

PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PRE-APPLICATION FORUM

ABERDEEN, 30 September 2021. Minute of Meeting of the PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PRE-APPLICATION FORUM. Present:- Councillor Boulton, Convener; and Councillors Allan, Cooke, Copland, Cormie and Greig.

Also present as local Members: Councillor MacGregor (for item 3)

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 20 MAY 2021

2. The Forum had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 20 May 2021, for approval.

The Forum resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE - MAJOR DEVELOPMENT FOR THE ERECTION OF BATTERY BASED ENERGY STORAGE FACILITY - ON LAND AT RAIHS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, BY KIRKTON DRIVE, OFF PITMEDDEN ROAD, DYCE - 211081

3. The Forum had before it a report by the Interim Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, on a submission of a Proposal of Application for a major development for the erection of battery based energy storage facility, at land At Raiths Industrial Estate, by Kirkton Drive, Off Pitmedden Road, Dyce, planning reference 211081.

The report advised that the proposal was to erect structures for the housing of energy storage batteries and associated equipment. 49.9MW of energy storage would be provided. The storage batteries would be stacked on racks within approximately 52 no.

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shipping container type structures (13m x 2.5m x 2.6m), which together with transformers and converters, a sub-station and other ancillary equipment and buildings would be contained within a fenced compound. Solid state lithium batteries would be used and the containers would also have air conditioning units for cooling.

The purpose of the facility would be to take excess power from the grid and store it, to then be fed back into the grid for use at times of need. The report stated that the power would largely be from renewable energy sources which would otherwise be switched off when power was in excess of demand. Power would not be generated on site. The report noted that the applicant stated that the site had been selected as it was close to the Dyce grid supply point, which was understood to be to the west at Cothal View. This would be linked by a cable laid within the road.

The Forum heard from Lucy Green, Senior Planner, who addressed the Forum and provided details regarding the planning aspects of the application.

Ms Greene explained that the site was zoned as B1 (Business and Industrial Land) in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan and noted that Policy B1 retains land for office and industrial uses, including Class 4: Business, 5: General Industrial and Class 6: Storage and Distribution. It is stated that conditions may be imposed restricting levels of noise, hours of operation and external storage.

Ms Greene also highlighted Policy R8: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments and advised that the policy supported in principle proposals for the development of renewable and low carbon energy schemes. Although the policy principally envisages renewable energy generating technologies it contained criteria for assessing schemes, indicating support where these involve technology operating efficiently and environmental and cumulative impacts were satisfactorily addressed. The criteria related to the impact on the local environment, landscape and heritage; impact on air quality, tourism and residential amenity.

Ms Greene also noted that the site fell just outside the area zoned for Aberdeen Airport, but within the safeguarding area and as such Policy B4 – Aberdeen Airport would apply. In terms of safeguarding, Policy B4 described the consultation that would take place with the Airport. Aviation impacts should be considered as part of the design of the proposed development in particular matters such as height of buildings, landscaping, impact on communication and navigation systems; bird hazards and lighting.

Ms Greene also made reference to Policies D1 (Quality Placemaking by Design), D2 (Landscape), NE8 (natural heritage), T2 (Managing the Transport Impact of Development) and T3 – (Sustainable and Active Travel).

It was noted that as part of the application, the applicant had been advised that the following information would need to accompany the formal submission:-

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- Plans, including layout and elevations;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Landscape Plan, including planting to boundary;
- Tree survey, including protection measures for trees along southern boundary and bat roost potential of any trees proposed to be removed;
- Drainage Impact Assessment and SUDS proposals;
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment;
- Transport Statement and swept path analysis for emergency and refuse vehicles;
- Noise Impact Assessment; and
- Planning Supporting Statement, including setting out how the proposal fits within the national and local policy framework regarding renewable energy and climate change.

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

- Andrew Hughes – PR & Media Manager, ILI Group; and
- Greig Templeton – Planning Manager, ILI Group.

They explained that (1) the application was for a 49.9MW Energy Storage facility containerised Battery Storage, (2) the development would consist of containers containing batteries and associated equipment, an access track, electricity, meter building and fencing, (3) stores excess energy from the grid, (4) puts electricity back into the grid when required and (5) this helped balance the supply and demand for the grid. It was noted that there would be 52 energy units and 13 converters.

In terms of why the facility was needed, they noted that:-

- Scotland had a target of Net Zero by 2045
- Renewable energy was intermittent, which meant we can't rely on it to meet demand;
- Fossil fuel generators, coal gas and nuclear make up the difference however as these go offline, there will be a need to be able to meet that demand;
- Energy storage would allow them to store renewable energy for when it was needed
- National Grid ESO had estimated there was a need for up to 40GW of energy storage by 2050. The Scottish Energy Strategy, published 2018, supported new energy storage capacity and stated that the Scottish Government would continue to support innovation and deployment in storage and to work to accelerate its penetration across Scotland.

In relation to the site, they explained that the land was located near the Dyce Grid Supply Point (GSP), and there was available capacity at the GSP.

They noted that 12 transformers and converters would be placed between the energy storage units and the power converters would be around 1.6 by 1.4 metres tall, and transformers would be around 2.7 by 2.5 metres tall. However the final equipment and size may vary slightly.

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They also advised that a small site substation was proposed to house SSE switchgear, site switchgear, electricity metering and control equipment and health and safety equipment. This would be a prefabricated GRP building up to 10 metres by 6 metres by 3.2 metres high and the colour would be agreed with the Council.

Members then asked a number of questions of both the applicant and the case officer.

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 Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request that the applicant consider consulting with both first responders and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in relation to the proposed development and include any mitigations with their final submission, in order to assist with safety concerns;
- (ii) to note that the development would be monitored remotely 24 hours a day 7 days a week; and
- (iii) to otherwise thank the presenters for their informative presentation.

PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE - MAJOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (APPROXIMATELY 250 UNITS) OF AFFORDABLE AND PRIVATE HOUSING WITH ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE, OPEN SPACE, LANDSCAPING, COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND ENERGY CENTRE - LAND AT TILLYOCH, PETERCULTER ABERDEEN

4. The Forum had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, on a submission of a Proposal of Application Notice by Halliday Fraser Munro on behalf of their client First Endeavour (Tillyoch) LLP, for a major development for a major residential development (approximately 250 units) of affordable and private housing with associated infrastructure, open space, landscaping, community facilities and energy centre - land at Tillyoch, Peterculter Aberdeen, planning reference number 210936.

The report advised that the site was located to the west of Aberdeen City, to the north of Peterculter, and fell within the City's Green Belt. The site extended to approximately 40 hectares and encompassed a large area of agricultural land, woodland currently protected by three Tree Preservation Orders, several individual dwellings and their associated curtilages and the Tillyoch Equestrian Centre.

The report also explained that whilst the site was not allocated within the current Local Development Plan, part of it had been identified within the Proposed Aberdeen Local

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Development Plan 2020, as an Opportunity Site OP53, as a housing opportunity for 250 houses. The report noted that the extent of OP53 was substantially smaller (15.25Ha) than the red line site boundary provided with the current Proposal of Application Notice.

The report also noted that the Proposal of Application Notice boundary also included two Opportunity Sites, designated in the current Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017, OP109: Woodend and OP52: Malcolm Road for 19 and 8 homes respectively. The site is bound by roads on all sides, with Malcolm Road (B979) forming the site's west boundary, Culter House Road to the east and Bucklerburn Road to the south and an unknown road to the north.

The Forum heard from Ms Aoife Murphy, Senior Planner who addressed the Forum and provided details regarding the planning aspects of the application.

Ms Murphy explained that the application site was close to the boundary with Aberdeenshire and was bound by public roads, and also advised of the relevant planning policies. Ms Murphy advised that the application was a departure from the Aberdeen Local Development Plan and it also conflicted with Policy NE2 – Green Belt.

In terms of consultation, Ms Murphy advised that public consultation was undertaken by the applicant via an online event on Wednesday 18 August 2021, and noted that that public exhibition was available to view from 11 August until 1 September 2021 with comments/feedback requested by 1 September 2021. Ms Murphy advised that a further consultation event was held on 25 August 2021, due to issues with the publicity of the previous events.

It was noted that as part of the application, the applicant had been advised that the following information would need to accompany the formal submission:-

- Pre-Application Consultation Report;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Justification for the loss of green infrastructure / development on Green Belt land;
- Drainage Impact Assessment;
- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Ecological Impact Assessment;
- Habitats Regulations Appraisal;
- Construction Environmental Management Plan;
- Transport Assessment;
- Travel Plan;
- Tree Survey Report, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and a Tree Protection and Mitigation Plan;
- Landscape Scheme and Maintenance Plans;
- Low and Zero Carbon Buildings and Water Efficiency Statement;
- Affordable Housing Delivery Strategy; and
- Waste Strategy Plan

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The Forum then heard from Julie Robertson, Halliday Fraser Munro, agent, and advised that the application site was located immediately to the north of Peterculter and to the east of Malcolm Road, and the site was currently an equestrian centre with existing stable buildings, hard standing, associated paddocks and existing dwelling. The current equestrian access was from Culter House Road and the proposed residential access would be from Malcolm Road. The site encompasses an area of ancient woodland in the southeast of the site which would be retained; and the site had easy access to Peterculter and Aberdeen with access to local bus services.

In regards to the site context, Ms Robertson explained that with a previous application, the feedback was that more private housing was required and also to maintain connections to Peterculter. Ms Robertson advised that there would be a creation of a village green and well defined public realm, with a bus stop and landscaping buffers.

Ms Robertson also provided detail on planning considerations in relation to the application. Ms Robertson noted that there would be a housing mix, with 25% affordable housing provision and also the retention of ancient woodland and access to the green network. Ms Robertson also spoke about a walkable neighbourhood and the emergence of a 20 minute neighbourhood through NPF4. It was noted that the main features of a 20 minute neighbourhood were:-

- Local employment opportunities
- Local health facilities and services
- Local schools
- Lifelong learning opportunities
- Local playgrounds and parks
- Green streets and spaces
- Community gardens
- Sport and recreation facilities
- Safe streets and spaces
- Affordable housing options
- Ability to age in place
- Housing diversity
- Local transport network
- Local employment opportunities and
- Well connected to the public transport, jobs and services within the region.

In relation to consultation, and following on from what Ms Murphy advised, Ms Robertson explained that 668 neighbour notifications were posted, posters were provided to local business (both hand delivered and posted), the Community Council was notified along with local elected members and an online exhibition board was available to view for 4 weeks with paper copies available upon request. It was noted that the website had 1067 visits with 792 individual unique views and over 80 participants in the consultation through feedback forms, emails, phone calls and engagement events.

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

- A tree survey was currently being undertaken to ascertain the amount of trees that would be lost and the figure was unknown at present;
- They were currently looking at what community facilities there would be and to see what would be appropriate;
- In response to a question about acute traffic issues in the local area, Ms Robertson advised that a Traffic Assessment was also being carried out and following this they would look at it, assess and investigate the impact on the road network;
- Early discussions were taking place with bus operators for a link into the site and to look at ways to accommodate buses in the development;
- It was noted that through the Transport Assessment, the Tree Survey and the Environmental Assessment, they could investigate the possibility of replanting on the road as part of the design process;

The report recommended:-

That the Forum –

- (d) note the key issues identified;
- (e) 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 Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request that the applicant carry out an archaeological survey;
- (ii) to request that the applicant investigate the infrastructure for Electric Vehicle Charging point in every property;
- (iii) to request that the applicant examine appropriate drainage scheme for the site;
- (iv) to request that the applicant consider the key points above; and
- (v) to thank the presenters for their informative presentation.

- **Councillor Marie Boulton, Convener**