

Our ref: MM/LH/GEN.40
Your ref: R/2020/0357/OOM

7th October 2020

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
Corporate Directorate for Growth, Enterprise
and Environment
Development Management
Redcar and Cleveland House
Kirkleatham Street
REDCAR
TS10 1RT

Dear Sir/Madam

PROPOSAL: OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR DEMOLITION OF EXISTING STRUCTURES ON SITE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 418,000 SQM (GROSS) OF GENERAL INDUSTRY (USE CLASS B2) AND STORAGE OR DISTRIBUTION FACILITIES (USE CLASS B8) WITH OFFICE ACCOMMODATION (USE CLASS B1), HGV AND CAR PARKING AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS ALL MATTERS RESERVED OTHER THAN ACCESS

LOCATION: LAND AT SOUTH TEES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION EAST OF SMITHS DOCK ROAD AND WEST OF TEES DOCK ROAD SOUTH BANK

APPLICANT: SOUTH TEES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Thank you for your letter of 16th September 2020. We would comment as follows:

General

PD Teesport Limited ("PD Teesport") as the Statutory Harbour Authority for the port of Tees and Hartlepool is supportive of the proposal for port related industrial development at South Bank the site of the application being in close proximity to the River Tees and major port infrastructure with the prospect of further port infrastructure being developed.

Industrial Estate or Strategic Port Related Regeneration Project

Whilst the current application relates to General Industry (Use Class B2), Storage or Distribution Facilities (Use Class B8) and Office Accommodation (Use Class B1), the Statutory Harbour Authority believes the site presents a once in a generation opportunity to deliver new port related economic activity and job creation particularly in the light of the emerging offshore wind sector at Dogger Bank. The recent announcements by Able UK in relation to signed documents relating to the creation of 120 jobs on the north bank of the Tees and 400 jobs on the Humber provide recent examples of the economic regeneration opportunities and private sector investment that Dogger Bank is now delivering.

We are mindful that substantial public expenditure has already gone into the site of the outline application in recent years including the purchase/relocation of various property and business interests and the public procurement of demolition/site clearance/clean up contracts. PD Teesport would hope that this strategic regeneration site, in close proximity to the commercial heart of the river, would be utilised as a port related facility rather than merely a general industrial estate which may compete with other non river based industrial areas such as Kirkleatham Business Park.

It is felt that a general industrial estate, if developed, which may “turn its back” on the river would be a lost opportunity to generate new long term private sector investment utilising the asset which is the River Tees and one of the largest commercial ports in the UK. The development of a general industrial estate may merely result in displacement of other local employment from other neighbouring estates. In contrast in recent years PD Teesport has attracted hundreds of millions of pounds of private sector investment and major new long term private sector employment to the region through for example the Asda and Tesco Port Centric Warehouses and the MGT Power Station development. The MGT biomass power station development alone has seen over £625m of private funding invested in the immediate locality in the last 4 years.

A non port related general industrial estate could be an “easy win” rather than something which could be in the best long term strategic interests of the area which would attract new long term private sector funding and employment in industries which could benefit from the assets and opportunities provided by one of the leading commercial Ports in the UK.

It is noted the application is outline for demolition and B1, B2 and B8 uses, with all matters reserved other than access. There is no commitment within the application to develop the quay facilities and in fact this is specifically excluded from the application. There is a strong local policy link to the site being used for port related development activity though the general conclusion made by the applicant within the planning statement accompanying the application is that the proposed development should be permitted as it falls within the “B Class” employment uses.

It is noted The South Industrial Zone Planning Statement, July 2020, accompanies the outline planning application R/2020/0357/OOM, with the following statements being included:

“Para 1.11 A separate planning application is being prepared by STDC for a quay on the River Tees adjoining the development site. It is expected this application will be submitted to RCBC in Autumn 2020 and it will facilitate the transportation of goods and materials to and from the development site by ship.”

“Para 2.4 It is located within the STDC area and it lies between land operated by PD Ports for its industry and commerce park”.

“Para 2.36 RCBC issued an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Opinion on 27th June 2019 for a proposed port-based development for the offshore marine energy sector (offshore wind turbines)”.

“Para 3.5 The [design] parameters have also been designed in accordance with a separate application, currently being prepared by STDC, for the development of a new quay at the north of the site. This will create the opportunity to transport goods and materials to and from the site via ship. For the purpose of this application however it is assumed that there will be no opportunities for deliveries via ships.

“Para 4.2 The relevant statutory development plan comprises:

- Redcar and Cleveland Local Plan (May 2018)
- South Tees Area SPD (May 2018)”

Para 4.28 Within the South Industrial Zone [identified in the SPD] the Council, in partnership with the STDC, will encourage development proposals for port related uses, including port based fabrication, offshore energy industries, including manufacturing, materials processing and manufacturing, contract fabrication and energy generation and, potentially rig and large equipment decommissioning.”

Whilst the above statements provide an indication that a port related proposal may follow, there is no commitment to port related development, noting of course an outline or full planning application does not necessarily lead to any development taking place.

Access

It is noted the layout provides two main access routes, one at Smiths Dock Road and the other at Tees Dock Road within the Teesport Estate, with a road running through the middle of the area of the application area. This route largely replicates the Dockside Road/Teesport Link Road Scheme, being designed as an alternative access between Bran Sands and Teesport to Dockside Road.

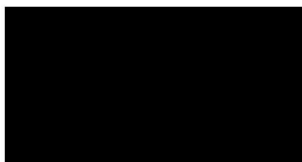
Paragraph 2.23 states “The development site is located directly to the east of Smiths Dock Road and directly to the west of Tees Dock Road. These roads provide connectivity to the wider local road network via the A66.”

The proposal appears to be for the industrial estate to access the private Teesport Estate and road network, before linking onto the Public Highway network at Tees Dock Road leading to the A66. It is noted that Highways England has objected to the proposal pending further information on highways matters.

Any proposals to access the private Teesport Estate and associated infrastructure would need to be formalised with PD Teesport considering, amongst other things, security, health and safety and internal road capacity issues for the Teesport Estate in addition to the wider public highway access beyond the private road network. In recent years PD Teesport has invested its own capital in upgrading the public highway network outside the Teesport Estate. Any proposal by third parties to access our own private road network as a method to access the public highway network will involve consideration of the implications on road capacity both for our own estate and the public highway infrastructure, and we would wish to reserve our position to comment further on those matters whenever the applicant has provided the necessary detail.

As the Statutory Harbour Authority for the River Tees we would thank you for the opportunity to comment on this outline application.

Yours faithfully



Michael McConnell
Group Property Director