



Maxwell Griffin

Fisher German

SCREENING OPINION

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017

Application No. : PL/2025/0001477/SCR

Registered on : 25-07-2025

Site at : Reservoir Oldbury Distribution Service Reservoir,
Oldbury,

Description of development : Installation of a new 16.6km below ground water pipeline proposed from the Oldbury Distribution Service Reservoir to the Meriden Distribution Service Reservoir, pursuant to Part 2, Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

This proposal falls within Schedule 2 of the above Regulations (an 'installation of long distance aqueducts') & therefore the City Council is charged to assess (a "screening opinion") whether the above development is likely to have significant effects on the environment such that the application should be accompanied by a Environmental Impact Assessment in the form set out in Part I & II of Schedule 4 to those Regulations

This screening opinion has been undertaken in accordance with the selection criteria set out in Schedule 3 to the Regulations.

The pipeline would run through the jurisdiction of multiple authorities with *site plan A8W14240-STW-XX-XX-D-EN-0609* showing the extent of development through Coventry City Council's jurisdiction.

SENSITIVE AREA

Designation	Does it apply
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SSI	No
National Park	No
Broad	No
World Heritage List	No
Scheduled Monument	No
AONB	No
European Site	No

The site is not a Sensitive Area as defined by Regulation 2(1).

CHARACTERISTICS OF DEVELOPMENT

Supporting information states that STWL are a Statutory Undertaker for the provision of water and sewage services and are granted permitted development rights by Central Government as required for the effective implementation of the undertaker's responsibility in providing public services. These are set out in Schedule 2, Part 13 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 ("GPDO"). The LPA provide no comment within this screening opinion on this matter.

The overall project is of a significant length. The section under Coventry City Councils jurisdiction is relatively small when considered cumulatively against the entirety of the development and the LPA do not foresee any cumulation within any existing development.

The LPA note that the main engineering works would displace soil and ground surface material. This is largely through open grassland and arable fields designated as greenbelt. The impact is to be mitigated as per *Table 4-part C) of Fisher German screening request* (referred to as "the screening request") by the retention of top and subsoil in two separate bunds and once the pipeline installed returned to the trench. This would include any arable fields being returned to a condition that can be incorporated into the remaining fields crop rotation.

The pipeline would cross the highway of Windmill lane where works would narrow but would intersect a row of vegetation and require the removal of vegetation. The vegetation is non TPO and as stated within the *screening request* where vegetation removal is unavoidable, appropriate replanting will take place in the first appropriate planting season following the completion of the works.

The *screening request* states that the applicant seeks to develop using permitted development and thus would be exempt from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements. The LPA deem that as long as the soil is returned in appropriate condition and trees replaced as stated within *the screening request* impacts to biodiversity for Coventry's section of the pipeline would not be significant. The LPA would of course welcome measures to improve biodiversity and in

the event associated works required permission the LPA would expect the statutory 10% BNG as agreed in the *screening request*.

In regard to waste, *the screening request* states any surplus soil will be evenly distributed over the working area and in the event this cannot be reinstated, sent to appropriate recycling facilities. The LPA consider that contaminated land may be uncovered and the applicant has recognised that in this event work would cease and appropriate measures taken including the safe disposal of asbestos.

The scheme would not be considered to cause significant pollution or nuisance and in the event of any harm, would largely be limited to the construction phase which would be harmful for its temporary period and in terms of sensitive receptors would be limited to the nearby farms. The *screening request* outlines a number of measures to reduce noise, vibration and dust which would mitigate against any of the temporary harms for the construction phase. In regard to pollution the *screening request* states that the proposed scheme would not be associated with high levels of pollution and measures such as equipment associated with low emissions of carbon dioxide will be used wherever possible across the project. Engine idling will also be minimised to ensure unnecessary emissions do not take place as well as the monitoring of levels of carbon dioxide emitted from the plant and machinery.

The *screening request* identifies the entire route within a coal authority mining reporting area. The LPA assess that the entirety of the route within Coventry's jurisdiction is within areas of low risk for coal board mining. The LPA consider the coal consultation area and national grids consultation buffer both lie outside of the proposed works. Therefore, subject to appropriate compliance with regulatory legislation outside of the planning regime the risk of major hazards should not be significant and in consideration of all of the above the risk to human health should be low.

The LPA also note the works would cross a Public Right Of Way on Birchley Hall Farm Lane which is not identified within the *site plan A8W14240-STW-XX-XX-D-EN-0609* . The LPA would require an application application to the local highway authority for a temporary closure and require the public right of way to be safely reinstated.

LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT

As previously stated, the land is largely open grassland and arable fields apart from the intersection of track roads which would be reinstated upon completion of the works and the LPA does not foresee any reason which would prevent the land being reinstated to an appropriate standard. The LPA note the pipeline would interfere with badger setts with the *Screening Opinion* stating that in these instances a Natural England Badger License will be obtained. The LPA consider where this could not be obtained a rerouting would likely be required and a further screening opinion would need to be sought.

An Archaeological Based Assessment (ADBA) was undertaken. The study concluded that the pipeline lies within a landscape of considerable archaeological interest. In response to the findings of the ADBA, a phased archaeological mitigation strategy has been proposed and is detailed in Wessex Archaeology's Technical Note (September 2024) which identifies a high-risk area WA15 which would be of consideration to the section of pipeline within Coventry's jurisdiction. The LPA would therefore expect the stand-alone assessments outlined within technical note to be carried out. Subject to investigation results, route alternatives should then be considered and in the event of requiring a route diversion another screening opinion sought out.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POTENTIAL IMPACT

In consideration of the assessment above, the LPA recognise potential environmental impacts for the development are likely. The LPA consider these impacts are contained within the solely the footprint of development with an unlikely wider impact.

In the event of any harms, these have been recognised within the supporting information. Any further recommended assessments, mitigation or compensatory requirements are strongly recommended to be carried out accordingly if the applicant chooses the permitted development right as statutory undertaker or in the event planning permission is sought the reports would be required to accompany a planning application. CCC determine that that the proposal would not be likely to give rise to significant environmental effects and that it would not therefore comprise EIA development for the purposes of the 2017 Regulations.

CONCLUSION

For the following reasons and under delegated powers it is determined that an Environmental Impact Statement is **NOT REQUIRED** for the above development:

- 1] The site is not within a "sensitive area" as defined by Regulation 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.
- 2] Although a major development the environmental impact would be no more than local significance;
- 3] The developments proposed are not in themselves environmentally sensitive or located in environmentally sensitive locations
- 4] The development would not result in unusually complex or potentially hazardous environmental effects.

Decision Date: 15.8.2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Back". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rob" and last name "Back" clearly distinguishable.

Rob Back
Strategic Lead for Planning