

North Herts Council,
Council Offices,
Gernon Road,
Letchworth Garden City,
SG6 3JF

09 October 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

Garden Square Shopping Centre, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3DP

Request for an EIA Screening Opinion under The Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) – Regulation 6 (1)

Regent Street Projects Ltd (the 'Applicant') intends to submit a full planning application to North Herts Council (NHC) under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for the demolition of the existing buildings and delivery of up to 240 dwellings (Use Class C3) and 1,859 sqm of Class E floorspace (predominantly in retail and food and beverage uses) (the 'Proposed Development') Land occupying Garden Square Shopping Centre, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3DP (the 'Site'). On behalf of the Applicant, we write to request an Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') Screening Opinion from NHC in accordance with Regulation 6(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017¹ (as amended²) ('EIA Regulations').

To assist NHC in its adoption of a Screening Opinion, we enclose an EIA Screening Appraisal to satisfy Regulation 6(2) by providing the following:

- A plan sufficient to identify the Site;
- A description of the Proposed Development, including physical characteristics of the development and, where relevant, of demolition works;
- A description of the location of the development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected;
- A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development;

¹ Her Majesty's Stationary Office (HMSO), 2017. The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. May 2017.

² HMSO, 2018. The Town and Country and Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2018. November 2018.

- A description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment resulting from expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity; and
- Measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.

Site and Development

The Site is approximately 1.54 hectares (ha) and is centred at National Grid Reference TL 21838 32581 in land known as Garden Square Shopping Centre, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3DP, approximately 9km north of Stevenage.

A Site location plan is provided within the enclosed Screening Appraisal document. The Site currently comprises the existing Garden Square Shopping Centre, currently in commercial and retail use, enclosed by retail stores, residential dwellings and street furniture.

The Proposed Development is demolition of the existing buildings and delivery of up to 240 dwellings (Class C3) and 1,859 sqm (Class E) floorspace (predominantly in retail and food and beverage uses), a serviced parcel for community uses, public open space, pedestrian connections, Sustainable Urban Drainage, access and associated infrastructure.

The Proposed Development will be delivered in phases over approximately 5 years to ensure the continued operation of parts of the existing shopping centre and reduce the impact on the town centre.

EIA Context

The proposals fall within Category (10)(b) of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations for 'urban development projects'. The relevant screening threshold for Category 10(b) projects is:

'The development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or

The development includes more than 150 dwellings; or

The overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.'

The Site area does exceed this threshold and therefore needs to be screened for EIA.

In consideration of Schedule 2, the following considerations are applicable:

"a) Any part of that development is to be carried out in a sensitive area; or

b) Any applicable threshold or criterion in the corresponding part of Column 2 of that table is respectively exceeded or met in relation to that development.”

The Proposed Development is not located in a ‘sensitive area’ as defined in Part 1 of the EIA Regulations (i.e. a Site of Special Scientific Interest, National Park, National Landscape³, World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument or European Site⁴).

Likely Significant Effects

The Government’s online planning practice guidance (PPG) for local authorities considering Schedule 2 development and the need for EIA states, “*Only a very small proportion of Schedule 2 development will require an Environmental Impact Assessment*” (Paragraph 018).

Key environmental issues set out in the Government’s online planning practice guidance (PPG) to consider for this form of development are noted as level of emissions to air, arrangements for the transport of fuel and any visual impact. These aspects are considered within the Screening Appraisal. Where mitigation is relied upon to avoid significant adverse effects this is set out in the report.

Based on the finding of the EIA Screening Appraisal, we conclude the Development would not give rise to significant environment effects alone or in cumulation with other existing or approved schemes and, as such, does not constitute an EIA development.

In adopting their screening opinion, SNC are required to consider whether the Proposed Development is ‘*likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as nature, size or location*’ with regard to the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations.

We look forward to receiving your EIA Screening Opinion which we would assume will include the main reasons for the Council’s conclusion. We would be grateful if you could confirm that you are satisfied you have sufficient information to adopt a Screening Opinion with 21 days. However, should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,



Alistair Walker
Technical Director (Environmental Impact Assessment)

Enc. EIA Screening Appraisal

³ Formerly known as ‘Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty’

⁴ Now known as the national site network (NSN), as defined by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).