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Sent via e-mail: chris@gpplanning.co.uk

**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> January 2023

**Our Ref:** 39755/APP/2022/3726

Dear Christian

**Request for an EIA Screening Opinion under Regulation 6 of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) in respect of Envar Composting Ltd. For the proposed extension to the existing green waste open windrow compost maturation yard.**

**Site Address:** HIGH VIEW FARM NEWYEARS GREEN LANE

I refer to your Screening Request submission which was received by the Local Planning Authority on 6<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2022. I write to inform you that in the preliminary examination of the screening request (ref: 39755/APP/2022/3726), it was found that the development proposed comprises of "Schedule 2 development" as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. As a consequence, the Local Planning Authority is required to make a determination as to whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is necessary.

In this context, a report on the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment in respect of this application has been considered under delegated powers and it has been concluded that an Environmental Statement is **not** required.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Yours sincerely,



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**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990**  
**(Environmental Impact Assessment)**  
**(ENGLAND AND WALES)**  
**Regulations 2017, as amended**

<b>SCREENING OPINION</b> Relating to Application No (where applicable):	39755/APP/2022/3726
Location:	Highview Farm, New Year's Green Lane, Harefield, UB9 6LX
Site area:	3.41 hectares
Description of development:	Extension of the existing compost maturation area at the applicant's existing green/food waste recycling and open windrow composting facility

**Reason for screening opinion:**

The site covers an area of 3.41 hectares. The development falls within Schedule 2 10(b). Development falling within Schedule 2 should normally meet certain thresholds to trigger the need to screen whether EIA is applicable for a development a subsequent planning application requires an environmental statement.

EIA is only applicable for developments that have likely significant environmental effects and it is noted that some developments may be below the prescribed thresholds but still trigger the need for EIA.

National Planning Practice Guidance states:

*“...projects listed in Schedule 2 which are located in, or partly in, a sensitive area also need to be screened, even if they are below the thresholds or do not meet the criteria.”*

The regulations assist with the identification of sensitive sites, which are generally nationally important locations. The application site is located relatively close to a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is defined in the EIA Regulations as a ‘sensitive area’.

Determining significance is subjective but in the context of EIA consideration is given to the scale of a development's impact and the sensitivity of the environmental receptor that is impacted; for example, a small scale impact on a highly sensitive receptor, or a larger impact on less sensitive receptor may result in a determination of likely significant environmental effect. Only effects that are of more than local importance are likely to give rise to likely significant effects.

**Relevant criteria (Schedule 3 of the regulations):**

***i) Characteristics of development***

The Applicant intends to seek planning permission to extend the existing compost maturation area at the applicant's existing green/food waste recycling and open windrow composting facility at Highview Farm, New Year's Green Lane, Harefield.

The proposals are effectively a change and extension to an existing facility but only in the context of the land required. There is no change in throughput of waste or matters beyond negligible changes to operational activities. The additional land required is to meet changing regulatory requirements for composting facilities.

**ii) Cumulation with other development**

The following assessment will consider the development as changed or extended, i.e. any impacts associated with the current site along with those introduced through the proposed development.

**iii) Use of natural resources *in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity***

The site is on a principle aquifer which contains a series of highly sensitive source protection zones for public water supplies. In addition, the facility is the primary site for managing composting for the West London Waste Authority. This management of waste is therefore intrinsically linked to the sustainable waste management for West London.

However, the test is likely significant effects. No significant effects were reported as part of the previous submission and the site is operational with the necessary permits and protections in place. The new scheme does not impact any new receptors, and the sensitivity of the receiving environment has not increased. It is unlikely that the extension would give rise to new or changed likely significant effects and nor in accumulation with the existing facility.

There will be a minor loss of open land at a local scale with a subsequent negligible impact on ecology as a result of development in this location. However, this is not considered to be a significant environmental affect, given that the site is not sensitive. The impact on the Mad Bess Woods SSSI (national scale significance) is considered to be negligible, with no impact on the conservation status of the receptor. Proposals will be expected to enhance the biodiversity value of the site and to protect existing landscape features in accordance with planning policy.

**iv) Production of waste:** Whilst there will be waste produced during construction, where appropriate, this could be controlled by a suitably worded condition securing a waste management plan. The site is operational with the necessary permits and protections in place. Therefore no substantive impact.

**v) Pollution and nuisance:** The site is operational with the necessary permits and protections in place. Therefore no substantive impact. No significant impacts anticipated in terms of pollution or nuisance.

**vi) Risk of accidents:** There are not considered to be significant risks associated with the construction and operation.

**vii) Risks to human health:** There are not considered to be significant risks associated with the construction and operation.

There would be no construction of buildings or associated structures within the woodland areas (including within the SSSI). Impacts on the nationally important receptor are therefore considered to be negligible and not give rise to likely significant effects.

Large scale soil deposition is approved to the south of the site. This is required to facilitate the construction of HS2. The likely significant effects associated with these mounds were assessed and approved as part of the HS2 Act 2017. No new significant cumulative effects associated with these mounds in addition to the extended composting facility are likely.

**ii) Location of development**

(a) the existing and approved land use; Composting facility. The extended area will require a change of use.

(b) natural resources in the area and its underground; No significant impacts.

The site is on a principle aquifer which contains a series of highly sensitive source protection zones for public water. No significant effects were reported as part of the previous submission and the site is operational with the necessary permits and protections in place. The new scheme does not impact any new receptors, and the sensitivity of the receiving environment has not increased.

(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment: the entire site is indicated to lie within in Flood Zone 1, 'low probability', which represents an annual probability of less than 0.1% of a flood occurring in any one year. The site is therefore deemed not to be at flood risk from fluvial or tidal sources. An existing surface water management system is present within the existing site which includes attenuation, storage and bunded / isolated floodable areas to ensure that existing surface water runoff rates are maintained, and the containment of contaminated water within the site, which is then either recycled or tankered off site as leachate.

The proposal is not considered to raise substantive EIA issues relating to identified criteria. However this would be robustly assessed during the consideration of the formal planning application.

**iii) Types and characteristics of the potential impact**

(a) Extent of impact: Not strategic or substantive in EIA terms. There would be a localised impact only. There are likely to be negligible to very minor ecological impacts given proximity of woodland, but only limited impacts are expected on the periphery and these of a limited nature. Although this woodland is a sensitive area, the effects are not likely to be significant. The potential impacts of the proposal on heritage assets, residential amenity, ecology and highways would be fully assessed during the consideration of any formal planning application.

(b) The transfrontier nature of the impact: The application site is entirely located within the administrative boundary of London Borough of Hillingdon, it is not considered that the proposal would result in any transfrontier impacts.

(c) Magnitude and complexity of the impact: The impacts are deemed to be of a local extent and of no regional, national or strategic importance.

(d) Probability of the impact: Overall unlikely to be substantive with the impacts being localised. Likely landscape character and visual impacts, including the following other possible impacts:

**Historic Impacts-** Within the surrounding area there are designated heritage assets which could potentially have their significance affected by the proposed development

**Landscape Impact** – While it has been identified that the extended application site is open Green Belt land, and the development results in an increased scale of the development, it is likely that minor impacts would arise. The impacts could be assessed through the submission of a Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).

**Highways** – There is the potential for increased traffic generation during the construction and operational phases as compared with the existing use. This would result in localised impact on the highway network which would have to be assessed following the submission of a construction management plan.

**Ecology and Trees**– An Ecological Impact Assessment and Habitat Survey along with a tree survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) including any required specific species surveys would be required as part of any formal planning application to inform the decision-making process. Appropriate surveys would be undertaken and assessed for this, and the necessary licences would have to be obtained. It is not considered that the significance of the development would be such that an EIA would be required.

**Flood risk and drainage** – The application site is situated within Flood Zone 1. A full flood risk assessment along with a surface water drainage strategy would be expected to accompany any formal planning application at which time the development would be fully assessed. However, the likely impacts are considered not to be significant in the context of requiring an EIA.

(e) Duration frequency and reversibility of the impact: Not substantive, given likely localised impact and the land is partially already in operational use as a composting facility.

**It must be noted that whilst the above attributes degrees of magnitude to impacts, this is only in the context of the EIA regulations. Impacts at a local level, even if deemed negligible in the extent of EIA, could give rise to**

**concerns of a degree of significance with a subsequent planning application that could lead to refusal.**

### **Conclusion and recommendation**

It is considered in the light of available information that the proposal would not have likely significant environmental effects with impacts of local importance only. The neighbouring sensitive site (SSSI) would be subject to only negligible to very local impacts and not alter the conservation value of the site.

Consequently, the Local Planning Authority considers that a subsequent application that conforms to the proposal screened is not required to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement. No further application of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) is required.

There are a number of factors which would have to be fully assessed as part of any formal planning application.

The determination of this application falls within the scope of Officer delegated powers

SIGNED:	<b>Karl Dafe</b>
DATE:	<b>13th January 2023</b>