

Landscape response to the Environmental Statement Addendum on behalf of Dorset Council

Proposal: Portland Energy Recovery Facility (ERF)

Application number: WP/20/00692/DCC

Location: Landscape at Portland Port, Castletown

9th December 2021

By email

Dear Adrian,

I am writing in response to the Council's Regulation 25 consultation for the above application. I have reviewed section 8: Landscape, seascape and visual effects, Appendix 8.1: Plume visibility modelling results, and Appendix 8.2: Replacement ES figures 9.16 and 9.17 and new ES figures 9.38 to 9.47 of the Environmental Statement Addendum Erratum Version.

Vapour plume

Additional type 4 visualisations have been provided for viewpoints 8, 9, 11 and 12, which show the vapour plume during the 'worst case scenario'. The ES Addendum explains that the vapour plume would be visible for 24.2 hours per year and that the length of the vapour plume would not be consistent for the entire duration. Paragraph 8.12 of the ES Addendum then goes on to state "that the plume is likely to produce only a minor alteration to the view for a very limited number of hours" and that the visual effects for each of the receptors... remain as originally assessed." Based on the additional visualisations provided, I would agree with the above statement.

Whilst the vapour plume would extend beyond the approximate extent of the proposals for viewpoints 8 and 9, the proportion of the angle of view which the vapour plume would be visible would be small and would be viewed over a very short time period per year.

Viewpoints 11 and 12 are located in the Dorset AONB. The additional visualisation illustrates that the vapour plume would be viewed in the distance above the development proposals but would not extend beyond the approximate extent of the proposals. I therefore agree that the original visual assessments for viewpoints 11 and 12 still stand and the vapour plume would not notably increase the visual effects above what was originally assessed from within the designated landscape.

Night-time effects

Additional night-time baseline photographs and visualisations have been provided for viewpoints 9 and 12, which are located circa 2.5km and beyond 10km from the site. The night-time photomontages show the proposed lighting on top of the stack. Whilst I would agree with paragraph 8.17 of the ES Addendum where the original night-time visual effects conclusions at completion would be negligible and not significant for viewpoints 1 and 4 – 14, I don't agree that this would be the case

for viewpoints 2 and 3. The baseline photographs for viewpoints 2 and 3 have been taken on a day with low cloud and are particularly dark. Viewpoint 2 has been taken from an elevated point within 1km of the site. It seems likely that the light on the stack would be viewed at a similar height to eye level. There are also likely to be views of the site below and the lighting associated with roads, car parking areas, and buildings when referring to 6.1.1 Horizontal Illuminance of the Lighting Statement, September 2020.

Viewpoint 3 is also located close to the site, with likely views of lighting associated with roads, car parking area, and the light on top of the stack viewed above the skyline. I do not consider that the night-time visual effects for viewpoints 2 and 3 would be significant, but the current ES night-time visual assessments of negligible are less than would be the case due to the magnitude of change experienced in these locations.

Conclusion

Photomontages have been produced for 4 viewpoints that show the vapour plume during the worst-case scenario, which addresses previous concerns. The photomontages have demonstrated that the plume would not result in a significant adverse visual effect.

The addendum also provides more detail regarding the mesh, which helps to address previous concerns.

There are no serious landscape objections to this application.

Conditions

The following should be considered as part of any planning conditions:

Detailed landscape plans with planting schedules and swale details are to be provided for approval with a management and maintenance plan.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Hayes BA (Hons), PgDip, MA, CMLI
Principal Landscape Architect
Tetra Tech on behalf of Dorset Council