

Planning Statement

Inchbroom Temporary Storage and Welfare facility

THE-24-0009

Balfour Beatty

February 12, 2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared on behalf of Balfour Beatty (the Applicant) and seeks temporary planning permission for the use of the Former Inchbroom Works for storage and distribution associated with the SSE Redmoss to Clayhills 132kV Cabling Project. In addition to the storage use there is a requirement to erect temporary welfare facilities associated with the Cabling Project.
- 1.2 The RFE and RFW Redmoss-Clayhills 132kV cable circuits were installed in 1964 and comprise of two parallel circuits of 3-core polythene diaphragm sheathed gas compression cables installed within 168 mm diameter steel pipes. The circuits form an integral part of the overall Aberdeen City 132kV ring network and have 9 double joint bays with 10 sections of cable each with an average length of 480m (cable route is circa 5km in length).
- 1.3 The driver for project is poor asset condition and associated safety and reliability concerns which puts the Aberdeen electrical ring network at risk:
- 132kV cables are at end of life
 - Frequent leaks in gas compression cable circuits
 - Porcelain sealing ends within the substations are at end of life and in poor condition which presents a potential safety risk (sharp flying debris in case of explosion)
 - Test results confirming poor insulation and hot spots
 - Limited spare parts availability as cable type is no longer supported by manufacturers
- 1.4 Following a process of optioneering and detailed analysis, SSE have determined the only viable option is to replace the Redmoss-Clayhills 132kV gas compression underground cables with high stress 'Pipe type' XLPE underground cables, bundled fibre, associated accessories and cable sealing ends which will require the removal and replacement of the existing cable assets and cable sealing ends with the new cable being installed within the existing steel duct.
- 1.5 The Applicant has been appointed by SSE to design, install and commission the new cable system and require a temporary yard in close proximity to the route which will accommodate office and welfare facilities with associated infrastructure such as services, vehicle parking and materials storage.
- 1.6 The project is due to commence mid April 2024 with yard to be set up from 25th March 2024. Currently the project is due for completion May 2024 and only temporary planning permission is sought for 16 months.

2.0 THE SITE AND PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 The Application Site is currently a vacant area of hardstanding, which followed the demolition of the former Inchbroom Works buildings in 2023.
- 2.2 The former industrial buildings were vacated by the most recent tenants and demolished by owners due to the lack of demand for the aging buildings. At the same time Planning Permission in Principle was granted for the erection of replacement Class 5 industrial buildings, associated office space and infrastructure works.
- 2.3 The Applicant has been granted a licence to occupy the site for a temporary period for the use associated with the delivery of the Redmoss to Clayhills 132kV Cabling Project and this application seeks temporary consent for this use. This temporary use does not change longer term redevelopment aspirations.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The principle requirement for the use of the existing yard area is to store cable drums until they are installed. Once installed they are returned to the yard and collected for delivery back to the cable supplier for re-use. The cable drums weight approx. 25T and require a specialist cable drum trailer to transport them out to the various joint bay locations. The drum trailer is 4.5m wide and thus is classed as an abnormal load requiring police escort. The location of this yard has been selected to provide adequate routes to site which will accommodate these abnormal loads. The site will not be used for any industrial process or construction activity. Lighting around the cabins and yard would be required after winter clock change however would be sensitive to the area we are located in.
- 3.2 In addition to storage, the yard will also include 9 portable units, each measuring 9754mm x 3010mm. These units will provide welfare facilities (as required by Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015) and office space related to the infrastructure project. There will be an external septic tank, water tank and generator located within the site, all temporary and moveable. The generator is located away from residential boundaries and will be containerized to reduce noise further. A datasheet for the unit is provided with the application submission.
- 3.3 The site is partially secured via an existing fence and wall, any gaps would be secured with heras fencing as shown on the yard layout drawing. Existing access points would be utilised and secured via gates, the site would also be secured using CCTV and DNA material which would be applied to internal fencing, and high value plant and cable drums. All fencing is temporary and shall be removed on the cessation of use.
- 3.4 The area required within the property for the storage and ancillary welfare facilities extends to a total of 7,000 sq.m as highlighted in yellow on Site Plan.

4.0 CONSIDERATION AGAINST DEVELOPMENT PLAN

4.1 Section 25 of the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires that applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the Development Plan comprises the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) 2023 and National Planning Framework 4 (February 2023).

4.2 The sections below set out consideration of this temporary use against the Development Plan.

Principle of Development

4.3 At a strategic level the maintenance of the ring network around Aberdeen is of importance to the region and NPF4 seeks to "To encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energy development onshore and offshore. This includes energy generation, storage, new and replacement transmission and distribution infrastructure and emerging low-carbon and zero emissions technologies including hydrogen and carbon capture utilisation and storage (CCUS)."

4.4 This application only relates to the temporary use of the application site for storage and distribution and site office and welfare facilities. It is however, the only location that has been identified available to provide this necessary role in the project. Without this storage facility the project would be at risk. As such this application is directly related to the wider project and gains support from NPF Policy 12.

4.5 The site in the Local Development Plan is located within a residential area (H1), for which Policy H1 requires that any proposed uses would cause no conflict with, or any nuisance to, the enjoyment of existing residential amenity.

4.6 As noted within the description of the proposed use, the site will not be used for any industrial process and noise will be minimal and relate to the movement of vehicles and cable drums on-site. SSE have directed that the maximum permitted hours of construction working within the site and working areas (which would include the site at Inchbroom) would be:

- Monday – Friday inclusive 0800 – 1900 hours
- Saturday 0800 – 1300 hours
- Sunday and bank holidays No Work Permitted

4.7 This is a site that has been in industrial use and has planning permission in principle for an industrial use. In the approval of the most recent Approval the Report of Handling stated that "there would be no change to the existing situation in terms of use class, it is considered that there would be no additional conflict with, or any nuisance to, the enjoyment of existing residential amenity."

4.8 Given the history of industrial use and permission on the site, it is considered that a temporary use for storage and distribution and for the siting of welfare facilities is supported by the Development Plan.

Road Access

- 4.9 The site layout identifies the routes for vehicular access with vehicles exiting the site only being permitted to turn left towards the signalised junction with Wellington Road. Movements of the cable drums will require police escort and Police Scotland will advise the applicant of the required route in consultation with the appropriate authorities. The site location close to the trunk road network and AWPR, make this site an ideal location for the storage and distribution of these materials, where there is a need to minimise the travel distance between the storage and point of use.
- 4.10 The site is accessible by bus, but importantly it is located close to the Cabling Project that it is serving to reduce travel distances and in particular the distances that vehicles will be required to move cable drums. This will support the objectives of NPF4 Policy 13 and the LDP on Sustainable Transport.

Drainage

- 4.11 Existing drainage services at the site are private and their condition is unknown. As the use is temporary, the applicant proposes to use either existing septic tanks or import an above ground septic tanks that can be emptied from the site. LDP Policy NE4 expects that waste water treatment systems connect to the public network, but as a temporary construction use this is not possible to provide on this site. Guidance related to welfare facilities provided by the Health and Safety Executive advises that where mains water and drainage systems are not available contractors should use toilets with a built-in water supply and drainage tanks. Policy NE4 is focussed on permanent development and as a temporary use related to a construction project there is separate guidance that advises that a tank solution on a temporary basis would be acceptable as an alternative.
- 4.12 In relation to surface water drainage the hard standing areas are all existing and the temporary use and development will have no change to the surface water management on-site. The use is not for construction or any industrial processes and is merely for the storage of cable materials and welfare facilities. It is considered that the proposed use will not conflict with policy objectives on SUDS that relate to new permanent physical changes to land.

Environmental

- 4.13 As a responsible contractor that would intend to be part of the Considerate Constructor Scheme for this project, the Applicant will be respectful of neighbours and the surrounding area. The project employs a health and safety advisor and environmental advisor – the environmental advisor will ensure the yard meets any mandatory obligations re storage of fuel i.e. bunded containers, COSHH stores, refuelling areas.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Temporary Planning Approval is sought for a period of 16 months for the use of an existing yard area for the storage and distribution of cables for the Redmoss-Clayhills 132kV gas compression underground cables with high stress 'Pipe type' XLPE underground cables, bundled fibre, associated accessories and cable sealing ends which will require the removal and replacement of the existing cable assets and cable sealing ends with the new cable being installed within the existing steel duct.
- 5.2 The use of the Application Site is critical to the successful delivery of this major infrastructure project and it is supported at a strategic level by NPF4 Policy 12. The site is located within a residential area, but as with previous approvals the use would not have any greater detrimental effect on surrounding residential areas and would not conflict with Policy H1.
- 5.3 The proposed temporary use is in compliance with the Development Plan and there will not be any detrimental environmental effects resulting from this short term use. The Applicant is in need to start site set-up from 25 March in order to meet project timescales and it is requested that the planning authority advise of any further information required at the earliest stage to allow permission to be granted efficiently.