

Adeilad y
Goron
Parc Cathays
Caerdydd
CF10 3NQ

Crown Buildings
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Ffôn / tel: 0303 444 3893

e-bost /
e-mail: policy.wales@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Barratt Homes, Bloor Homes North West,
John Raymond Jones and the Trustees of
The Wrexham (Parochial) Education
Foundation

Eich Cyf / Your Ref:

Ein Cyf / Our Ref: 3263516

Dyddiad / Date: 20 January 2021

c/o

Mr Dan Ingram
Barton Willmore

(via e-mail)

Dear Sir / Madam,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales)
Regulations 2017

Appeal by: Barratt Homes, Bloor Homes North West, John Raymond Jones and the Trustees of The Wrexham (Parochial) Education Foundation

Site Address: Land South of Holt Road, Wrexham

Proposed Development: Outline application for the construction of up to 600 dwellings, with associated landscaping, public open space and on-site infrastructure, with all matters reserved except from the northern site access.

I refer to the above appeal made to the Welsh Ministers in November 2020.

The Welsh Ministers consider it appropriate for them to come to their own conclusion as to whether the project is EIA development within the meaning of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017, ("the Regulations") and provide a screening direction in that respect.

The Planning Inspectorate is authorised by the Welsh Ministers to provide that screening direction.

The project, as described above, falls within the description at paragraph 10(b) in column 1 of the table in Schedule 2 to the Regulations and exceeds the applicable threshold in column 2 of that table.

A screening assessment is attached which identifies the key areas which have been considered. Having taken into account the selection criteria in Schedule 3 to the Regulations and the advice in Welsh Office Circular 11/99: Environmental Impact Assessment on establishing whether EIA is required, the assessment concludes that:

The proposed development of up to 600 dwellings with associated landscaping, public open space and on-site infrastructure would be of a size that would inevitably result in physical effects in a number of areas; these will no doubt be important considerations for the decision maker. Nonetheless, in the majority of instances the scale of effect, the site context and the potential for mitigation or compensation to be secured where required are such that significant environmental effects are unlikely.

However, the site contains some 26.3 ha of the best and most versatile agricultural land (grade 3a), which is a finite resource at the national level. Moreover, the site also contains mineral resources in the form of fine sand that are also considered to be of national significance. Based on the proposals put forward, both of those nationally important resources would be sterilised or lost were development to go ahead. In the case of the mineral resource, the ability to extract on parts of neighbouring land would also be lost due to the need to provide a buffer zone around the proposed dwellings. Given the size of the site, the magnitude and permanence of the losses that would occur and the importance of the resources at the national level, I consider that significant environmental effects in these respects are likely. As such, I conclude that the proposed development must be considered EIA development for the purposes of the EIA regulations.

Therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by Regulation 4 of the Regulations and the authority referred to above, the Welsh Ministers hereby direct that the development subject of this appeal **is EIA development** within the meaning of the Regulations.

Consequently, this appeal **must** be accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

- Please confirm whether you intend to submit an Environmental Statement, and if you do, how long you anticipate this will take to prepare. Under Regulation 13(8) of the Regulations, if you do not write to us within 21 days of this direction, i.e. **no later than Wednesday 10 February 2021**, to inform the Inspectorate that you propose to provide an Environmental Statement, no further action will be taken on the appeal.

An Environmental Statement must contain, for the purpose of assessing the likely impact on the environment, the information specified in Regulation 17 and Schedule 4 to the Regulations. You should refer to the Regulations and Welsh Office Circular 11/99, before and during the preparation of the Environmental Statement. In the meantime, you may wish to have regard to the particular environmental topics identified in the attached screening assessment.

I am copying this letter to the Local Planning Authority.

In accordance with the Regulations, the Local Planning Authority should ensure that this screening direction is placed on Part 1 of the Planning Register in relation to the application in question.

Yours sincerely,

C Sweet

Mr Christopher Sweet MPlan

Swyddog Cynllunio / Planning Officer

Tîm Cynllunio a'r Amgylchedd / The Planning & Environment Team

Yr Arolygiaeth Gynllunio / The Planning Inspectorate