

## **PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PRE-APPLICATION FORUM**

ABERDEEN, 22 April 2021. Minute of Meeting of the PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PRE-APPLICATION FORUM. Present:- Councillor Boulton, Convener; and Councillors Allan, Copland, Cormie, Greig, Henrickson (as substitute for Councillor Cooke), Malik and MacKenzie.

Also present as local Members: Councillors Al-Samarai and MacGregor.

**The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be found [here](#).**

**Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.**

### **INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURE NOTE**

1. The Forum had before it the procedure note and guidance for members on the operation of Forum meetings.

**The Forum resolved**:-

to note the procedure note and guidance for members.

### **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 24 SEPTEMBER 2020**

2. The Forum had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 24 September 2020, for approval.

**The Forum resolved**:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

### **PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE FOR MAJOR DEVELOPMENT FOR ERECTION OF BATTERY-BASED ENERGY STORAGE FACILITY AT SITE AT FARBURN PLACE DYCE ABERDEEN - 201599**

3. The Forum had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, on a submission of a Proposal of Application Notice by RPS Consulting on behalf of their client Peak Reserve Power Ltd, for a major development for the erection of a battery-based energy storage facility at site at Farburn Place, Dyce Aberdeen, 201599.

The report advised that the site comprised an area of vacant land located adjacent to the main Aberdeen-Inverness rail line and approximately 0.5km to the south of Dyce train station. The site comprised vacant, flat land and access was taken off Farburn

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Place to the east. It was noted that for the past two years the site had been utilised for ad-hoc parking without the benefit of planning permission. The Far Burn ran along the southern site boundary within a culvert.

It was noted that the site lay to the east of Aberdeen Airport. The land to the north of the site was occupied by residential flats and associated parking areas. The buildings were 4 storeys in height and overlook the application site. There were existing residential properties to the east of the railway line. There was also a mix of commercial uses in the surrounding area.

The Forum heard from Mr Gavin Clark, Senior Planner who addressed the Forum and provided details regarding the planning aspects of the application.

Mr Clark advised that in terms of principle, the site was zoned as mixed-use area in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, which advised that proposals for development or change of use within such areas must take account of the existing uses and character of the surrounding area and avoid undue conflict with the adjacent land uses and amenity. It also stated that where new industrial, business, or commercial uses were permitted, development should not affect the amenity of people living and working in the area.

Ms Clark explained that as part of the application, the applicant had been advised that the following information would need to accompany the formal submission:-

- Location Plan, Site Plan, Elevations, Floor Plans, Building and Site Sections
- Design and Access Statement
- Pre-Application Consultation Report
- Landscaping Plan, including Management Plan
- Transport Statement, including Swept Path Analysis for emergency and refuse vehicles (if appropriate)
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Drainage Impact Assessment and SUDS Details
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Details of Refuse Storage and Collection
- Preliminary Ecological Survey; and
- Scheme of Investigation – Contaminated Land

The Forum then heard from the applicant/agent and the presenters were as follows:-

- Jonathan Smith – RPS Consulting
- Ben Coulston – speaking for the client.

Mr Coulston began the presentation by provided an overview of Cragside Energy Ltd and noted they were founded in 2004 and specialised in developments of energy schemes that support the UK's net zero carbon ambition and their mission was to enable a low carbon, cost effective and resilient energy system through the deployment of flexible and renewable technologies.

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Mr Coulston provided some information on what energy storage was and noted that (1) they aimed to increase reliance on renewable but intermittent energy sources, eg wind and solar, (2) there was a need for greater resilience in the system, (3) it stored excess energy from the Grid, (4) it returned electricity to the Grid when required, (5) it helped balance demand and supply, particularly at peak times and (6) there were national and local benefits.

Mr Coulston then provided some details on the site layout of the proposed development and noted that it was for a modular Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). On site there would be transformers and invertors, a DNO kiosk, concrete plinths for the equipment, hard surfacing for vehicles, hardcore or gravel surround, secure boundaries and also landscaping.

In relation to the construction and operation of the site, it was noted that the plant would be remotely managed with pre-fabricated units which would aid delivery to the site, modular system would speed up construction time, there would be low level maintenance, availability 24 hours a day 7 days a week and the energy transfer would only be at short periods at time.

In regard to noise and impact on the site, Mr Smith advised that it would be a minimal noise producing plant with careful consideration of the layout and there would be short periods of operations. There would also be the appropriate assessment and mitigation to maintain existing levels and the construction period would be kept to a minimum. The site would be remotely operated with low-level maintenance and operational traffic would be limited to the occasional large goods vehicle or one car.

Mr Smith explained that in relation to the ground conditions and hydrology, there would be an assessment of the existing ground conditions and appropriate mitigation and remediation should it be required. There would also be an assessment of any potential flood risk, with appropriate mitigation and protection. There would also be an appropriate drainage design.

Mr Smith also advised that in regard to habitat and landscape there were no habitat or ecological constraints on the site, and there would be appropriate construction to safeguard the wider area as well as landscaping to boundaries to help integrate the development and also the creation of a new habitat from planting.

Members then asked a number of questions of both the applicant and the case officer and the following information was noted:-

- The site was approximately 25 metres from the nearest flatted properties;
- Once the formal application was submitted, officers would be able to assess if the application complied with Policy H2 – mixed use;
- Planning officers were to establish whether a health assessment would be required;

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- In relation to acoustics to help with noise, there would be a mixture of fencing and planting to help alleviate any noise impact;
- No sound waves would affect Aberdeen Airport and noted that battery storage facilities did not cause emission issues;
- Flood lighting would not be required for the site, however for the rare occasion that the site would require personnel to visit, there would be suitable lighting.

### **The report recommended:-**

That the Forum –

- (a) Note the key issues identified;
- (b) If necessary, seek clarification on any particular matters; and
- (c) Identify relevant issues which they would like the applicant to consider and address in any future application.

### **The Forum resolved:-**

- (i) to request that the applicant consider the key points above; and
  - (ii) to thank the presenters for their informative presentation.
- **Councillor Marie Boulton, Convener**