

Our Ref: ENQ/2020/0124
Your Ref:

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Keith Grant
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19 February 2020

Dear Sir,

The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017
Proposal: EIA Screening Opinion for Erection of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) Facility
Address: Site At, St Fergus Gas Terminal, St Fergus, Peterhead

I refer to the above and to your request for a screening opinion under Regulation 8 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.

It is noted that as per Paragraph 1.4.1 and Figure 1.3 of your Screening Request, various sites within the St Fergus Gas Terminal are being considered for the final location of the development. This Screening Opinion considers and applies to all seven of the identified sites given that the issues and impacts will be applicable to all, such is the proximity of these within the existing gas plant site.

The Planning Authority is required to provide and record a formal screening opinion based upon an assessment of the location, nature, purpose and possible effects of the development. Based upon this assessment, it is my view that the proposed development, on any one of the proposed sites, is **not likely** to have significant effects on the environment to the extent that a detailed study through EIA would be necessary to properly assess any affect. Therefore, an **EIA Report is not required**. Notwithstanding this, it would be expected that any planning application for the proposed development be accompanied by an appropriate range of supporting information and assessments.

The following assessment outlines the reasoning behind this opinion.

Under the terms of the above Regulations, the proposed development does not fall within Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations as:

- the development does not propose the capture of carbon dioxide from installations referred to in Schedule 1 of the above Regulations,
- the proposed development does not exceed the total yearly capture of 1.5 megatonnes or more.

A mandatory EIA is therefore not required.

The site is not within a 'sensitive area' as defined by Regulation 2(1) but, as a proposed "installation for the capture of carbon dioxide streams for the purposes of geological storage pursuant to the CCS Directive from Installations not referred to in Schedule 1" it falls to be considered under Schedule 2 of the Regulations.

Accordingly, the Council must reach a screening opinion and consider whether the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment, taking into account the selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development, listed in Schedule 3 of the Regulations. These include the characteristics of the development, the location of the development and the characteristics of the potential impact.

I have assessed the likely impact against Schedule 3 criteria and the guidance given in Planning Circular 1/2017. Key Environmental issues that are relevant to this proposal are as follows:

- Impacts upon amenity
- Impacts upon biodiversity and internationally protected sites
- Impacts upon cultural heritage
- Impacts upon the landscape

I note that table 1.1 of the screening request makes reference to a number of mitigation measures to reduce any impacts of the proposed development. These have been factored into this screening opinion. It is crucial that these measures are carried forward to any subsequent planning application.

I note you have considered the effects upon sites designated for their ecological value – namely the Loch of Strathbeg (Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA), RAMSAR); Rora Moss (SSSI) and the Rattray Head to Peterhead Local Nature Conservation Site (LNCS). The mitigation outlined seems appropriate, but I would advise early and continued engagement with both SNH and the Councils Environment Team in relation to supporting information requirements.

I should also highlight that a Scheduled Monument is located within the North Sea Midstream Partners (NSMP) South area shown in Figure 1.3 of the screening document. I would advise engaging with Historic Environment Scotland along with the Councils Environment Team and Archaeologists in order to determine any surveys or mitigation proposals.

The character, scale and location of the proposed development are largely in keeping with the existing land use and so significant effects are not anticipated on this basis. However, the proposed development has the potential both on its own and cumulatively with the existing Gas Terminal to give rise to instances of pollution and landscape impacts,

affecting the amenity of the surrounding area. Engagement with the Councils Environmental Health team is encouraged to discuss assessment requirements. The Planning Service are also able to offer advice on viewpoints to consider for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

Table 1.1 of the screening request is useful in identifying potential impacts and how these are expected to be mitigated insofar that no significant negative impacts are anticipated to arise by virtue of the proposed development. Any positive impacts that are expected, i.e. carbon reduction, should also be included within any supporting documentation.

While no formal EIA is required, further advice in relation to submission requirements and accompanying surveys can be requested from the Planning Service at a later date once the concept select phase is completed and a development site is chosen.

You should bear in mind that the planning authority's opinion on the likelihood of significant environmental effects is reached only for the purposes of adopting this screening opinion under the EIA regulations. This screening opinion is given without prejudice to any subsequent consideration by the planning authority through the planning application process of the impacts of the proposed development, and the authority's assessment of the acceptability or otherwise of the proposed development relative to development plan policy and other material considerations.

You have the right to apply to Scottish Ministers for a screening direction should you disagree with the above opinion.

This opinion will be held for public inspection for a two-year period, or until a planning application is submitted at which time the opinion will be transferred to the planning register with the application.

Should you wish to discuss any matters relating to this issue please contact the officer named at the head of this letter.

Yours faithfully



Head of Planning and Environment Service