



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Town Planning Committee
Subject:	Article 31 application - Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Generating Station at Airport Road, Belfast
Date:	15 August 2013
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Director of Health and Environmental Services, ext 3260
Contact Officer:	Keith Sutherland, Urban Development Manager, ext 3478

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	On 13 December 2012, Bombardier Aerospace submitted a planning application (Z/2012/1387/F) to the Department of Environment for the proposed construction and operation of a combined heat and power (CHP) generating station for the treatment of refuse derived fuel (RDF) by gasification at 7 Airport Road, Belfast. A Supporting and Environmental Statement was also submitted.
1.2	The proposed site is currently undeveloped scrub land bounded by a fence. The site is located within Belfast Harbour Estate, an established industrial area and is accessed from Airport Road. Significant land uses in the surrounding area include the George Best Belfast City Airport to the north, Victoria Park to the south and Belfast Lough to the west.
1.3	The proposed CHP plant is designed to convert refuse derived fuel into heat and power for use in the Bombardier site in an effort to reduce their energy costs. It is proposed that surplus will be exported to the National Grid. Further details of the proposal are outlined in Appendix 1.
1.4	On the 26 th March 2013 the Department wrote to the City Council informing them that Article 31 of the Planning (NI) Order 1991 had been applied to the application, designating it as one of major importance as it considers the development if permitted: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be of significance to the whole or substantial part of Northern Ireland• affect the whole of a neighbourhood. The notification requested the Council's views on the application and also informed the Council that before the application is determined the Department will either cause a public inquiry to be held before the Planning Appeals Commission or will

	alternatively issue to the applicant a Notice of Opinion indicating how it considers the application should be decided.
1.5	This correspondence (See Appendix 2) was initially considered by this Committee on the 18 th April 2013 and members requested that the applicant attend a future meeting. Members of both the Development and the Health and Environmental Services Committee have also been invited to hear this application.
	<u>Council response to date</u>
1.6	Prior to the application being designated Article 31, the DOE issued a consultation request to the Council's Environmental Protection Unit in January 2013 as part of the statutory consultation process. The Council's Environmental Protection Unit provided a technical response on the 15 th February 2013. (This is attached as Appendix 3)
1.7	On the 26 th February 2013 the Department wrote to the Council requesting that the views of arc21 be sought in respect of this application. arc21 subsequently submitted comments which were forwarded to the Planning Service on the 14 th May 2013.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The team from Bombardier will provide a presentation on the proposal.
2.2	Whilst a technical environmental health response has already been provided to the Planning Service, the DOE is also seeking a fuller Council response as they have now determined that the application will be dealt with under Article 31 of the Planning Order.
2.3	Members are requested to note the content of the presentation and to consider if they would like to request officers to prepare a draft Council response to this application for consideration at a future meeting of this committee.
2.4	Officers from the Council's Health and Environmental Services Department and Planning and Transport team will be present at the meeting should members require any further information.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	No revenue cost

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no specific Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are requested to note the presentation regarding the Article 31 application for a Combined Heat and Power Plant at Airport Road. Following the presentation, Members should consider if they would like to request officers to prepare a draft response for the Council to submit in respect of this application for consideration at a future meeting of this committee.

6	Decision Tracking

7	Key to Abbreviations
RDF - Refuse derived fuel CHP combined heat and power	

8	Documents attached
Appendix 1 Application details Appendix 2 Article 31 Letter Appendix 3 BCC officer responses to date	

Proposed combined heat and power (CHP) generating station for the treatment of refuse derived fuel (RDF) by gasification at Airport Road, Belfast

Development Proposal

On 13 December 2012, Bombardier Aerospace submitted a planning application (Z/2012/1387/F) to DOE for the proposed construction and operation of a combined heat and power generating station for the treatment of refuse derived fuel (RDF) by gasification at 7 Airport Road, Belfast. A Supporting and Environmental Statement was also submitted.

The proposed site is currently undeveloped scrub land bounded by a fence. The site is located within Belfast Harbour Estate, an established industrial area and is accessed from Airport Road. Significant land uses in the surrounding area include the George Best Belfast City Airport to the north, Victoria Park to the south and Belfast Lough to the west.

The accompanying Environmental Statement states that nearest residential area is located approximately 1 Kilometre from the CPH generating station boundary.

Proposed Use

The proposed CHP plant is designed to convert refuse derived fuel into heat and power for use in the Bombardier site in an effort to reduce their energy costs. It is proposed that surplus power will be exported to the national grid.

The refuse derived fuel which consists of non recyclable elements of commercial, industrial and municipal waste will be produced off site with limited processing on site.

The reception hall of the proposed facility has capacity for 3,300 tonnes of RDF which provides sufficient material for five days operation. It is anticipated that the plant will process 240,000 tonnes of RDF per year.

The waste for RDF production will be sourced primarily from treatment plants within the Belfast and surrounding areas. The Environmental Statement states that there is currently sufficient waste locally in the surrounding area to fuel the plant. Furthermore, it is noted that the facility is not reliant on the arc21 Waste Management Group providing waste.

Design

The main CPH building on the site will be approximately 27.7m high, 193.3m in length and 105.5m wide.

Two stacks of approximately 4m diameter will extend to a height of 42m (48mAOD) at the northeast elevation of the building, which is reported in the Environmental Statement as the optimal height and location for the stacks relative to the surrounding environs, air dispersion modelling and proximity to the airport.

Traffic

The existing access road from Airport Road will be extended to provide access. This will comprise a 7.3m wide industrial distributor road to match the existing access roads. The roads will allow access to the building and provide a queuing area for vehicles entering the facility.

RDF arriving at the site will be transported mainly by 32 tonne and 44 tonne gross heavy goods vehicles. It is envisaged that there will be around 49 deliveries per day.

HGV movements are to avoid import and export through the Dee Street Junction between the weekday hours of 7.00am - 9.00am and 4.30pm - 6.00pm.

Car parking for 21 vehicles will be provided on site allowing for 15 cars for operatives and 6 cars for visitors.

Construction Phase

Construction of the facility is expected to take eighteen months. Construction operations are planned to take place between 7.00am and 7.00pm Monday to Friday and 7.30am to 2:30pm on Saturdays. It is noted that certain works may be necessary outside these periods, for example, lifting of chimney sections into place which will be required when the Airport is not operational.

It is also noted that during construction of the stacks it is likely that infringement into the Airport's Inner Horizontal Surface will be required by tall plant or cranes however the Construction Management Plan will be agreed with the George Best City Airport.

Operational Phase

Waste deliveries to the site will generally take place on Monday to Fridays between 9:00am - 4.30pm and on Saturdays between 9.00am - 3.30pm. It is noted that occasional waste deliveries may be necessary outside these periods to ensure adequate fuel supply, but will be set to a minimum.

The operation of the plant is automatic therefore the human input is reduced to minimum.

Following complete combustion of the RDF an ash residue accumulates in a pit at the bottom of a combustion chamber. Fly ash production is expected to be around 1,500 tonnes per annum and will be sent for treatment at an external waste treatment facility with the treated fly ash being landfilled. This process is expected to take place in the UK mainland.