



South Tyneside Council

Mr M Brooker
Storeys Edward Symmons
Higham House
New Bridge Street West
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 8AU

Date: 26 March 2015
Our ref: ST/1176/14/EIA
Your ref:

This matter is being dealt with by:
George Mansbridge on 0191 424 7566

Dear Mr Brooker

Screening Opinion of the Local Planning Authority
Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011

Proposal: Erection of Wood Pellet Storage and Handling Facility including enclosed conveyors, 3no. storage silos (49m high), 1no. rail loading silo (48.24m high), alterations to rail sidings and other enabling works to carry out the proposal.

Location: Port of Tyne
Tyne Dock West Side
South Shields

With reference to your request received by the Council on the 11 December 2014 that was subsequently amended with further details being received on 30 January 2015, 16 February 2015, 3 March 2015, 10 March 2015 and 13 March 2015, I hereby notify you of the Council's screening opinion as to whether the proposed development requires an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

The consideration of whether a particular development requires an EIA depends upon whether it is classed as Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development, as defined by the regulations.

I am satisfied that the development is not a development that falls within Schedule 1 and as such would not automatically require an EIA.

With respect to Schedule 2 development the Council, as Local Planning Authority, is duty bound to consider whether any part of the development falls within a 'sensitive area', as defined by the regulations, or whether any applicable threshold or criterion in the corresponding part of Column 2 of Schedule 2 is exceeded, or met, in relation to the development proposed.

The proposed development does not lie within a sensitive area but it falls within Infrastructure Projects description of development in column 1 (10, criteria a, c and g) of Schedule 2 and it exceeds the 0.5 hectare threshold in the associated column 2.

Therefore, the Council must adopt a screening opinion and consider whether there would be any significant effects on the environment and Schedule 3 of the regulations outlines the three criteria that must be taken into account in making this decision.

1. The characteristics of the development

The proposal would be located within the substantial demise of the Port's land on the south side of the River Tyne, which contains a wide variety of buildings and other structures, such as cranes and conveyors, to enable the operation of various business activities (either by the Port or their tenants).

The proposal would enable biomass to be delivered to the Port by sea, stored on-site and then transported off-site for use elsewhere. It would include the provision of three 49.8m storage silos together with one rail loading silo, associated conveyor systems, hoppers plus other associated works.

The proposed silo heights are of comparable height to other built structures (such as cranes, buildings or conveyors) on the site used for Port related activities.

The development would include the consumption of natural resources, either in its construction or the process of transporting biomass for use elsewhere and it could produce waste either during construction or during its operation on completion. It is recognised however that the natural resources used in the construction and operation of the proposed development are not scarce and the site can be reused when the development is no longer needed.

The development could give rise to pollution and nuisance, for example noise and dust. It could also give rise to the risk of accidents, either during construction or during its subsequent operation.

2. The location of the development

As stated earlier the proposed development is located within the confines of the Port and it would be a compatible use with those that currently exist across it, which already include handling biomass amongst other things.

The development site, or the Port generally, is not considered to be an abundant quality natural resource and the development site is considered to be unlikely to affect the absorption capacity of factors covered by 2 (c) (i) to (v) in Schedule 3 of the regulations – wetlands, coastal zones, mountain and forest areas, nature reserves and parks, designated sites in relation to wild birds or conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora respectively.

However, it could affect factors covered by 2 (c) (vi) to (viii) in Schedule 3 of the regulations – environmental quality standards, densely populated areas or landscapes of historical, cultural or archaeological significance respectively.

3. Characteristics of the potential impact

In relation to points 1 and 2 above, the potential significant impacts of the proposed development are primarily considered to be associated with its visual impact, dust and noise. The visual impact is not considered significant as the proposed wood pellet holding silos and rail loading silo are of a comparable height to other structures and infrastructure at the Port and of a design that is in general keeping with the industrial nature of Port operations.

Noise and dust emissions have the potential to give rise to significant impacts, which may be cumulative with other existing operations at the port. However, the submitted information states that proposed mitigation measures could have the potential to ameliorate the likelihood of significant adverse impacts in terms of noise or dust associated with the proposal.

Conclusion

It is the Council's opinion that the proposed development would not, on the basis of all the information provided, have significant environmental impacts for it to require the carrying out of an EIA

It could therefore be carried out as a permitted development (under Part 17 Class B of Article 3 of the Town and County Planning General Permitted Development Order, as amended).

You should be aware that the comments made regarding the likely environmental impacts of the proposed development relate only to the Council's need to issue a screening opinion under the above regulations. They do not represent the Council's views as to the planning merits of any planning application, or its conformity with the development plan.

A copy of this screening opinion has been placed on the planning register.

Yours sincerely,



George Mansbridge
Head of Development Services

We aim to make letters easy to understand. If you found this letter difficult to understand please let us know. Call 0845 145 0100 or email feedback@southtyneside.gov.uk

