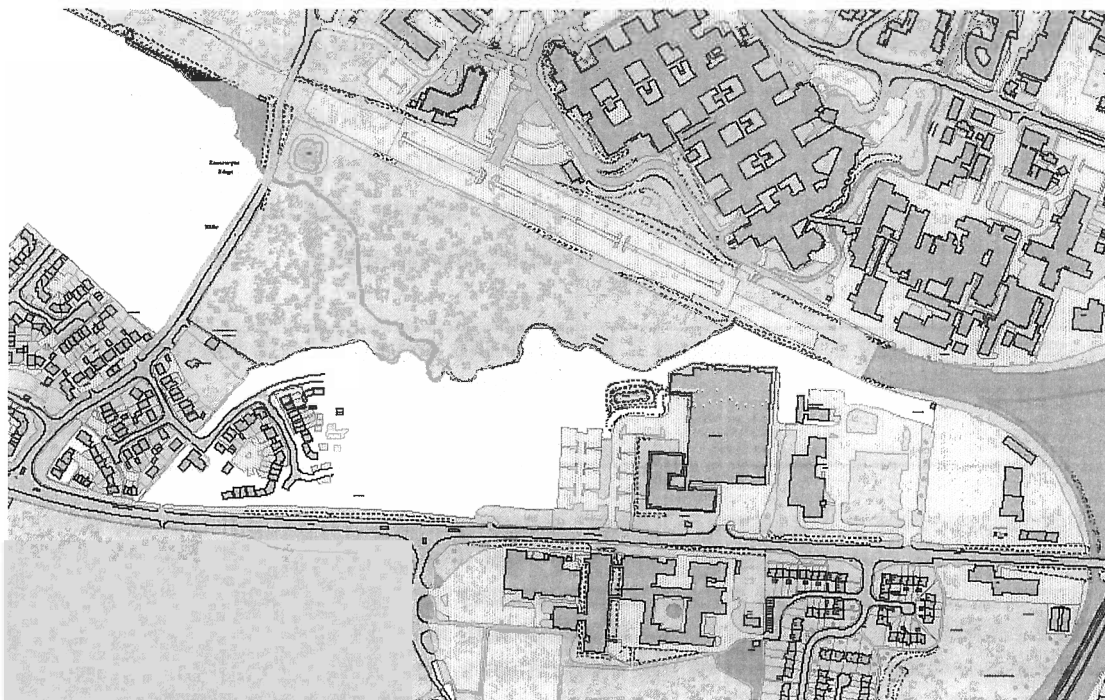


**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 1999
(AS AMENDED)**

**DETERMINATION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT A DEVELOPMENT
PROPOSAL IS SUBJECT TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT –
SCREENING OPINION.**



The Site

The project comprises an Ambulance and Fire Station of approximately 3400m² gross internal floor area, arranged over two stories. The location is on land recently purchased from the Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) on the western side of Wrexham town centre, on a site bounded to the north by Wrexham Maelor Hospital (specifically the hospital car park on the former and disused railway), to the east by WCBC offices and existing Ambulance Station, to the west by the proposed improved Croesnewydd Road, and to the south by the River Gwenfro.

SECTION A

Reference	SO/2012/016
Date of receipt of request	30/04/2012
Date the decision due	08/06/2012

Address of site	A parcel of (adjacent) land to the east of Croesnewydd Road (part of the Western Gateway Site). See location plan above.
Agents Name Address	Mr Robin Ainley Robinainley@nightingaleassociates.com
Proposed development	Ambulance and Fire Station of approximately 3400m ² gross internal floor area, arranged over two stories
Schedule 1 category	No
Schedule 2 category	<i>Infrastructure projects -</i> 10.(b) Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas
The reasons why it is Schedule 2 in the Regulations	The site area exceeds the thresholds of 0.5 Hectare

This **request** for a Screening Opinion is submitted to Wrexham County Borough Council under the procedures set out in Part II of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (amended). The proposed development is **not** categorised as any of the activities under Schedule 1 of the Regulations, for which the submission of an EIA is mandatory. As such, it is appropriate to consider the proposed development in the context of paragraph 10. (b) Urban development projects - under Schedule 2 of the Regulations. These thresholds determine whether a development falls within Schedule 2 of the regulations whereby an EIA may be required if the development has the potential to generate significant effects. For this development the applicable threshold and criteria to be taken into account when determining if the proposals fall within Schedule 2 is defined as 'the area of the development exceeds 0.5 ha'.

The general criteria for assessing **significance** are provided in paragraph 33 of the Circular. In applying the general tests of significance the LPA must assess whether a Schedule 2 project is likely to have impacts that are of 'more than local importance'. It is not sufficient that the development will have off site local impacts. More than local importance means effects beyond their immediate locality, which give rise to substantial national or regional controversy, which may conflict with national policy on important matters. The fact that there are likely to be environmental effects beyond the site boundaries but within the general locality of the site does not therefore, in itself, constitute 'more than local importance'.

Schedule 3 of the Regulations raises certain selection criteria that must be

taken into account:

- Characteristics of the development (it is more than local importance?)
- Location of development (is there a sensitive/vulnerable location involved?)
- Characteristics of potential impacts (would these be complicated or adverse?)

SECTION B**1. The Proposal**

The proposal would involve the construction of an Ambulance and Fire Station will house, over two floors housing up to 8 No. Fire Appliance Vehicles, 6 No. Ambulance Vehicles in an internal garage, 3 No. Ambulance Vehicles in an internal cleaning and restocking bay, Up to 5 No. Ambulance Vehicles in a vehicle maintenance garage, and associated accommodation for personnel.

Other significant features of the development of the site will include a hard standing 'apron' in front of the vehicle garages, parking for 135 cars, vehicle washing, maintenance and refuelling area, fire training house and various outbuildings, including oil stores, transformer and generator housings, covered parking for 12 ambulance vehicles, bin stores, cycle shelter etc.

Environmental information will support the planning application with a particular focus on visual, noise, water, air quality and ecological information.

2. Environmental Sensitivity

- Risk of flooding: Mitigation of risk by raising the platform of the site by at least 300mm
- Presence of invasive plant species (Himalayan Balsam)
- Ecological: River Gwenfro is a tributary of the River Dee which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) known to contain otters, impact to be mitigated by preservation of 'ecological corridor' (an area enhanced and protected by planting, bat and nesting boxes, fencing etc along the river bank)
- Acoustics: Noise Impact Assessment to be carried out
- Traffic Impact Assessment: a comparison report against previous planning application submissions to be undertaken

With appropriate planning conditions and adequate buffer zone (minimum distance of 15 metres is required) it is not considered that the proposed development would have likely significant effects on the wider surrounding environment.

3. Characteristics of the Development**3.1 *The size of the development***

The Ambulance and Fire Station will house:

- 8 No. Fire Appliance Vehicles
- 6 No. Ambulance Vehicles in an internal garage

- Up to 3 No. Ambulance Vehicles in an internal cleaning and restocking bay
- Up to 5 No. Ambulance Vehicles in a vehicle maintenance garage

The accommodation for personnel will include:

- Rest room, dining and kitchen facilities
- Lockers, changing rooms and toilet facilities
- Training room facilities
- Support offices for operational functions
- Store rooms for equipment and supplies
- Administrative offices

Other significant features of the development of the site will include:

- A hard standing 'apron' in front of the vehicle garages
- Car parking for 135 cars
- A vehicle washing and refuelling area
- A yard and compound for the ambulance vehicle maintenance operations
- Various outbuildings, including oil stores, transformer and generator housings, covered parking for 12 ambulance vehicles, bin stores, cycle shelter etc
- A Fire Training House, to simulate wet (water), cold smoke, and blackout rescue conditions (but not live fire or hot smoke conditions)
- A compound to simulate rescue from Road Traffic Collision situations

3.2 Cumulative effect

Housing development is nearing completion on land to the south of the site. There are no other proposals of this nature in the locality. The proposal is not considered to give rise to any significant environmental impacts over and above the existing. No adverse cumulative impact would occur.

3.3 The use of natural resources

There is no use or loss of natural resources beyond that associated with standard construction practices.

3.4 Waste

Normal waste associated this nature of development existing services. Unlikely to be in quantities which would have significant environmental impacts.

3.5 Pollution and nuisance

Short term noise, emission and dust issues associated with normal construction practices which can be controlled by planning conditions. Longer term noise restricted to the use of the ambulance and fire service and increased traffic movements, and there would be no significant increases of more than local significance.

3.6 Risk of accident

Construction works would be controlled by Health and Safety legislation and good site management. Increase in traffic will be catered for by new access points with acceptable visibility for motorists and pedestrians.

4. Location of the Development

4.1 The existing land use

The location is on land recently purchased from the Wrexham County Borough Council on the western side of Wrexham town centre, on a site bounded to the north by Wrexham Maelor Hospital (specifically the hospital car park on the former and disused railway), to the west by the proposed improved Croesnewydd Road, and to the south by the River Gwenfro (SSSI and SAC). Subject to appropriate ground levels and ecological buffer between the development and the river, no significant adverse effects are likely.

4.2 The relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area

There will be no significant loss of, or impact upon exceptional or unique natural resources.

4.3 The absorption capacity of the natural environment; (paying particular attention to wetlands, coastal zones, mountain and forest areas, nature reserves and parks, areas classified or protected under Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora; areas in which the environmental quality standards laid down in Community legislation have already been exceeded, densely populated areas and landscapes of historical, cultural or archaeological significance)

- The site is not wetland;
- The site is not coast land;
- The site does not sit within a mountain, forest or nature reserve or park;
- The site does not sit within an area classified or protected under Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora;
- The site does not sit within an area in which the environmental quality standards laid down in Community legislation have already been exceeded, a densely populated area or a landscape of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

It is important that the development is buffered from the River Gwenfro by an appropriate 15 metre wide wildlife corridor to protect this otter habitat within the tributary of the River Dee SAC.

5. Characteristics of the potential impact

5.1 The extent of the impact

Direct effects are limited to the site and the immediate local area in terms of traffic, air quality, noise, scale and ecological issues.

5.2 The transfrontier nature of the impact

The proposed development is entirely within the WCBC area and will not give rise to impacts of this nature.

5.3 The magnitude and complexity of the impact

The nature of the development and potential impact on the sensitive site is

unlikely to lead to complex impacts.

5.4 The probability of the impact

Likely effects are clearly definable and limited to the development. Impacts can be addressed and controlled effectively by planning conditions.

5.5 The duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact

Effects would be for the life of the development. Once operational, any effects of the development are predicted to be negligible in relation to its location. The impact of the completed development is reversible as the facility could be removed and the site restored.

SECTION C

Consideration has been given by the Local Planning Authority to the relevant selection criteria in Schedule 3 to the Regulations, the general guidance contained in EIA Circular 11/99, and any relevant indicative criteria in Annex A of the Circular and in the case of the Schedule 2 development, whether it is in a sensitive area under Regulation 2(1). The Local Planning Authority **hereby determines** that :

The proposed development as described in the submitted details would not give rise to significant adverse effects on the environment and therefore an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.



Signed by Lawrence Isted
Head of Community Wellbeing and Development

Date of Determination: 16.05.2012

References:

Town & Country Planning (EIA) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 and in particular categories 1 – 10 of Schedule 2

Welsh Office Circular 11/99 and in particular Annex A