

To: Clive Saul
Sustainable Development Unit

From: Paul Bingham
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Your Ref: 11/03705/FU
Our Ref:
Date: 2 May 2012

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Site: Skelton Grange Road, Stourton

Proposal: Energy Recovery Facility (incineration of waste and energy generation), associated infrastructure and improvements to access and bridge.

Previous planning policy comments have been provided on this application which remain relevant. I understand that the applicant has amended the scheme and provided additional supporting information including new layout, floorspace and elevation plans; a clarification letter which considers the technology proposed and the need for a waste facility, a landscape layout plan; and an EIA statement clarification.

I would reiterate that the principle of the use of the site for a waste facility is accepted given the identification of the former Skelton Grange Power Station site under Policy Waste 6 of the draft Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan Document which is at an advanced stage of preparation and has been through a public examination.

The applicant has provided further information as to how the facility will operate within the waste hierarchy which seeks to reduce and recycle waste before energy recovery facilities should be considered. I am generally satisfied that facility will divert residual commercial and industrial waste that would otherwise go to landfill rather than act as a deterrent to recycling waste. It would appear, on the basis of the information provided, to be in the financial interests of the businesses to recycle as well as being part of their obligations under the Waste Regulations 2011 to consider the waste hierarchy in the disposal of waste.

With regard to the need for the facility, the applicant points to evidence presented in the NRW DPD that there will be an estimated 500,000 tonnes of residual commercial and industrial waste produced in Leeds, assuming that 70% of waste from this sector is recycled. Given there are no other energy recovery facilities in Leeds for residual commercial and industrial waste this demonstrates that the proposed 300,000 per annum capacity of the facility can be taken up by residual waste produced by Leeds businesses. The applicant has offered to either restrict the catchment of the facility to Leeds on the proviso that no other energy recovery facility is permitted in the district or undertake to double the community fund payment from 20p to 40p per tonne for waste brought in from outside the district. It is an matter for your judgement as to which of these is the most appropriate approach.

In terms of the details of the scheme, you should be satisfied that the development will not prejudice the provision of a north – south public transport link between Skelton Bridge Road to the development sites to the north and east of the former power station site, which forms an important element of medium to long term proposals to provide public transport services in the area. However, any permission should be conditioned to the effect that there will be no access via the site for private vehicles to the ELLR.

I am supportive of the proposal to provide a cyclepath link along the north bank of the River Aire to facilitate a potential re-routing of the Trans Pennine Trail and consider this to be an important element of the proposal.

The landscape provision in the scheme needs to be considered in the context of providing a strategic green infrastructure network in the Aire Valley. The landscape team should be consulted on the latest landscape scheme submitted.

I note that the facility is designed to be CHP enabled to provide low grade heat as a by-product of electricity production. This satisfies the requirements of draft NRW DPD Policy Energy 3 in the absence of a district heating network to connect into at present. I welcome the offer to install Solar PV panels on the roof of the office, whilst this would only form a small fraction of the low carbon energy produced by the facility it nevertheless demonstrates compliance with the Sustainable Design SPD requirements and helps make maximum use of the development to provide low carbon energy..

In conclusion, the proposal is considered to be **acceptable in principle** subject to the specific issues raised above.

Paul Bingham
Local Plans East