

Our Ref: S0151812

Your Ref:

Gordon Atkinson,
Planning Group,
South Tyneside Council,
Town Hall & Civic Offices,
Westoe Road, South Shields
NE33 2RL

11th December 2014

Dear Sirs,

Screening Opinion Request in respect of Development of a Wood Pellet Handling and Storage Facility at the Port of Tyne, Tyne Dock, South Shields

The Port of Tyne are proposing to create a wood pellet handling and storage facility on land created by the infilling of the former Tyne Dock. The proposed facility would consist of the erection of 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.

I am pleased to enclose plans and drawings of the proposed facility, alongside technical reports assessing the impact of the proposed development in respect of the visual impact and potential noise and dust impacts. Furthermore, I enclose a completed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) analysis and screening proforma, I hope that this is of some assistance to you.

A screening opinion request is sought because, while the site does not fall within schedule 1 of the EIA regulations, the site of the development area exceeds the threshold of 0.5 ha set out in 10. Infrastructure projects - column 2 of schedule 2. As such it is necessary to refer to schedule 3 of the regulations and other relevant guidance, including the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) to determine whether an EIA is required.

Paragraphs 17 and 18 of the PPG provide guidance on the determination of whether an EIA is required; paragraph 18 specifically states *"Only a very small proportion of Schedule 2 development will require an assessment"*.

The table at paragraph 58 details that with regards developments falling within 10. Infrastructure projects of schedule 2 the indicative threshold at which a development may have significant environmental effects is *...more than five hectares*. It is worthwhile noting that the site of the proposed development is only 1.8ha.

Furthermore, you will be aware that the Port has previously proposed, and received planning permission for, a similar but significantly larger scheme in January 2014. Consequently the site and the potential environmental impacts, significant or otherwise, of the development have been subject to considerable detailed technical analysis and consideration.

As a result of that proposal it has been concluded that the potential significant environmental impacts of the proposed scheme are the visual impact of the proposed development and any noise and dust impacts resulting from the operation of the facility.

The technical reports conclude, and I am of the opinion that, the proposed development would not have any significant environmental impacts and as such the Port could carry out the development under the permitted development rights that they enjoy.

The proposed facility will create jobs both in the construction and operation phases of the facility. It is intended to commence work on the facility early in the new year and as such your early consideration of this matter would be greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions or if you require any further information in order to adopt a screening opinion in respect of this site and proposal please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Mark Brooker MRTPI

Associate

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cc. Paul Foster – Port of Tyne