

SCREENING OPINION

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

Screening Opinion reference: HK/25b

Applicant: Mr M Brophy, Michelmersh Brick Holdings Plc

Contact: Mrs K Tomczyk, Portakabin

Date Received: 30th September 2025

Site: Freshfield Lane Brickworks, Freshfield Lane, Danehill, RH17 7HH

Proposal: Installation of modular building

Classification of the Proposed Development

The proposed development is for the installation of a 12.2m by 20m by 3.5m high modular building of utilitarian design. The proposal is located within the existing brickworks site, towards the south. There will be no increase in users of the site.

The proposal does not comprise Schedule 1 development, as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ('the EIA Regulations').

The proposed development is considered to fall within Part 13 (b) of Schedule 2 of the EIA regulations. Part 13 (a) '*changes and extensions*', to an authorised and implemented schedule 2 development – in this case a Brickworks site is within Schedule 2, Part 2 (a) '*Quarries, open cast mining and peat extraction*'. The proposed development also located within a sensitive area, the High Weald National Landscape (formally High Weald AONB).

Accordingly, consideration needs to be given, with reference to Schedule 3 to the EIA Regulations, as to whether the development would have the potential to result in 'significant environmental effects' which require an EIA.

Characteristics of Development	
Development Area	The site area is approximately 2900m ² .
Development Nature / Scale	Approximately 3.5m in height measuring 12.2m x 20m, with a internal floor space of 235m ² .

Screening Criteria	Applicable (and explanation of reasons)?	Is a significant effect likely (and explanation of reasons)?
Natural Resources		
1. Will construction, operation or	Yes.	No.

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decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the topography of the area?	The proposals include the installation of an additional modular building on site.	All development is located within and would remain ancillary to the wider established brickworks, and the excavation works are minimal.
2. Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes. Although, during construction there is potential for the use of fossil fuels, the facility will use water which will be connected to the mains supply.	No. Any construction related fuel/energy use would be temporary and relatively limited in scale/duration. There is no increase in users at the site, and therefore it should not result in a change.
3. Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project, e.g. forestry, agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?	Yes. The proposal is located on working brickworks site, adjacent to a working Wadhurst clay pit, in a Wadhurst Clay Safeguarded area. The Freshfield Lane SSSI is designated for geological reasons as providing exposures of geologically significant formations is located adjacent to the Freshfield Brickworks Site.	No. The application is to support the continued extraction of the mineral and the production of mineral products.
Waste		
4. Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes. There are minor excavation works for the footings.	No. This will amount to a insignificant amount of inert waste.
Pollution and Nuisances		
5. Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Yes. Temporary emissions may occur during construction. During operation, no additional emissions envisaged.	No. Any construction related emissions to air would be minimal, limited and temporary in nature.
6. Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or	Yes.	No Any construction related noise/vibration/lighting would

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electromagnetic radiation?	Noise, vibration and light are likely during the construction period. During operation, there is no foreseen additional noise, vibration, heat or electromagnetic radiation. There are some additional lighting being implemented.	be minimal, limited and temporary in nature. Any lighting to be installed, would be on a permanent basis, however, would be orientated to avoid off-site light spill and operated only as required for the safe operation/access of the site. In the larger scheme of the surrounding site this would not cause adverse effects.
7. Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	No. The development does not require the use of known contaminants to land or water.	No.
8. Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	No. There are no areas which are subject to pollution or environmental damage.	No.
Population and Human Health		
9. Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?	No. During construction, risk of accidents would be low and likely to centre around typical use of plant and HGV traffic. No change to the potential for major accidents envisaged given the nature of development proposed.	No. The risk of accidents is considered relatively low. The site would be subject to Health and Safety requirements as regulated by the Health and Safety Executive.
10. Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (for example due to water	Yes. Proposed development would involve vehicular movements and use of heavy plant/machinery. During operation no significant change to potential risk to the	No. The site and its access is located off Freshfield Lane, which hosts a small collection of residential properties. None of which are located within a distance for this proposed development to cause adverse effects.

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contamination or air pollution)	population given the nature of development proposed.	
Water Resources		
11. Are there any water resources including surface waters, e.g. rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?	Yes. Daneshill Brook and some ponds are located within 250m of the proposed development.	No. The nature/scale of the proposals, context of existing operations, and controls required by other regimes are such that they are unlikely to result in potential for significant effects on water resources.
Biodiversity (Species and Habitats)		
12. Are there any protected areas which are designated or classified for their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, or any non-designated / non-classified areas which are important or sensitive for reasons of their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, located on or around the location and which could be affected by the project? (e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water-bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, undesignated nature reserves or parks. (Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local))).	No. None located in the surrounding area.	No.
13. Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or	Yes. The site also falls in relatively close proximity to Ancient woodland to the south/west and sits within a Red Zone for Newts according to Nature Space.	No. The proposal would be installed on brownfield land, on a working minerals site. There would be no increase in intensity of site operations. However, there is potential for some minimal effects during construction.

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migration, be affected by the project?		
Landscape and Visual		
14. Are there any areas or features on or around the location which are protected for their landscape and scenic value, and/or any non-designated / non-classified areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project? Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	Yes. The site falls within the High Weald National Landscape (formally High Weald AONB) and is located in a countryside location.	No. Given the context, location and nature of the proposed modular building, any impacts are likely to be limited to visual impacts in the immediate locality. The works proposed would occupy a previously developed area occupied by development of commensurate scale/uses.
15. Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people? (If so, from where, what direction, and what distance?)	No. The proposed development is located away from the boundary of the site. There is no public right of way and the nearest properties from this area of the proposed development are located approximately 50m away to the west.	No. Given the context of the proposed development in the surrounding built/operational development and extensive boundary treatments from hedgerows and trees, therefore the proposed development would not be highly visible.
Cultural Heritage/Archaeology		
16. Are there any areas or features which are protected for their cultural heritage or archaeological value, or any non-designated / classified areas and/or features of cultural heritage or archaeological importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project (including potential impacts on setting, and views to, from and within)? Where designated indicate level of designation	Yes. The site does not fall within an Archaeological Notification Area. There are however multiple Historic Environmental Record located on the brickworks site from Neolithic to Roman.	No.

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(international, national, regional or local).		
Transport and Access		
17. Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes. There is a Public Right of Way (route code: HOK/26HK/1) located approximately 130m to the south of the application site within the ancient woodland. Freshfield Lane is also located immediately to the west and serves as the main access to the brickworks.	No. Construction impacts would be temporary.
18. Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Yes. Construction will require vehicle journeys as construction materials must be brought to site and surplus materials removed, as necessary. The construction access would be via Freshfield Lane. There will be no additional traffic during the operation.	No. Although the proposals will result in additional HGV movements during construction, this will be limited due to the modular nature of the development. Any highways impacts would be limited to the construction period. The increase in movements to the site once operational are not considered to be significant in the meanings of the EIA regulations.
Land Use		
19. Are there existing land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project? E.g. housing, densely populated areas, industry / commerce, farm/agricultural holdings, forestry, tourism, mining, quarrying, facilities relating to health, education, places of worship, leisure /sports / recreation.	Yes. There are some residential properties off Freshfield Lane. The closest abutting the Brickworks site to the South. Part of the site to the south wrapping around to the north on the east side of the site is heavily wooded area. To the west of the site there is agricultural land.	No. The site is located outside the built-up area, in the countryside, and is relatively distant from densely populated areas. The proposals are located within the boundary of an established brickworks.
20. Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location	No.	No.

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which could be affected by the project?		
Land Stability and Climate		
21. Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	No.	No.
22. Is there potential for the development to impact upon the climate (for example through the nature and magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions)?	Yes. During construction, the proposed development will result in the release of some greenhouse gasses from vehicle or plant activities. During operation, the proposed development is not considered to produce any significant amounts of green house gasses.	No. Given the context of established uses and scale/nature of the proposals, no significant effects anticipated within the meanings of the regulations.
Cumulative Effects		
23. Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulation of impacts together during the construction/operation phase?	No. During construction there is a potential for the development to coincide with other development in the area. During operation, there should be little impact from emissions, although there will be a slight increase in light which could cause a cumulative impact within the locality and larger landscapes or any future development at the site.	No. Whilst there is potential for cumulative impacts with the neighbouring developments, the scale and nature/context of the proposal, with mitigations in place the proposed development would not likely result in significant effects within the meaning of the regulations.
Transboundary Effects		
24. Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects?	Yes. The site does fall in close proximity to East Sussex County boundary.	No. Any impacts thereon would be limited to temporary impacts associated with construction traffic and therefore are not considered significant.

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Conclusion

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on Environmental Impact Assessment (May 2020) sets out 'Indicative screening thresholds' for considering whether EIA is necessary. This proposed development falls within Part 13 (b) which do not have indicative thresholds within guidance.

In this case, the key potential for impact is associated with the siting of the development within a sensitive area (AONB). In relation to sensitive areas guidance notes that:

'it does not follow that every Schedule 2 development in (or affecting) these areas will automatically require an assessment. It will be necessary to judge whether the likely effects on the environment of that particular development will be significant in that particular location.'

In this case, the proposed development is for the installation of a modular building on a well-established brickworks site. It is not considered likely that the proposed development would give rise to any significant adverse effects on the environment. Due to the nature of the development, the proposal, once completed, would not be likely to result in any additional emissions, considering the small single storey scale of the development, there is little potential for long distance views, and modular building will be relatively limited in their overall scale, height, and mass.

The proposals clearly have the potential for environmental impacts. However, the scale, nature and location of the proposed development, situated within an established operational brickwork, is such that it is considered that these are unlikely to be of a magnitude that would lead to significant environmental effects. Many of the key potential impacts would arise from construction activities, which would be temporary in nature.

The applicant proposes further detailed environmental surveys/assessments in accordance with relevant guidance, and mitigation measures typical of a development of this nature, all of which would accompany any future planning application. It is considered that such measures would reduce the probability of impacts, and/or likely be capable of reducing or offsetting them.

Considering the findings set out above and having regard to the selection criteria in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations, it is considered that the proposed development does not have the potential for significant effects on the environment within the meaning of the EIA Regulations 2017.

Screening Opinion

In the opinion of the County Planning Authority the development **would not require** an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Approved by: Rupy Sandhu (County Planning Manager)



On behalf of the Head of Planning Services

Date: 03 November 2025

Case Officer: Tyra Money (Assistant Planner)