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Strategic Planning Division

Mr Diarmuid O'Loan
RPS Group

diarmuid.oloan@rpsgroup.com

3rd Floor
Millennium House
17-25 Gt Victoria Street
Malone Lower
BELFAST
BT2 7BN

Telephone: (028) 9025 6523
Facsimile: (028) 9041 6976
Email: simon.kirk@doeni.gov.uk

Your Ref:
Our Ref: E/2013/0093/F
Date: 7 November 2013

[by email]

Dear Diarmuid

Planning reference: E/2013/0093/F

At our meeting on the 30th September 2013, Mary MacIntyre and Simon Kirk gave you a commitment to review the consultation responses received on the above application and determine if there is sufficient information for the Department to make its EIA determination.

Having considered all elements of this application, I can conclude that you have provided the Department with insufficient environmental information to allow for an EIA determination to be made. In addition, in order for the Department to determine the application, details of the proposed development must be accurately presented.

With both these objectives in mind, I would be grateful if you would please provide the Department with 4no. copies of the following information by **6 December 2013**:

1. Drawings

- Please review the cross sections provided on Drawing Number IBM0397-PL-04 entitled 'Proposed Sections'. There appears to be inconsistencies with the site measurements and relationship with the site layout as detailed on Drawing Number IBM0397-PL-01 entitled 'General Arrangement of Site, Temporary Drilling Rig & Temporary Access.

Cross sections should be clear and accurate with the red line boundary clearly defined on the drawings. A degree of context should also be provided either side of the marked cross sections to clearly describe the site conditions and topography.

- Please provide a separate cross section of the site preparations works, clearly showing the existing ground level and proposed extraction level.

2. Noise Assessment

Please review and provide a comprehensive noise assessment taking the following into account;

- It would appear that only phase 1+2 of the proposed 4 phased development has been assessed in the Noise Assessment. Please include all 4 phases.
- The hours of operation detailed in the report differ to the hours stated in the Operational Report. Please clarify.
- Page 5 of the noise Impact Assessment in making reference to the WHO 1999 guidelines states, "...if the noise is not continuous, then the internal level required to prevent negative effects on sleep is a L_{Amax,fast} of 45dB. Therefore, for sleep disturbance, the continuous level as well as the number of noisy events should be considered." It is noted that the noise impact assessment provides no comment with respect to likely L_{Amax} levels from the proposed development.
- Page 11 of the Noise Impact Assessment lists the predicted worst case construction noise levels at the nearest properties surrounding the proposed development. It is noted that for a number of properties the daytime construction noise limits of 55 – 65 dB are exceeded. As such the acoustic consultancy within section 5.1 of the Noise Impact Assessment has listed a number of mitigation measures to reduce the noise impact from construction activities. No further predictions are provided to confirm whether or not the daytime construction noise limits of 55 – 65 dB can be achieved in practice. Please clarify.
- Page 14 of the Noise Impact Assessment has detailed as a mitigation measure that a detailed construction plan be prepared that includes a range of measures aimed at reducing the potential construction noise. Please provide this plan
- Page 15 of the Noise Impact Assessment states, "it is recommended that noise monitoring is undertaken at the nearest noise sensitive properties during the drilling phase...". Due to the potential for construction noise to exceed the daytime construction noise limits, MDCEHD have recommended that noise monitoring be extended to cover the lifespan of the proposed development from construction to demobilisation. Please incorporate this into the mitigation proposals.

3. Hydrological Assessment

Please review and provide a comprehensive hydrological assessment taking account of the following;

- The operational time frames detailed in the existing hydrological assessment are not consistent with the hours detailed in the Operational Report. Please clarify.
- Detail all environmental impacts and the proposed mitigation measures.

- The hydrological report only uses small-scale maps and contains limited local information. NIEA:WMU require an updated hydrogeological risk assessment taking into account large-scale maps and local information:
 - Large scale maps can be obtained from the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (1:50,000) as well as the Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (1:10,000).
 - Regional geological information can be viewed on the GSNI Geindex webpage (1:250,000 scale instead of the 1: 625,000 scale used);
 - Environmental information (e.g. monitoring data, abstraction points, discharge consents etc) can be requested from waterinfo@doeni.gov.uk (as per EIA scoping guidance note sent to RPS on 10 June 2013). The Drinking Water Inspectorate of Northern Ireland can be contacted by emailing dwi@doeni.gov.uk.
 - Consideration of all water features in the area including private water abstractions
 - Presence of naturally occurring radioactive materials.
 - Injection of any materials during the drilling process and associated safety data sheets.
- The updated Hydrogeological Risk Assessment should also address private water supplies as potential receptors (springs and wells). The desktop phase of the water features survey might have to be complemented by a field survey. Note, that 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey map shows a number of springs within 1 km of the supplied grid reference.

4. Air Quality Impact Assessment

Please review and provide a comprehensive air quality assessment which takes the following into account the following;

- It would appear that only phase 1+2 of the proposed 4 phased development has been assessed in the air quality report. Please include phase 3 and 4.
- Traffic volumes stated in the Air Assessment are not consistent with the traffic volumes provided in the Operational Report. Please clarify.
- One of the mitigation measures stated in the report is that a site specific air quality risk assessment be provided. Please provide this assessment.
- Whilst the air quality impact assessment predicts that the UK Air Quality Objectives will be achieved, it would appear that emissions from the gas flare have not been considered. Page 30 of the Operations Summary report states, "In the event of gas being discovered, well test equipment will be mobilised to site...Equipment required to complete these tests will include a wireline truck and flare stack. Gas will be flowed to surface through the tubing, pipework and separator. Any gas will be burnt through a flare. Gas is likely to be flared for up to 7 days. The well would then be shut in for a short period before the well is either flared again or suspended." Please review the air quality impact assessment to take into consideration air quality impacts associated with the gas flare.

5. Transport Assessment

Please review the submitted Transport Assessment and take account of the following;

- Only phase 1 and 2 are assessed in the Transport Assessment, please include phase 3 and 4.
- The traffic figures are different to those provided in the Operational Plan for each phase of the proposed development. Please clarify.

6. Extended Phase 1 Survey and Ornithological Surveys

Please review the submitted surveys and amend as follows;

- Both surveys state that the scale and scope of the proposed development is not known so mitigation is based on the whole site being developed. Please revise both of these surveys, taking into account what is being proposed on site and the phases of each stage of the operation.
- It is also noted that 2 sites, Ballinlea 1 and 2, are assessed in these surveys. As the development refers solely to site 1, please remove all references to site 2 (Ballinlea 1).

7. Operational Plan

Please review the Operational Plan and amend as follows;

- For the site preparation, the report states that surplus subsoil will be stored in a separate earth bund. Please provide details of this additional bund and annotate in location on the site layout drawing.
- Please review the traffic figures detailed for each phase as the predicted vehicle movements per week and per day offer different figures.
- Please clarify the traffic numbers for phase 3 and phase 4 of the proposed development. In the operational report you have stated for phase 3 that there would be on average 4 HGV's over a period of 90 days which would total 360 movements. Phase 4 traffic is stated as being similar to phase 1 with 340 lorries required to remove stone. However this does not tally with the traffic figures provided for phase 1. Please clarify.
- Page 6 of the Noise Impact Assessment notes that the proposed drilling rig for the site is a KCA/Deutag T61 with an associated sound power level of 101 dB(A)... 'this has been used as the sound power level for the rig in the noise model included in this assessment'. However, it should be highlighted that page 21 of the Operations Summary report notes that, "whilst this drilling rig has been identified as being suitable for the operation, it may not be the one used to drill the well." Therefore, unless suitably conditioned, there is the potential for a drilling rig to be mobilised with a sound power level greater than that used within the noise impact assessment. Please confirm that the KCA/Deutag T61 drill will be used or drill with equivalent or lower SPL will be used.

The following additional information is also requested:

8. NORM's Assessment

No assessment has been made of the potential for naturally occurring radioactive materials (NORM's) to be present in the rock formations and hence the rock chippings and return fluids. Please provide this information.

9. Light Impact Assessment

The nearest residence to the proposed development is located approximately 73m from the boundary of the site. As the proposed development will operate 24 hrs per day during the drilling stage, there is likely to be significant levels of associated artificial light. Artificial light if not appropriately controlled can cause a loss to the amenity of neighbouring residents.

Given the intrinsically dark nature of the locality and the fact that floodlights are to be installed as part of the proposed development, MDCEHD recommend that an artificial light impact assessment be conducted. Such an assessment should include:

- Measure the existing/background light levels experienced at neighbouring properties at times when the proposed floodlighting would be operational.
- Predict the vertical light levels (1m AGL) experienced at neighbouring properties at times when the proposed floodlighting will be operational.
- Compare the predicted light levels against guidelines contained within the Institution of Lighting Professionals – Guidance notes for the reduction of obtrusive light.
- Provide comment with respect to any direct line of sight from neighbouring residents windows and the light source (e.g. consider issues with respect to potential glare)
- Suggest suitable mitigation measures, if necessary (e.g. cowls, shields, angling, double asymmetric luminaire etc.)

10. Please detail all waste materials likely to be generated and the waste management operations that will be implemented.

11. Please provide details of the proposed gates and fence which will be placed around the perimeter of the site.

12. Please provide details of the flood lights to be used for night workings.

13. Please provide a site layout and cross section of each phase of the operations. This should include the possible site arrangements for phase 3 should oil or gas be found.

14. Please provide details of the equipment intended to be used in phase 3 –extended welling testing. This should include the different scenarios should oil or gas be found.

15. Please provide details of the site drainage and proposed sump.

The information requested is required to allow the Department to carry out an EIA Screening Assessment in line with the Planning EIA Regulation's (NI) 2012 and to allow the application to be progressed and adequately assessed.

Please be advised that it is essential that the information requested above is submitted as soon as possible and no later than the 6 December 2013. If you feel it is not possible to submit the information by this date you must request an extension of time (in writing) and this must be agreed by the case officer.

Please note the details of any additional information provided will be published on the Planning NI Web Portal www.planningni.gov.uk

I will be happy for the determination to be expedited upon receipt of the above information.

Yours sincerely



Scott Symington
Manager, Strategic Planning Division

c.c. **David Montagu-Smith**
Dermot Nesbitt