

**COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL
DELEGATED PLANNING DECISION**

1.	Reference No:	4/21/2512/OF1
2.	Proposed Development:	INSTALLATION OF NO.1 SITE SIREN (16M HIGH COLUMN)
3.	Location:	SELLAFIELD SITE, SEASCALE
4.	Parish:	Ponsonby
5.	Constraints:	ASC;Adverts - ASC;Adverts, Safeguard Zone - Safeguard Zone, Coal - Off Coalfield - Data Subject To Change, Key Species - Potential areas for Natterjack Toads, DEPZ Zone - DEPZ Zone, Outer Consultation Zone - Sellafield 10KM
6.	Publicity Representations &Policy	See Report
7.	Report: Site and Location <p>Sellafield is an existing licensed nuclear site situated to the north of Seascale. It is highly industrialised covering an area of approximately 6km square and accommodating over 1300 buildings of varying sizes. Vehicular access is via the A595T at Blackbeck, Calderbridge and Seascale.</p> <p>Whilst the site does not benefit from any sensitive designations it is situated circa 3km away from the boundary of the Lake District National Park to the east which is a UNESCO World Heritage site.</p> <p>The application site lies within south eastern quadrant of the Sellafield site.</p> Proposal <p>Permission is sought to erect a new site siren within the Sellafield site close to Calder Gate on a former contractor's laydown area which is now vacant. In terms of detail this will involve the erection of a siren (horn assembly) fixed on top of a mast comprising grey galvanised aluminium, the total height of which will be 16m. This in turn will be attached to a 4m by 4m concrete base with a</p>	

1.8m ramp and hand railing to the perimeter.

This will replace an existing siren sited some 260m away to the south east which is no longer fit for purpose.

The proposed site siren will perform an important safety function in the event of a nuclear incident and its new location has been chosen to ensure there is adequate coverage of the audible warning system to personnel working in the south eastern area of the main site.

In terms of construction / installation it is envisaged that this will take approximately 8 weeks of work scheduled over a 12-week period with 5 personnel working week days.

Consultations

Seascale Parish Council

No objections.

Ponsonby and Calderbridge Parish Council

No opposition.

Gosforth Parish Council

No objections.

CCC Resilience

No objections.

Environmental Health

No objections per se but requested further information on the noise level of the siren and its testing regime and whether there is any public/local liaison.

This was provided and Environmental Health confirmed that the additional information is acceptable.

Planning Policy

Copeland Local Plan 2013 – 2028 (CLP) (Adopted December 2013)

The relevant Copeland Local Plan policies are identified below.

Core Strategy

Policy ST1 – Strategic Development Principles

Policy ST2 – Spatial Development Strategy

Policy ER1 – Planning for the Nuclear Sector.

Development Management Policies

Policy DM5 – Nuclear Sector Development at Sellafield and the LLWR at Drigg

Other Material Planning Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

The aforementioned policies and guidance generally support proposals related to the development of energy/ nuclear related infrastructure on the Sellafield site.

Emerging Copeland Local Plan (ELP):

The emerging Copeland Local Plan 2017-2035 was recently the subject of a Preferred Options Consultation which ended on 30 November 2020. The Preferred Options Consultation builds upon the completed Issues and Options Consultation, which finished in January 2020. Given the stage of preparation, the emerging Copeland Local Plan 2017-2035 has only limited weight in decision making, but provides an indication of the direction of travel of the emerging planning policies, which themselves have been developed in accordance with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Assessment

Due to the very nature of the application it raises issues in terms of potential noise, traffic generation, landscape and visual impact as well as ecology that need further consideration.

Noise

This is the key issue. The applicants have confirmed that the potential for noise to emanate from the proposed use of the new site is relatively low and will, as a result, have a negligible impact given that it will normally only be fully tested during site emergency operations which take place two or three times annually. Sellafield Ltd communicate when these exercises will be undertaken with key stakeholders / local community. In-between these times only low volume tests will be carried out and are normally only audible in the immediate vicinity of the siren. However, it is possible for the 'low volume' sounds emitted during testing to be heard further afield but this is very much dependent on background noise, prevailing wind direction and the presence of any intervening vegetation/obstructions

Also it should be noted that site sirens are activated locally – only one siren will be sounded at a time for a period of 10-20 seconds. The full system cannot be initiated from a single siren (outstation) removing the risk of the full system sounding inadvertently.

Testing of the site siren(s) take place during normal working hours (07:00 to 19:00 hours) only. No testing will occur at night time.

In respect of this particular proposal there is a requirement for the proposed site siren's horn to be set to face inbound towards the centre of the site. This will maximise sound propagation across the site, with sound levels directed inwards instead of outside the site boundary. This should help reduce

the audibility of full activation testing within the surrounding area.

In view of the above it is unlikely that the operation and testing of the proposed siren in this location would result in undue noise and disturbance to local residents/ nearby communities.

Traffic/ Access

As previously stated the installation of the new site siren will take approximately 8 weeks of work scheduled over a 12-week period with 5 personnel working week days. The construction workers will travel to the site in accordance with Sellafield Ltd's Travel Plan. Given the very small number of people working on the project and its short construction period it is unlikely that there would be any adverse impact on the local road network as a consequence of this development.

The materials and equipment for the new site siren will also be delivered to the site in accordance with Sellafield Ltd's Travel Plan i.e. the deliveries will be scheduled using the Delivery Management System (DMS) and will arrive via the Main Gate outside rush hours.

Once the site siren becomes operational, it will be subject to maintenance by the existing maintenance teams and no additional traffic will result from this development. As a consequence it is considered highly unlikely that there would be any undue traffic impacts arising from the construction and operation of this development.

Landscape and Visual Impact

As this is a relatively small-scale proposal and it's siting on an existing hardstanding, formerly part of a contractors laydown area, it is not considered that it will result in any harm to the surrounding landscape which is predominantly industrial in nature.

In terms of visual effects, it will not be visually prominent blending into the backdrop of a heavily industrialised setting. As a result it should not have any adverse effect on the landscape or visual amenity of the surrounding area.

Ecology

The location of the siren is currently on an area of industrial hardstanding within the Calder compound. There is no vegetation within the proposed footprint of the siren and the potential for any habitat is low.

The ecological report submitted with the application confirms that the site area is of low ecological value and there are no protected areas within 2km. The potential for ecological impacts during construction for this site are relatively low risk such as nesting birds or basking adders. If nesting birds, protected species or invasive species are found on site then they will not be disturbed, and the Environmental Advisor will be contacted.

Taking the above into account it can be concluded that ecology is not likely to be an issue.

	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>For the reasons cited above, the development of a new site siren within the main Sellafield site is considered to be of a minor nature which, as demonstrated will not result in any significant adverse material planning impacts. The principle and form of development is therefore considered acceptable and compliant with Copeland Local Plan nuclear policies ER1 and DM5 and national planning policy.</p>
8.	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Approve (commence within 3 years)</p>
9.	<p>Conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <p>The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.</p> <p>Reason</p> <p>To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p> <p>Permission shall relate to the following plans and documents as received on the respective dates and development shall be carried out in accordance with them: -</p> <p>Covering Letter from Martin Chown, Chief Executive Officer, Sellafield Ltd, dated 17 November 2021</p> <p>Site Location Plan, drawing no 1BE 3032302 Mod A, received 26 November 2021.</p> <p>Block Plan, drawing no. 1BE 3032303 Mod A, received 26 November 2021.</p> <p>Detailed Drawing of Siren, drawing no. BE3081663 Mod B, scale 1:100, received 26 November 2021.</p> <p>Proposed Site Siren: Design and Access Statement, by Sellafield Ltd, Issue date November 2021, received 26 November 2021.</p> <p>Proposed Site Siren: Ecological Survey, by Infrastructure Strategic Alliance, Issue date October 2021, received 26 November 2021.</p> <p>Reason</p> <p>To conform to the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p>

	Statement The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application. As a result the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for the development in accordance with Copeland Local Plan policies and the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.	
Case Officer: H. Morrison		Date : 04/02/2022
Authorising Officer: N.J. Hayhurst		Date : 04/02/2022
Dedicated responses to:-		