The 26/SCR/00002 — EIA Screening Opinion. Land South of Southwell Road Farnsfield

The issues are:

1. What is an Environmental Impact Assessment : Screening Opinion (EIA:SO)?
2. What is its effect?
3. What next?

Some background.

A Consultant has issue a request on behalf of a developer for an EIA Screening Opinion. There are some 6.7 Ha of land near to Hadleigh Park. Lane Town Planning has requested an EIA:SO from our Local Planning Authority (LPA) - NSDC - as about 140 - 160 dwellings could be built on it. They recognise a development of this size may need an EIA, of some depth, in addition to all the other items stated in the Planning Validation checklist (e.g. drainage, waste removal, ecological provisions, Tree & Bat reports).... An EIA:SO would help them determine some likely costs and difficulties and also help to determine if any development might be profitably created.

1. An EIA:SO is:

An opinion from the LPA on the Scope of an EIA that might be required to be provided at submission of a Planning Application. The LPA Officer will examine (screen) the information provided by the applicant and determine, according to the requirements of Sched 3 what are the likely requirements to be addressed by an EIA should the applicant decide to go forward with a full planning application.

2. The effect is:

To guide the applicant in what might be needed in an EIA and to help the applicant prepare any PA comprehensively.

3. What next?

The EIA:SO should be available on 14 July. The Requestor will then review, as will MoP, and determine there next steps. The requestor may then submit a formal PA or may terminate their interest.

A Screening Opinion is not a planning application and therefore does not require public consultation. This is a technical procedure issued by the Council to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required to be submitted with a planning application or not.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Some types of development require an EIA to be undertaken, and the resulting environmental statement to be submitted with the planning application. This enables the local planning authority to have sufficient environmental information on the impacts of the development when making the decision. The EIA assesses the impacts of the development upon different aspects of the environment (e.g. ecology, noise, air quality) and recommend mitigation where necessary. The mitigation can then be secured through planning conditions or legal agreements, if the development is granted planning permission.

Criteria for making a decision with regard to the need for Environmental Impact Assessment are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. The consideration is based upon a proposed development's characteristics, location and potential impacts. You can read more about the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 and the requirements for local planning authorities to consider whether certain projects are likely to have a significant effect on the environment via: Environmental Impact Assessment - GOV.UK.

Screening Opinion

A developer can apply to the Council to determine whether an EIA is required prior to submitting a planning application. This is known as a request for a Screening Opinion. The applicant is required to submit sufficient information on the proposal so that the Council can understand the potential of the proposal to have a significant effect on certain issues. If a developer does not make a request for Screening Opinion, the Council will issue a Screening Opinion on major developments when a planning application is made. The Council is required to issue a Screening Opinion within 21 days unless an extension is agreed with the developer.

The information submitted with a request for a Screening Opinion is often limited, usually a red line identifying the land and a brief description of the development proposed and possible effects. The Council can ask for further information if this is considered necessary to issue a Screening Opinion.

If the proposal has a number of issues then the Council may consult technical consultees to seek their advice with regard to the potential for significant impact. Consultation with the public will occur if and when a planning application is made.

A Screening Opinion must be made public for 2 years. Only the Opinion is made public (this is the decision of the Council). A Screening Opinion does not consider the detail of the impact of the development, this is a matter for consideration once the planning application is made. If required, the Environmental Statement will help inform this process.

The Head of planning at NSDC has been invited to visit with FPC on 21 July and you may wish to join us to hear what he has to say about Land Allocation within NSDC, EIA:SOs and how the process works