA is mandatory. Schedule 2 contains a list of

development types and development thresholds where the requirement for EIA should be considered. The Local Planning Authority must screen planning applications for development of a description contained within Column 1 of Schedule 2 which is within a sensitive area or meets or exceeds the relevant thresholds contained in Column 2, to determine whether it is likely to have significant effects on the environment when having regard to the selection criteria which are contained within Schedule 3 of the Regulations. Not all of the criteria will be relevant in every case. Each case should be considered on its own merits in a balanced way. A Screening Matrix has been utilised to assist the process and is attached.

Schedule 1 Development

An Environmental Statement is mandatory for projects listed in Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations. Schedule 1 developments are large scale projects for which significant effects would be expected and comprise developments such as power stations, airports etc. The development is not of a type listed in Schedule 1 of the Regulations.

Schedule 2 Development

Schedule 2 development means development, other than exempt development, of a description mentioned in column 1 of the table in Schedule 2 where:

- (a) any part of that development is to be carried out in a sensitive area; or
- (b) the applicable threshold or criterion in the corresponding part of column 2 of that table is respectively exceeded or met in relation to that development.

Is the development Schedule 2 development?

The development proposed is of a type listed in column 2 category 10(b) Urban Development Projects.

Sensitive areas

As set out in Paragraph 032 of the PPG, the more environmentally sensitive the location, the more likely it is that the effects on the environment will be significant and will require an EIA. Certain designated sites are defined in regulation 2(1) as sensitive areas and the thresholds and criteria in the second column of the table in Schedule 2 are not applied. All development in, or partly in, such areas should be screened. These are:

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest and European Sites;
- National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and
- World Heritage Sites and scheduled monuments.

In certain cases, local designations which are not included in the definition of “sensitive areas”, but which are nonetheless environmentally sensitive, may also be relevant in determining whether an assessment is required. In considering the sensitivity of a particular location, regard should also be had to whether any nationally

or internationally agreed environmental standards are already being approached or exceeded.

The proposed development site is not located within a sensitive area but is near the South Downs National Park, Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC), River Itchen SSSI and SAC, Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar, and Lee-on Solent to Itchen Estuary SSSI. A small part lies within the 15km zone of influence for the New Forest SAC/SPA/Ramsar.

Thresholds

Thresholds for Schedule 2 Projects should be considered. The Planning Practice Guidance May 2020 (PPG) gives further guidance. The table below outlines the Schedule 2 and indicative PPG criteria and thresholds, alongside issues that are likely to be considered. The 'Development Type' is '10(b) Urban development projects under the Infrastructure Projects category.

Development Type	Schedule 2 Criteria and Thresholds	PPG Indicative Criteria and Threshold	Key Issues to Consider
10(b) Urban Development Projects, including the construction of Shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas	(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.	Environmental Impact Assessment is unlikely to be required for the redevelopment of land unless the new development is on a significantly greater scale than previous use, or the type 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 10,000sq m of new commercial floorspace; or (iii) the development would have significant urbanising effect in a previously nonurbanized area (e.g. a new development of more than 1,000 dwellings).	Physical scales of such developments, potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise

The site extends to approximately 115ha and up to 3,400 dwellings on greenfield land, significantly exceeding the Schedule 2 and PPG indicative thresholds for Urban Development projects. This means the proposal constitutes Schedule 2 development and must be screened, subject to the selection criteria as identified in Schedule 3 of the Regulations. Key issues to consider are indicated as physical scale of such development, potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise.

Schedule 3:

Selection Criteria for Screening Schedule 2 Developments Schedule 3 includes three broad categories for consideration which comprise of: the characteristics of the development; the environmental sensitivity of the location; and, the types and characteristics of the potential impacts, which includes such matters as: the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact; the nature of the impact; the probability

and complexity of the impact; the onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact; and, the possibility of effectively reducing the impact. The relevant matters to the particular development proposed are considered below and in the attached Screening Matrix. Comments from individual consultees can be viewed via our portal [V/25/99987](https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/portal/V/25/99987).

1 Characteristics of development

- a) *Size and design of the development* – the mixed use development of the size proposed is likely to result in a significant urban expansion beyond the existing Fair Oak Village which is unlikely to fit with the existing environment without impacts, including visual/landscape, transport and other infrastructure impacts. The design approach is likely to differ from the low density and suburban character of nearby development.
- b) *Cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development* – combined with the nearby One Horton Heath development for mixed use including up to 2500 dwellings (planning reference O/20/89498) and other planned development the scale of these standalone proposals is such that it may give rise to unacceptable impacts during the construction and operational phases.
- c) *Use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity* – the development would characteristically result in substantial physical changes to the topography of the site and the irreversible use of natural resources in the construction and post-construction phases. There would be some loss of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land Grades (1,2 or 3a). The site is located in a minerals safeguarding area and the development is likely to have the potential for significant effects through their loss as a natural resource. Management and mitigation of the use of natural resources would be necessary.
- d) *Production of waste* - the production of waste which would result from the construction phase would be typical for a project of the nature proposed with some potential recycling of materials. The use would not generate significant levels of waste during its operational period and some waste components may be reused or recycled. The provisions for the storage, collection, and disposal of construction waste can typically be managed through a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP).
- e) *Pollution and nuisances* – potential air quality impacts would require consideration, including that from traffic, but no other hazardous, toxic or noxious substance releases are characteristic of the development proposed. There is potential for localised noise and vibration impacts during the construction period which can typically be managed through a CEMP. There is potential for permanent noise impacts during the operational phase, due to new plant installation and operational traffic. The impact on existing and future sensitive receptors can be assessed and controlled. The site is located near the River Itchen which flows into the Solent which are both internationally designated for their biodiversity interests, and the development would require appropriate controls to prevent risk of water pollution through the release of

pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters and groundwater. This can typically be controlled with appropriate buffers and sustainable drainage/surface water management and through a CEMP during the construction and operational phases, but there is considered to be significant risk of pollution without fully detailed and agreed mitigation. There are no areas on or around the site which are already subject to known pollution or environmental damage which could be affected by the project, e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded.

- f) *Risk of major accidents and/or disasters, including those caused by climate change*- the area identified for residential development is almost entirely contained within EA Flood Zone 1, taking into account the effects of climate change and up to the '100 year plus 40% event', the site is otherwise unlikely to be specifically impacted by the effects of climate change. Pockets are in Flood Zones 2 and 3 which are at risk of surface water flooding and could be excluded from development if required. Flood risk and surface water drainage would need to be fully addressed through mitigation and management and would require the use of sustainable drainage to retain greenfield flow rates. The anticipated risk of accidents occurring is considered to be low if appropriately managed. The construction and operational phases of the development do not involve the use of high risk substances or technologies. There is also not considered to be a significant risk of accidents occurring as a result of the proposed end use, including those related to transport. The construction phase would be managed by the developer in accordance with a CEMP, the relevant Health and Safety Regulations and other associated statutory provisions.
- g) *Risk to human health* – Contamination or air pollution- the site has a low risk of land contamination associated with its former uses. There is some risk that contamination could be mobilised during construction which could have adverse effects, including the potential risk to human health. It is not, however, considered that this circumstance is exceptional and risk can be managed through a CEMP and other controls. The air quality impacts from the development are not anticipated to result in significant effects on the environment subject to appropriate transport mitigation and management. The development is anticipated to result in an increase in noise levels during the construction and potentially operational phases. The construction impacts are not anticipated to be unusual for a development of this type and the temporary noise emissions arising from site preparation and construction activities can be controlled through the use of a CEMP, incorporating a range of measures including the appropriate locating of plant and on-site facilities, lorry routing and the controlling of construction and delivery hours to minimise the impact upon sensitive receptors, which include the adjoining residential uses. During the operational phase, the development may result in an increase in noise levels relative to the existing situation on site with this arising from additional traffic movements. The location of any noise generating or noise-sensitive

uses can be considered and controlled in this respect following the submission of a noise assessment, to ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts.

It is concluded overall that the Characteristics of the proposed large-scale development would give rise to a level of environmental impact or impacts which would require an EIA to be undertaken.

2 The Location of the Development

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development must be considered, with particular regard, to—

(a) *the existing and approved land use*; currently agricultural land which would be lost to development and has potential for significant adverse impacts. Mitigation following detailed site assessment, including LVIA and other environmental surveys, would be necessary. Neighbouring land uses may experience effects during the construction and operational phases;

(b) *the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground*: Phase 1 and Phase 2 ecology work to inform an evidence-based Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) would be necessary to determine the likely the impacts and inform ecological enhancement work such that longer term the project would deliver an increase in biodiversity from the former agricultural baseline. Areas of set back from any notable trees and potentially Ancient and Veteran trees and woodland are indicated but not agreed. Biodiversity Net Gain and other mitigation would be provided through condition/S106. Improvements to biodiversity are likely to add to the existing baseline in excess of 10%. Nevertheless, scope for regeneration is limited and there would be permanent loss of Grades 1 and 2 agricultural land. There would also be permanent loss of minerals resource unless prior extraction was deemed feasible.

(c) *the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas—*

(i) *wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths*; An assessment of hydrological impacts would be necessary, together with any necessary prevention and mitigation works. The potential extent of this large-scale development limits the absorption capacity of the existing natural environment.

(ii) *coastal zones and the marine environment*: The Solent suite of internationally protected areas is fed by the River Itchen and River Hamble and impacts on water quality are a significant consideration including the nutrient and recreational impacts of the development.

(iii) *mountain and forest areas*: There are no mountain or significant forest areas affected by this site, although the site adjoins areas of SINC and ancient woodland

which require appropriate protection and buffers. Proposals for the protection and enhancement of trees and hedgerows would be required.

(iv) nature reserves and parks: the eastern part of the site is in close proximity to the South Downs National Park which would be sensitive to any light pollution, landscape changes and traffic impacts resulting from the development. The South Downs National Park is a 'sensitive area' as defined by Regulation 2 of the EIA Regulations.

(v) European sites and other areas classified or protected under national legislation:

The site itself is not subject to international, national, regional or local designations other than Tippers Copse, which is located on the identified applicants' site and is designated as Ancient Woodland and a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). A further Ancient Woodland SINC is located immediately to the north of the Site (Park Hills Wood) and a remnant woodland parcel, known as Hall Lands Copse, is centrally enveloped by the site. The boundary with the South Downs National Park 'sensitive area' lies approximately 1km northeast of the east parcel on Portsmouth Road B2177, and parts of the site are on high ground and may be sensitive visually in the landscape from both short and long views. The visual impact of the development would be subject to further Landscape and Visual Impact (LVIA) assessment.

Transport routes to the South Down National Park, which is used for recreation, are likely to be affected by the project.

The Site lies near the catchment of the international designations associated with the River Itchen and Solent. Nutrient neutrality may be achieved through both on-site and off-site mechanisms subject to an agreed Nutrient Neutrality Assessment, but this is not currently certain. Whilst the site falls just outside the 5.6km catchment of the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy (Bird Aware strategy) and only the very southeastern corner of the site falls within the 15km zone of influence for the New Forest SPA/SAC/Ramsar designated site, the significant scale of the development proposed indicates that there is the potential for impacts on ecological receptors which are considered to potentially give rise to significant effects on the environment and it is anticipated, as highlighted above, that there is potential that these designations will be directly or indirectly significantly affected by this development. This would be considered through the assessments supporting any planning application and mitigation options.

Additionally, there are several Tree Preservation Orders applicable to the site and/or its surroundings, as well as other mature/Veteran trees and hedgerows. The potential impacts on these features and mitigation measures would need to be assessed through an Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure: There are no environmentally degraded areas affected by this site and as such this can be scoped out of further consideration ;

(vii) densely populated areas: the site is within countryside and not within or close to existing or proposed densely populated areas, the nearest areas of population being

suburban or rural. A conventional residential scheme as proposed would not typically give rise to any significant environmental effects and/or risks that could have particular implications for densely populated areas.

(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance: An assessment of landscape and cultural heritage will be undertaken and mitigation considered as necessary. Other heritage interests include adjoining and nearby Grade II Listed Buildings and the more distant scattered band of seven scheduled monuments relating to the park pale of Marwell Manor and the moated site of the Manor house itself. There are no or other known designated landscapes or sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance likely to be directly affected by this site. The land also does not fall within a Conservation Area. A Heritage Statement, an LVIA and an Archaeology Assessment Statement would be necessary to fully assess the heritage constraints and identify mitigation measures necessary to address potential environmental effects on landscape and heritage receptors.

3. Types and characteristics of the potential impact

The likely significant effects of the development on the environment must be considered in relation to criteria set out in paragraphs 1 and 2 above, with regard to the impact of the development on the factors specified in regulation 4(2), (i.e. population and human health; biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under Directive 92/43/EEC(1) and Directive 2009/147/EC(2); land, soil, water, air and climate; material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape; the interaction between these factors) taking into account:

- (a) Magnitude and spatial extent of the impact* - as detailed above, the potential types and spatial extent of the likely impacts are likely to be significant in EIA terms. The area of the development is c115ha, with up to 3,400 dwellings and new population of approximately 8000 residents and affects a wide population and geographical area within and outside Eastleigh Borough.
- (b) Nature of the impact* – as detailed in 1 above, impacts are not all localised. Impacts potentially include transport congestion, highway safety, landscape, biodiversity, heritage, water quality, infrastructure and pollution which would extend beyond the site and immediate locality.
- (c) Transboundary nature of the impact* – there is potential for impacts beyond the local authority boundary into South Downs National Park area, Solent area, New Forest and Winchester City Council area but not beyond the Hampshire County boundary or any international boundary.
- (d) The intensity and complexity of the impact* – largely traffic, landscape, biodiversity, infrastructure, pollution and visual impacts which have the potential to be significant but not complex.

- (e) *Probability of the impact* – the impacts detailed in 1 above are likely to occur. There would be complete and significant change in the character of the site when operational and the construction phase also has potential to give rise to impacts.
- (f) *Expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact* – the impacts detailed in 1 above are likely to be either temporary during the construction period, which nevertheless extends to 15 years, or permanent during the irreversible operational phase. Mitigation and management through CEMP, construction traffic management and conditions would reduce the impacts.
- (g) *Cumulation of the impact of other existing and/or approved development* – The applicants' submission identifies and describes 'approved schemes', which have been granted planning permission, within the surrounding area, as well as schemes that are judged to be pending approval. These and other approved schemes (including those with a formal resolution to permit) are considered. These schemes are either located in proximity to the site or otherwise have some relationship to the site/proposals and therefore merit consideration. They serve to demonstrate that they are of a scale such that they are likely to give rise to cumulative significant effects including those relating to landscape, biodiversity, transport and pollution during both the construction and operational phases.
- (h) *Possibility of effectively reducing the impact* – as indicated above mitigation and biodiversity gains can significantly reduce likely impacts and can be secured by conditions/S106. It is concluded, however, that the type and characteristics of the potential impacts arising from the proposed development would give rise to a level of environmental impact or impacts which would require an EIA to be undertaken.

Conclusion

The development has been screened against the relevant provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and the Planning Practice Guidance. This screening assessment has considered whether the proposed development is likely to give rise to significant effects on the Environment. The development is not Schedule 1 development as defined in the EIA Regulations, but is Schedule 2 development under Category 10(b) and also has the potential to impact 'sensitive areas'. The site extends to approximately 115 ha, exceeding the 5ha threshold set by the Regulations. This means the proposal does constitute Schedule 2 development subject to the selection criteria as identified in Schedule 3 of the Regulations. Screening has been undertaken using Schedule 3 criteria.

The development would be likely to give rise to significant effects on the application site, its immediate surroundings, and beyond, and the characteristics and location of development indicate that the development is likely to give rise to significant environment effects. The site is not located within a sensitive area as defined by the EIA Regulations but due to its scale and proximity to sensitive areas, it is considered

that there is likely potential for significant effects on the environment. Prevention and mitigation measures, which are typical for a development of this type and nature in close proximity to sensitive uses, would be necessary and these are able to be appropriately provided and controlled through the planning application process, including through the use of planning conditions and obligations. However, it is not certain at this screening stage that they would adequately mitigate the potential environmental impacts prior to further assessment. Cumulative impacts relating to other approved development also indicate that they require EIA consideration.

Is an Environmental Impact Assessment Required?

The Local Planning Authority are of the opinion that an Environmental Impact Assessment is required for this development. The screening assessment has identified that significant effects on the environment are considered likely either alone or in combination with other development and, therefore, it is the opinion of Eastleigh Borough Council as the Local Planning Authority that the proposed development constitutes EIA development as defined by the Regulations.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "N Parker". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

Nicholas Parker
Planning Manager