

Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council

Planning (Development Management)

APPLICATION NUMBER: R/2021/0152/CD
LOCATION: GRANGETOWN PRAIRIE LAND EAST OF
JOHN BOYLE ROAD AND WEST OF TEES
DOCK ROAD GRANGETOWN REDCAR
PROPOSAL: DISCHARGE OF CONDITIONS 4 & 7 OF
PLANNING PERMISSION R/2019/0767/OOM
FOR OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE
CONSTRUCTION OF AN ENERGY RECOVERY
FACILITY (ERF) AND ASSOCIATED
DEVELOPMENT

APPLICATION SITE AND DESCRIPTION

The application site is located within the boundary of the STDC and comprises approximately 10.1 hectares of land. The site forms part of what has been termed the Prairie site and is located to the west of John Boyle Road and the east of Tees Dock Road and south of the local rail line.

The site is presently vacant land which is relatively flat and featureless having been vacant for several years.

Planning permission was granted subject to conditions on 25 July 2020 for the development of an energy from waste plant (EFW). The application was subject to an EIA and was granted in outline, subject to conditions.

This application relates to the discharge of planning conditions in respect of archaeological investigation of the site. Two conditions were applied to the permission; condition (7)(part) related to the archaeological investigation of the site and the submission and approval of a WSI; condition (4)(part) related to a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) part of which dealt with archaeology.

The application is accompanied by a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

REDCAR & CLEVELAND LOCAL PLAN (2018)

- SD1 Sustainable Development
- SD4 General Development Principles
- LS4 South Tees Spatial Strategy
- HE3 Archaeological Sites and Monuments

OTHER POLICY DOCUMENTS

- South Tees SPD
- SDTD Masterplan

PLANNING HISTORY

Outline planning permission was granted on 24 July 2020 for construction of an energy recovery facility (erf) and associated development.

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY

The application has been the subject of consultation with the Council's retained archaeological consultant, comments are set out in the report.

CONSIDERATION OF PLANNING ISSUES

The only matter to be considered in respect of this application is whether it is appropriate to discharge the condition in respect of the archaeological assessment of the site.

Background

Prior to the submission of the outline planning application, and in order to de-risk the project as far as possible, it was decided by the procurement team that site investigation works in respect of archaeology and ground investigation would be carried out.

The preliminary archaeological assessment identified the remain of former blast furnaces on the site and it was considered appropriate, at that time, to seek the preservation of these remains as part of the detailed design of the development. The specification for the development therefore included a provision to retain an area of land (Area B) within the site, to accommodate the remains.

The matter of archaeology was fully assessed in the ES which supported the outline application. The ES examined the baseline history and archaeological potential for the site and the impacts of construction, the ES commented;

The archaeological investigation and recording of any archaeological remains present on the site will allow aspects of their evidential value which would otherwise be lost to be recorded and interpreted. Through the deposition of the report with the HER and the archive with a suitable repository public

benefits will accrue in the form of increased knowledge and understanding of the site. This will result in a reduced loss of evidential value and therefore the residual magnitude of impact is considered to be moderate negative. This would result in a minor-moderate adverse significance of effect on these remains of medium cultural heritage value.

The residual impact and significance of effect on the blast furnaces are unchanged as a minor-moderate beneficial effect as there is no additional mitigation to be implemented as part of the application.

The Council's archaeological consultant commented;

In application of the above policies (the NPPF and BDLP) to the proposal our advice to the LPA in this instance is that if the public benefit and other aspects of the proposal are considered to outweigh the identified harm to the important non-designated heritage asset, the harm can be successfully mitigated by a programme of archaeological work, including some in situ preservation of the asset.

A condition in respect of archaeological investigation is recommended.

Two conditions were applied to the permission, one relating directly to archaeological investigation of the site and one in part, dealing with archaeology and the CEMP.

The matter of archaeology has become somewhat complicated on the site because there are now two planning permissions for the same area dealing with archaeology and related matters: the EFW plant and one of the remediation of the wider Prairie site.

A note explains.

The ERF scheme: outline planning permission granted to Hartlepool Borough Council in July 2020 for the construction of an Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) (app. ref. R/2019/0767/OOM); and The Prairies remediation scheme: detailed planning permission granted to STDC in September 2020 for engineering operations to remediate and prepare the Prairies site for end-use development, to carry out excavation works to agreed maximum dig depths across the site (app. ref. R/2020/0318/FFM).

The ERF scheme sits within the site area of the wider Prairies remediation scheme. Both permissions contain near identical conditions (nos. 7) in respect of archaeology that, in summary, require: the submission of a written scheme of investigation (WSI) to agree the extent of archaeological work required; an initial archaeological survey; an archaeological strip, map, record (SMR) of agreed areas; a watching brief (the on-site observation of excavation works by an archaeologist) in areas identified as archaeologically sensitive; and protection, followed by preservation, of high value remains.

The planning conditions would be fully discharged following the archiving and publication of the results of the archaeological surveys and excavations. In addition, the ERF permission contains a condition (no.4) that requires the ERF scheme to adhere to certain aspects of the Environmental Statement submitted with the planning application. One requirement is to maintain in situ an area (Area B) of approximately 0.6ha/1.6acres, wherein the remains of late 19th century blast furnaces exist, unless alternative archaeological mitigation is agreed.

North East Archaeological Research Limited (NEAR) provide archaeological advice to RCBC, to support the Council during the discharge of condition process. Northern Archaeological Associates (NAA) assisted Stantec on behalf of Hartlepool Council and in the Environmental Assessment prepared to accompany the planning application for the ERF scheme. Prospect Archaeology act for STDC. Pre-construct Archaeology (PCA) are working with Prospect in carrying out the fieldwork.

In October 2020, it was agreed between STDC, Prospect, Lichfields and Stantec/NAA that Prospect would work with NAA/Stantec to agree with NEAR the methodology of the WSI for both the sites of the ERF scheme and the Prairies remediation scheme and to ultimately reach agreement with NEAR as to the significance of the archaeological remains and the approach to any necessary recording and / or preserving remains. An important objective of this exercise is to reach agreement with NEAR that the area referred to as Area B does not warrant preservation in its entirety. This agreement would, in turn, enable the ERF scheme to take in some (or potentially all) of Area B into its layout.

In November 2020, a WSI was submitted by Prospect to NEAR for the ERF area. NEAR commented on it, leading to a revised version being issued by Prospect in late November for further approval by NEAR. In summary, the revised WSI proposed to clean and evaluate the blast furnace remains, to undertake a “strip, map, record” approach to most of the Area B beyond the areas of the furnaces, and also that a watching brief over most of the wider Prairies site was not required due to it not being archaeologically sensitive. NEAR provided comments to Prospect, agreeing to the revised WSI, on 11 January. NEAR subsequently agreed (on 22 January) that most parts of the wider Prairies site beyond the ERF site (other than an area on the northern extent at the site) did not require a watching brief during the carrying out of the excavation / remediation works. This latter agreement has enabled Prospect to finalise a WSI for the wider Prairies site, which sits alongside the WSI for the ERF scheme.

Current Position

Following fieldwork carried out by PCA during January, it has become necessary to amend the agreed WSI for the ERF site. Prospect / PCA are to maintain the approach to cleaning and evaluating the blast furnaces, as per the WSI. It is necessary to amend the WSI in order to remove the requirement for a “strip map record” approach to areas to the east and north of the blast

furnaces because excavations undertaken on site have reduced the ground back to the pre-industrial era in those areas. Once the amended WSI is agreed with NEAR Lichfields will commence the discharge of condition process with RCBC. Lichfields has been in discussions with Planning Officers at RCBC throughout January to keep them informed of the progress being made towards the finalisation of the WSIs. Lichfields will, therefore, be making two submissions to RCBC: The WSI for the ERF scheme in order to commence the discharge process for condition no.7 of permission R/2019/0767/OOM; and The WSI for the Prairie remediation scheme in order to commence the discharge process for condition no.7 of permission R/2020/0318/FFM.

The submission

The submitted WSI notes the previous archaeological investigation of the site (which came to different conclusions on the significance of remains) What is apparent is that remediation works carried out on the site in 2020 have somewhat compromised that area of archaeological interest identified in the preliminary assessment (Area B) The consultant archaeologists presenting the STDC and RCBC have agreed a revised approach to the WSI

The WSI comments.

Under the scope of works provided in the first version of this Written Scheme of Investigation (November 2020), a programme of cleaning and recording has been undertaken in the area of the blast furnaces and adjacent land. It has become clear from this work that there is no archaeological survival to the east of a rail track, east of the blast furnaces, and limited survival of archaeological remains to the west, south and north. The eastern area of the Eston Iron Works has been remediated although the area of the western end of that structure does survive. No other areas of the site are expected to contain significant archaeological remains.

The scope of works

An area of specific archaeological interest has been identified by the Tees Archaeology report and refined by Pre-Construct's ongoing work (2021). The programme of works detailed in this document will focus primarily on that part of the site of greatest archaeological interest. The area to the east now has negligible archaeological potential and the areas to the south and west, considered to be of low archaeological potential have, following evaluation, been confirmed as such. Selected features will be cleaned and photographically recorded as appropriate. The area to the northwest, formerly occupied by the western end of the Eston Iron Works, will be subject to further evaluation by trial-trenching and subsequent investigation and recording if considered appropriate bearing in mind the results of the evaluation.

The WSI then sets out in accordance with good practice, the method of evaluation, digital photography and soil sampling etc and reporting.

CONCLUSION

The WSI in respect of conditions (4) and (7) has been the subject of detailed discussions between the archaeologists representing RCBC and STDC.


NEAR confirm that the submitted WSI has been the subject of detailed negotiations with the STDC teams and that whilst the full implantation of the WSI is yet to be completed and additional reporting is required, the archaeologists have now agreed that the remains in Area B are no longer required to be preserved.

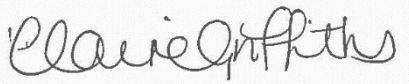
The WSI submitted in considered acceptable and meets the requirements of policy HE3

RECOMMENDATION

Taking into account the content of the report the recommendation is to:

Grant condition discharge

Case Officer	
Mr A Miller	Head of Planning and Development
	17 March 2021

Delegated Approval Signature	
Claire Griffiths	Development Services Manager
	23/03/2021