

11/0001/Preapp

Our Ref: SO/11/04

Your Ref: AMacN/JJ/87097

Date: 21st June 2011

Regeneration & Environment
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James Jamieson
W.A. Fairhurst & Partners
225 Bath Street
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Dear Mr Jamieson,

Proposed alterations and environmental improvements to existing car parks and construction of new public realm areas, open space, public realm link with associated car parking and associated engineering works at Gourrock

The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)(Scotland) Regulations 2011

I refer to your letter, dated 31st May 2011, in respect of the above matter and to your subsequent e-mail of 7th June enclosing the relevant plans which completed the information to allow me to reach a screening opinion for the proposed development. Under Regulation 6 of the Regulations the following screening opinion is adopted by the Council.

The proposed development is noted, under Schedule 2 to the Regulations, as falling within two categories. Firstly, as part of the construction will fall within an intertidal area it is regarded as involving "reclamation of land from the sea" (category 1(e) of Schedule 2). It is also regarded as an "urban development project" under category 10(b) of Schedule 2. I have assessed the proposed project based on your submissions, the current urban morphology of the area and the development history, together with the relevant criteria in Schedule 3 to the Regulations and have concluded that an Environmental Assessment is required.

This conclusion has been reached taking into account the characteristics of the development, particularly the area covered by the proposal, the nature of the development (especially the foreshore reclamation element and the potential for pollution through disturbance of previously developed ground) and its location on the coastal zone adjacent to a densely populated area. There is the potential for impact on this population and on marine ecology, the latter particularly from the foreshore reclamation, the "possible future visiting harbour", and the potential for leachate to the river from ground disturbance of previously developed and, therefore, potentially contaminated land especially around the pierhead area. The key concern here is that there is the potential for significant effects on the environment but these can only be determined once a full investigation of the relevant concerns has been carried out. Circular 3/2011 (see paragraph 53) is quite specific that potential environmental

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impact issues must be addressed upfront by environmental investigation and not left for the imposition of conditions on a planning permission. In this respect I note that your initial studies have recommended that an intrusive investigation and further analysis require to be carried out.

Your submissions to date indicate that much of the information which will require to be included in an Environmental Statement (ES) may already be available but further investigative work will require to be brought to a conclusion to ensure the ES is fully competent.

I trust that this information is of use to you.

Yours sincerely

David A Ashman
Development Management Team Leader

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