

FAO: Michael Evans
Dawn Developments Ltd
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5 June 2017

Dear Sirs

Screening Opinion: District Heating System at Queens Quay, Clydebank
The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)
(Scotland) Regulations 2011

I refer to the request for a screening opinion of the above site which was received on 1 February, 2017, planning reference PREAPP17/018.

A screening opinion has now been carried out and concludes that part of the proposal is a Schedule 2 development but is not likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of its nature, size or location. This means that an EIA will not be required.

I enclose a copy of the screening opinion which is required under the Regulations to be placed on the public register for inspection. Please note that this does not absolve you from additional information that may be required to be submitted as part of any application.

Please contact me on 0141 951 7943 should you wish to discuss any matter further.

Yours faithfully

Karen McChesney
Lead Planner, Development Management

Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland)
Regulations 2011

Screening Opinion: District Heating System at Queens Quay,
Clydebank (Ref. PREAPP17/018)

INTRODUCTION

A request for a screening opinion has been submitted for the installation of a district heating system by Dawn Group and Clydeside Regeneration Ltd. The site is 24 hectares and extends along the northern bank of the River Clyde, bounded by Glasgow Road to the north-east, Cart Street to the south-east and Cable Depot Road to the north-west.

The proposal consists of two elements:

1. An energy centre- this is to be located at the end of Alisa Road adjacent to West College Scotland and consists of a building approximately 50m by 18m, equivalent to 3-4 residential storeys in height and with a chimney approximately 25m in height. This is to house the boilers, heat pumps and transformers.
2. Associated pipework– this will run underground from the energy centre using the channels of the existing servicing proposed for the road infrastructure to the development parcels (road position as approved under Planning Application Ref. DC16/240).

Planning permission was granted in principle for a mixed use development including residential, retail, financial/professional services, restaurant, public house, office/business, hotel, care home and health centre, along with associated roads, access, parking, landscaping and quay wall improvements (Ref.DC15/234). It is intended that the district heating will serve the various elements of development across the site.

Under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2011, proposals are “screened” to determine whether they fall within the description of development requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). In screening an application consideration is firstly given to whether the proposal falls into any of the categories set out in Schedules 1 and 2 of the Regulations.

SCHEDULE 1 AND SCHEDULE 2

The site does not fall into any category under Schedule 1 and therefore does not automatically require an EIA.

Development types listed in Schedule 2 are developments where an EIA may be required under specified circumstances, typically where the development is to be carried out in a sensitive area or meets/exceeds a size threshold listed in the Schedule. The proposal fits the description of an energy project under 3(a) and 3(b) of the table in Schedule 2. The energy centre would fall under the description of 3(a) which is for “industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water” with a threshold size of 0.5ha. The energy centre is 0.09ha and therefore is significantly less than the threshold. However, the associated pipework fall under 3(b) which is for “industrial installations for

carrying gas, steam and hot water” and exceeds the size threshold of 1ha. The proposal is therefore Schedule 2 development by virtue of category 3(b).

Schedule 2 development does not automatically require an EIA to be submitted, rather, that consideration be given of the likelihood that the proposal will have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as nature, size and location. Determination is made using the selection criteria set out in Schedule 3 of the 2011 Regulations and the advice contained in Circular 3/2011 The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 and the guidance in PAN 1/2013. The consideration of these is set out below.

MULTI-STAGE CONSENTS

Circular 3/2011 makes clear in paragraph 144 that where a consent procedure comprises more than one decision stage i.e. a principal decision and an implementing decision (for example, a planning permission in principle and subsequent applications for matters specified in conditions), it is the principal decision which must identify the effects on the environment. If those effects are not identified or identifiable at the time of the principal decision, assessment must be undertaken at the subsequent stage.

In this instance, the principal decision is the grant of planning permission in principle under Ref. DC15/234. This consent did not consider a district heating system as part of the EIA process and it did not form part of that application. It is therefore necessary to carry out the assessment even although the district heating system is now an integral part of the redevelopment of the whole site.

SCHEDULE 3

1. Characteristics of Development

This considers criteria such as the size of development, cumulation with other development, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisances, the risk of accidents (with reference to substances or technologies) and any other characteristics.

Although the overall site area is large, the pipework will not take that amount of land but be routed under the roads which divide up the site into smaller development parcels. It will therefore not be out of scale with the proposed development for the site but be hidden within the underground infrastructure and will be constructed as part of the wider redevelopment of the site. It therefore complements the proposed redevelopment on which an EIA has already been carried out. However, these related developments can proceed independently (and be heated by conventional means).

The River Clyde is classed as transitional waters in this location. The proposal will use the water resource from the River Clyde by extracting heat energy from the water which would be returned back into the river at a temperature that is plus/minus 3 degrees of the receiving waters ambient temperature. The process does not therefore constitute using up a non-renewable resource. SEPA have been consulted and confirm that in the context of their regulations the proposal would be unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment. A small amount of natural resources will be required during the construction phase in respect of land, aggregates and energy but as the works on the

pipework will be aligned with the road infrastructure some of these resources will be split across two projects.

The completed development will not generate any significant wastes or pollution. The proposal is intended to support the reduction of CO₂ emissions in the heat sector. It is anticipated that around 80% of the heat required for the development will be extracted from the river using heat transfer technology (electricity powered) with the remaining 20% to be from gas boilers within the energy centre e.g. during peak demand times and as a back-up source during an emergency. The proposal will therefore not release pollutants.

It is not likely to generate any significant nuisance from noise and vibration during the construction phases, which are anticipated to be short-term. There may be some noise and vibration from plant equipment within the energy centre building but it is intended that the building will be designed to mitigate this. There is not anticipated to be potential for pollutants to enter the River Clyde. There is no significant risk of accidents with reference to substances or technologies.

Finally, in respect of other characteristics, there are no potential physical changes to the topography of the site over and above what is already approved under the EIA proposal DC15/234. The pipe system will be underground and the energy centre is in a location already identified for buildings of significant scale. There are no changes to the structure of the basin.

2. Location of Development

The site was previously used for heavy engineering purposes but is now cleared of buildings and there are large stockpiles of demolition material on the site. The proposal to form a network of pipes is in scale with and complements the proposed uses for the site.

As a former brownfield site the redevelopment would not directly use up any important, high quality or scarce natural resources.

The site as a whole adjoins the Inner Clyde SPA which consists of a narrow strip along the western half of the site (south of the site boundary) and a much wider intertidal zone on the southern river bank. The Inner Clyde SPA is an internationally designated conservation site, and the application site falls within the description of a “sensitive site” as defined in the Regulations by virtue of being close to an SPA. The SPA is also designated as an SSSI. The qualifying interest of the SPA is overwintering redshank, which roost and feed within the intertidal areas of the Clyde.

A location plan showing the network of pipes and the position of the energy centre has been submitted. The pipe network is at least 40m away from edge of the river and the basin in which the energy centre sits is not within the SPA. Disturbance affecting the river over a period of several years does have the potential for a significant adverse affect upon the important redshank population which relies upon it. This disturbance may take the form of noise and visual disturbance during construction and post-construction phases. As part of the planning permission in principle Ref. DC15/234 (the “principle decision”) the EIA considered the potential significant effects of the whole development proposal on the redshank and a number of mitigation measures have been agreed which are required by planning condition. It is not considered that the works to construct an

energy centre, a network of pipes or the operation of a district heating system would generate any further additional noise or visual disturbance that would have a significant effect on the qualifying interest of the SPA. In consultation with SNH they confirm that it is unlikely that the proposed works would have a significant effect on the redshank qualifying interest either directly or indirectly.

The energy centre is adjacent to West College Scotland which is a sensitive land use. It is anticipated that the most significant impacts (i.e. noise and disturbance) would occur during the construction phases and subject to appropriate design and materials the operation of the energy centre will not result in any adverse noise or vibration impacts. There is also the potential to benefit the college through connection with the district heating system.

3. Characteristics of the Potential Impact

Most of these impacts would be relatively localised, small-scale and temporary in nature and relate to the construction phases for the energy centre and the pipe network which will be carried out at the same time as more significant works approved (and screened) under the principal consent DC15/234. Operational noise and vibrations from the energy centre can be mitigated through the design of the building. There are no potentially significant impacts identified relative to the location of the site to the River Clyde (and in particular the wildlife interests therein).

CIRCULAR 3/2011

Paragraph 52 of the circular gives advice as to when EIA is required for Schedule 2 developments. It states that there is not a universal test but that each site should be considered on a case-by-case basis and that “the fundamental test to be applied in each case is whether that particular type of development and its specific impacts are likely, in that particular location, to result in significant effects on the environment”.

The whole site is adjacent to an environmentally sensitive site but the pipe network and energy centre would not be significantly close to the Inner Clyde SPA, or have noise or disturbance impacts which would result in significant effects on the environment. The District Heating System would also be constructed at the same time and form part of the redevelopment of the wider site.

CONCLUSION

Under the Regulations the proposal is a Schedule 2 development by reason of exceeding the threshold criteria (size of site) and in being within a “sensitive area”. On the basis of the selection criteria and assessment, the guidance in Circular 3/2011 and the advice from Environmental Health, SNH and SEPA it is considered that the environmental impacts of the development are not so significant to require a further separate Environmental Impact Assessment.

SCREENING OPINION

Having regard to the relevant Regulations and the advice given in Circular 3/2011, West Dunbartonshire Council considers that **the proposed development does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment.**

Signed: _____

Dated: 5th June, 2017

Pamela Clifford
Planning & Building Standards Manager
West Dunbartonshire Council

RIGHT TO REQUEST SCREENING DIRECTION

If the applicants are aggrieved by this decision, they are entitled to request a screening direction from Scottish Ministers. The procedures for so doing are set out in Regulation 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2011.