

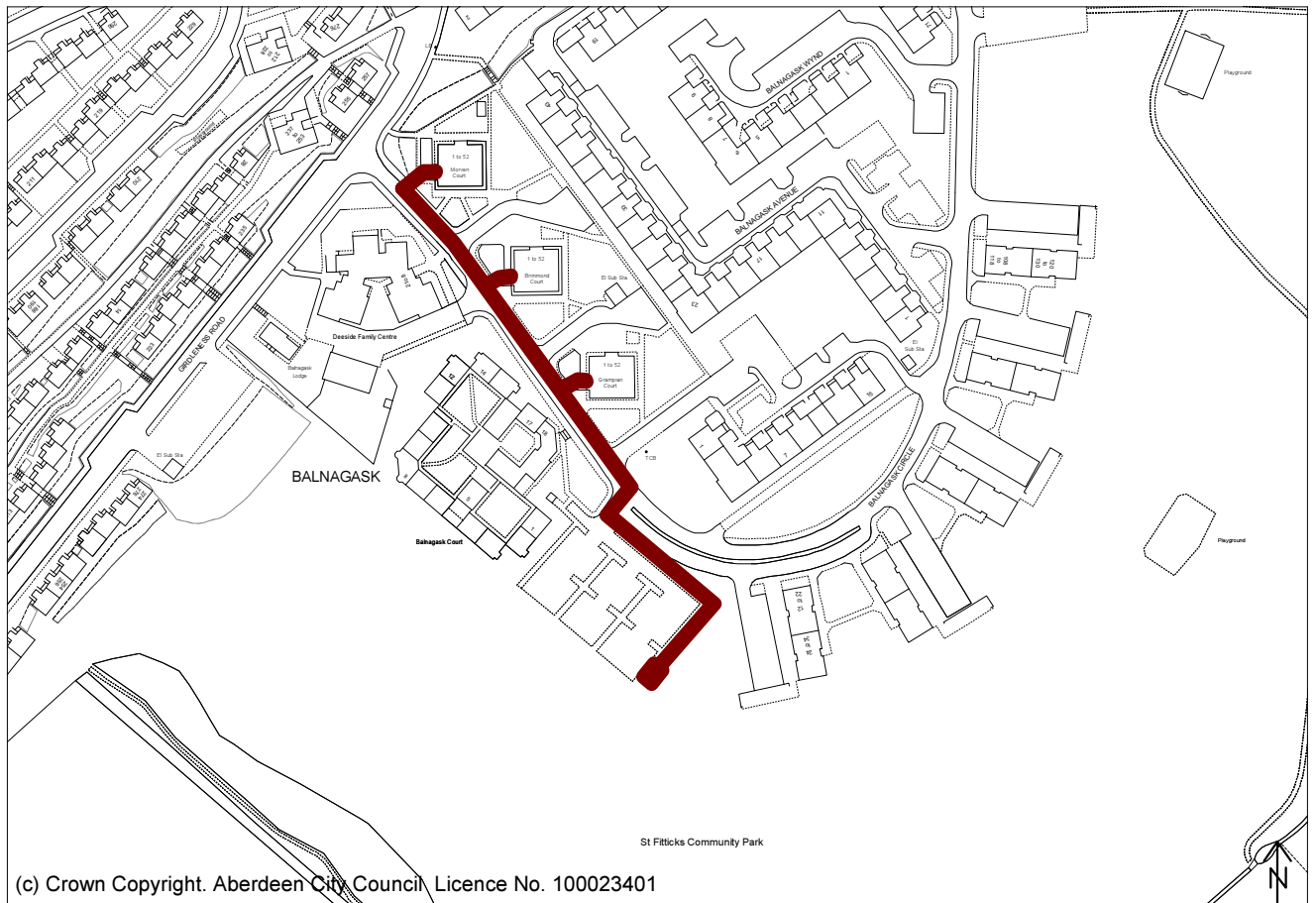
BALNAGASK CIRCLE, ABERDEEN

ERECTION OF BOILER HOUSE AND
INSTALLATION OF DISTRICT HEATING
MAINS BETWEEN THE BOILER HOUSE
AND EXISTING TOWER BLOCKS
(MORVEN COURT, BRIMMOND COURT
AND GRAMPIAN COURT)

For: Aberdeen Heat & Power

Application Ref. : P120539
Application Date : 13/04/2012
Officer : Robert Forbes
Ward: Torry/Ferryhill (Y Allan/A Donnelly/J
Kiddie/G Dickson)

Advert : Section 34 -Proj. Pub.
Concern
Advertised on : 02/05/2012
Committee Date : 14 June 2012
Community Council : No response received



RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to conditions

DESCRIPTION

The site comprises part of the carriageway of Balnagask Circle, incidental open space located beside the existing tower blocks and public open space located adjacent to a public car park on the south side of Balnagask Circle. The car park is accessed from Balnagask Circle and appears to be largely unused during the day. The public open space forms part of a larger area of open space extending to Nigg Bay and is visible from the main approach to Aberdeen from the south by rail. The multi storey blocks which would be connected to the boiler house are 14 storeys high and in residential use. They are well maintained structures which still retain the original concrete aggregate wall panel system and have not been overclad.

The closest housing to the boiler house is located about 50m to the east of the site, on the south side of Balnagask Circle.

HISTORY

None of direct relevance for this site. The applicant has developed a series of mini CHP schemes linked to Council property throughout the city, including at Seaton and Stockethill.

PROPOSAL

The proposed boiler house would be located on an area of open space. It would be approximately 3m wide by 9m long by 3m high. The boiler house would be constructed of acoustic lined steel panels. The roof would be centre apexed and built of lined steel panels. The walls would be clad with pressure treated timber linings. A series of 10 150mm diameter flues from the boilers would project through the roof of the boiler house by about 1m. The boilers would be powered by natural gas.

The heat distribution pipes would run from the boiler house to the adjacent multi storey flats partly through open space and partly along the road. The pipes would be buried and would not be visible.

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO SUB-COMMITTEE

The Council has an interest in the proposal as landowner and it was necessary to advertise the application as a project of public concern.

CONSULTATIONS

ROADS SECTION – No response received

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – No response received

COMMUNITY COUNCIL – No response received

REPRESENTATIONS

A letter of representation has been received from residents of Grampian Court. They are happy for the development to proceed.

PLANNING POLICY

The site lies within an H1 residential area as identified in the Adopted Local Plan. The public open space where the boiler house is proposed to be located is identified as a larger area of green space network and policies NE1 (Green Space Network) and NE3 (Urban Green Space) are therefore of relevance. Policies D1 (Design) and D6 (Landscape Protection) are also of some relevance.

Policy R8 (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments) supports such development in principle, subject to criteria.

SPP supports development of decentralised energy and heat supply systems including district heating for community / housing schemes.

EVALUATION

This application requires to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless outweighed by other material considerations. The development plan consists of the Adopted Local Development Plan and the approved Structure Plan. Other material considerations include SPP.

As a low carbon energy development, the proposal accords with the objectives of local plan policy R8 and related Scottish Planning Policy. As regards the specific criteria raised in policy R8, there would be no substantive adverse impact on air quality or tourism or on listed building / conservation area character. The impact on the amenity of adjacent dwellings and landscape character are considered below.

The proposed use is complementary / incidental to residential use. There would be no adverse impact on residential amenity as the boiler house would be located sufficiently far from adjacent housing and the pipe network would be buried and there is no concern regarding local air pollution from the burning of natural gas, in contrast to use of biofuels / coal. By securing the provision of affordable heating for nearby residents, the development can be regarded as enhancing residential amenity. It would therefore accord with local plan policy H1.

Although the proposal would result in the loss of a small area of open space (about 30 square metres) and no compensatory open space is proposed, there would appear to be scope to mitigate the impact of the development by use of conditions. Subject to provision of additional screen planting / soft landscaping on adjacent open space to mitigate the loss of green space due to the boiler house, the proposal would have no adverse landscape impact and would accord with related local plan policies NE1, NE3 and D6. Although the proposed boiler house would be of somewhat utilitarian design and appearance (similar to that of a shipping container), a condition can be imposed to ensure that the boiler house finishes are of an appropriate quality to accord with the objective of local plan policy D1.

Although the Council has an interest in this proposal, there is no requirement for the planning application to be referred to the Scottish Government for consideration as there is no substantial body of objection.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to conditions

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Subject to provision of additional screen planting / soft landscaping on adjacent open space to mitigate the loss of green space due to the boiler house, the proposal would have no adverse landscape impact and would accord with related local plan policy. There would be no adverse impact on residential amenity and a condition can be imposed to ensure that the boiler house finishes are of an appropriate quality.

It is recommended that approval is granted with the following conditions:

(1) that no development shall take place unless a scheme detailing all external finishing materials to the roof and walls of the development hereby approved has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority and thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the details so agreed - in the interests of visual amenity.

(2) that no development pursuant to the planning permission hereby approved shall be carried out unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing for the purpose by the planning authority a further detailed scheme of landscaping for the open space adjacent to the site, which scheme shall include indications of all existing trees and landscaped areas on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development, and the proposed areas of tree/shrub planting including details of numbers, densities, locations, species, sizes and stage of maturity at planting - in the interests of the amenity of the area and to screen the proposed boiler house.

(3) that all planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved scheme of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting season following the completion of the development and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a size and species similar to those originally required to be planted, or in accordance with such other scheme as may be submitted to and approved in writing for the purpose by the planning authority - in the interests of the amenity of the area.

Dr Margaret Bochel

Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.