

Planning Committee Report Item E	23rd March 2016
PLANNING COMMITTEE	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Protecting and Enhancing our Environment and Assets
Outcome	Pro-active decision making which protects the natural features, characteristics and integrity of the Borough
Lead Officer	Shane Mathers
Cost: (If applicable)	N/a

ITEM E

**29 Drumbare Road
Cloughmills**

**LA01/2015/0377/F
Full Planning**

23 March 2016

<u>No:</u>	LA01/2015/0377/F	<u>Ward:</u>	Cloghmills
<u>App Type:</u>	Full Planning		
<u>Address:</u>	29 Drumbare Road, Cloughmills		
<u>Proposal:</u>	Proposed installation of a wood energy plant to manufacture up to 60 tonnes per annum of virgin timber pellets for use as renewable fuel in domestic, commercial and small scale industrial combustion facilities.		
<u>Con Area:</u>	N/A	<u>Valid Date:</u>	12.06.2015
<u>Listed Building Grade:</u>	N/A	<u>Target Date:</u>	02.03.2016
Applicant:	AA MCGuckian Ltd		
Agent:	GF Environmental Ltd, 8 Alcotts Green, Sandhurst, Gloucester.		
Objections:	0	Petitions of Objection:	0
Support:	2	Petitions of Support:	0

Drawings and additional information are available to view on the Planning Portal- www.planningni.gov.uk

1 RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Committee has taken into consideration and agrees with the reasons for the recommendation set out in section 9 and the policies and guidance in sections 7 and 8 and resolves to **GRANT** planning permission subject to the conditions and informatives set out in section 10.

2 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The size of the site extends to approximately 2.96 hectares. The site is located just beyond the south west fringe of Cloughmills village settlement development limit. The site is accessed via the entrance laneway which serves an existing animal feed plant and intensive pig rearing facility.

- 2.2 The site incorporates a large area of agricultural land (semi-improved grassland) with existing development on three sides: the animal feed plant along part of the south-eastern (roadside) boundary; and the intensive pig rearing facility along both the south-western and north-eastern boundaries. Two individual wind turbines also exist adjacent the site. The site currently incorporates both a slurry storage tank along the western boundary and a silage pit to the southern corner. The eastern half of the site is fairly level before rising fairly steeply towards the north-eastern / eastern boundary.
- 2.3 The site does not fall within any specific designation and is within the rural remainder.
- 2.4 The landscape of the area is characterised by Cloughmills village to the north and an increasingly rural landscape to the south-west.

3 RELEVANT HISTORY

D/2010/0218

Wind Turbine (36metres to hub) in association with McGuckians Milling Company to supersede that previously approved under planning Ref: D/2009/0295/F.

Approved 28.01.2011

D/2011/0082/F

Permission for the installation of a wind turbine (36m hub, 30m Blade dia) at the McGuckians Ltd company site, to offset energy consumption.

Approved 03.06.2013

D/2015/0038/F

Proposed upgrade of existing Micon 250kw wind turbine with 36m hub height and 30m rotor diameter ,to an EWT DW54 turbine with 40m hub height and 54m rotor diameter.

Approved 18.01.2016

4 THE APPLICATION

- 4.1 The proposed application is for the installation of a wood to energy plant that will manufacture up to 60,000 tonnes per annum of virgin timber pellets for use as renewable fuel in

domestic, commercial and small-scale industrial combustion facilities.

- 4.2 The proposed development includes the installation of:
- 1) an industrial wood to energy plant to manufacture wood pellets from virgin timber for commercial and domestic use;
 - 2) A temporary 8MW input biomass boiler to provide process heat for the wood pellet manufacturing process; and,
 - 3) Replacement of the temporary biomass boiler with a 14MW input CHP boiler to provide both heating and electrical requirements for the manufacturing process.
- 4.3 All heat and power requirements of the wood pellet manufacturing process will be provided by a dedicated biomass CHP boiler that will burn the same virgin timber feedstocks that will be used by the pellet manufacturing plant. The biomass CHP boiler will generate ~2.0 MWe of renewable electricity for direct supply to the wood pellet manufacturing process.

BACKGROUND

- 4.4 AA McGuckian Ltd operates a pig rearing business extending to approximately 6 acres. In conjunction McGuckian Milling company provides feedstuff for the pigs reared on the farm as well as selling to the public. The animal feed business covers approximately 4 acres of land and produces 20,000 tonne per year of feed.
- 4.5 The proposed scheme is located on a parcel of land to the rear of the milling company site and adjacent the pig rearing business.
- 4.6 The development proposes a wood pellet manufacturing facility, with a capacity of up to 60,000 tonnes per annum with a directly associated biomass CHP (combined heat and power) plant to provide all of the heat and power requirements of the manufacturing process. The feedstock for the wood pellet plant is virgin timber and forestry residues. Heat and power for the wood pellet plant manufacturing process is provided by the directly associated CHP plant which will burn the same virgin timber and forestry residue feedstocks.

- 4.7 Feedstocks will be sourced predominantly from Ireland and the west coast of Scotland (imported via Coleraine Harbour). The process involves delivery of round wood (10-30cm dia and approximately 3 metres in length) by HGV. The timber is then debarked, chipped, dried (using belt dryer) and compressed into pellets.
- 4.8 The overall facility will incorporate storage capacity, sufficient for a throughput of about 230,000 tonnes per annum of forest wood, 50,000 tonnes per annum of which will be used directly as fuel by the biomass CHP plant.
- 4.9 The CHP plant will provide all of the process heating and electrical requirements of the wood pellet manufacturing process. The proposed biomass CHP plant comprises the following components: virgin timber reception; primary combustion chamber and associated secondary combustion chamber; energy recovery system (steam boiler and associated turbine generator); pollution control system; chimney; and solid residue storage, handling and (possibly treatment).
- 4.10 Four waste streams will be generated by the CHP plant:
- Non – hazardous bottom ash;
 - Flyash from the pollution control process;
 - Liquid effluent in the form of boiler blow down water; and,
 - Liquid effluent from the condensing economiser.
- 4.11 The proposal includes, upgraded access, outside debarking and chipping zones, outside storage areas, purpose built storage buildings, pelleting plant, boiler and turbine house (and associated equipment), moving floors, staff car parking, gatehouse and weighbridge.

5 PUBLICITY & CONSULTATIONS

External

- 5.1 **Neighbours:** There are **two (2)** letters of support both from Cloughmills Communiy Action Team referring to the creation of employment as well as promoting renewable energy / sustainability

Internal

5.2 Rivers Agency: No objections - Informatives

NI Water: No objections – Informatives

TransportNI: No objections – Conditions/Informatives

NIEA Historic Monuments Unit: No objections

NIEA Water Management Unit: No objections – Informatives

NIEA Waste Management Unit: No objections – Conditions / Informatives

NIEA Industrial Pollution & Radiochemical Inspectorate: No objections

NIEA Natural Environment Division (NED): No objections – Informatives

Shared Environmental Services: No objections

Environmental Health: No objections – conditions / informatives

6 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Section 45 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 states that, “where an application is made for planning permission, the council or, as the case may be, the Department, in dealing with the application, must have regard to the local development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations.”

6.2 The development plan is:

- Northern Area Plan 2016

6.3 The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is a material consideration.

6.4 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) is a material consideration. As set out in the SPPS, until such times as a plan strategy is adopted, councils will apply specified retained operational policies.

- 6.5 Due weight should be given to the relevant policies in the development plan.
- 6.6 All material considerations and any policy conflicts are identified in the “Considerations and Assessment” section of the report.

7 RELEVANT POLICIES & GUIDANCE

Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS)

Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)

Northern Area Plan 2016 (NAP)

A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (PSRNI)

Planning Policy Statement 2 (PPS 2) Natural Heritage

Planning Policy Statement 3: (PPS 3) Access, Movement and Parking.

Planning Policy Statement 4: (PPS4) Planning & Economic Development.

Planning Policy Statement 6: (PPS 6) Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage.

Planning Policy Statement 15: (PPS15) Planning and Flood Risk.

Planning Policy Statement 18:(PPS18) Renewable Energy

Best Practice Guidance to PPS18.

Planning Policy Statement 21: (PPS21) Sustainable Development in the Countryside.

8 CONSIDERATIONS & ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application relate to: the principle of the development at this location including social and economic benefits; sustainable

development; impact on the environment, nature conservation and built heritage; visual impact; residential amenity, public safety and human health, and; transportation and traffic.

Planning Policy

- 8.2 The site is located within the rural area of the Northern Area Plan.
- 8.3 The principle of this development proposed must be considered having regard to the PPS policy documents specified above and the supplementary guidance.

EIA Development

- 8.7 Under Regulation 10 of the Planning 'Environmental Impact Assessment' (EIA) Regulations (NI) 2015, the Planning Authority is required to make a determination as to whether the proposed development would or would not be deemed EIA development.
- 8.8 The proposal falls within Category 3 (A) of Schedule 2 of the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 - the carrying out of development to provide for industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water (unless falling within Schedule 1).
- 8.9 As the proposal has the potential to cause significant adverse impacts during construction and operational phases an Environmental Statement (ES) was requested and received on 8th December 2015. The Environmental Statement includes consideration of:
 - Air Quality issues
 - Ecological Issues
 - Health Impact
 - Flood risk and Drainage
 - Waste
 - Transportation
 - Heritage and Archaeology
 - Visual Impact Assessment

Principle of Development / Social & Economic Benefits

- 8.10 The RDS 2035 states that a robust and sustainable energy infrastructure is required which should deliver reliable and secure sources of energy to communities and businesses across the Region. The RDS also highlights the fact that decision makers will have to balance economic growth and the environmental impacts on air quality and energy supply for industry and transportation.
- 8.11 The proposed wood to energy plant relates to the production of wood pellets for sale into the local markets in Northern Ireland as well as in Britain. Information within the Environmental Statement (ES) indicates that this is an expanding market with few similar manufacturing facilities currently operating within N. Ireland. The existing use on site comprises an intensive pig rearing farm extending to approximately 6 acres and is operating in conjunction with an associated animal feeds company. While there is some degree of overlap between the two existing businesses on site they both operate as two separate limited companies. The current proposal relates to an expansion and diversification of the use on agricultural land adjacent both the piggery and milling businesses.
- 8.12 The current application relates to a parcel of land approximately 2.96 hectares in size located to the rear of the milling business.
- 8.13 All heat and power requirements of the wood pellet manufacturing process will be provided by a dedicated biomass CHP boiler that will burn the same virgin timber feedstocks that will be used by the pellet manufacturing plant. The biomass CHP boiler will generate ~2.0 MWe of renewable electricity for direct supply to the wood pellet manufacturing process. It shall not be utilised in conjunction with either of the two existing businesses, nor is it proposed to produce energy which is directed back into the grid.
- 8.14 The site is located on the south-western fringe of Cloughmills village but is beyond the existing settlement development limit. As such, the site does not fall within any specific designation and is within the rural remainder.

8.15 Paragraph 6.87 of the SPPS states that the guiding principle for policies and proposals for economic development in the countryside is to facilitate proposals likely to benefit the rural economy and support rural communities, while protecting and enhancing rural character and the environment. Appropriate redevelopment and expansion proposals for industrial and business purposes are highlighted to as offering the greatest scope for industrial and business purposes that will normally offer the greatest scope for sustainable economic development in the countryside. As outlined above the current proposal represents an extension and diversification of the existing industrial use on site (milling business).

Social and economic

8.18 In terms of benefit to the rural economy and supporting rural communities the supporting information submitted indicates various employment opportunities in relation to the proposal.

1) The construction phase – the estimated construction workforce is on average, 80 people peaking at approximately 120 people during the first and second quarters of the second year of the construction phase.

2) Operational Phase – It is expected that the wood to energy plant will require 21 full time staff ranging in skills and expertise.

3) Transport – The proposed plant will require significant levels of transportation of raw materials to site as well as exporting finished product. This has the potential to create and secure jobs in relation to transport operator including at Coleraine Harbour which will be the main port for importing raw materials.

4) Potential for subsidiary job creation. The proposal may create the opportunity for an increase in forestry production and woodland management employment as it would represent a new and sustainable market for the provision of localised supplies of raw virgin timber.

8.19 The SPPS also states that all applications for economic development must be assessed in accordance with normal planning criteria, including access arrangements, design, and environmental and amenity impacts.

- 8.20 PPS 21 outlines a range of types of development which in principle are acceptable in the countryside and that will contribute to the aims of sustainable development and includes industry and business uses in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 4 – Planning and Economic Development (PPS4).
- 8.21 PPS 4 sets out the planning policies for economic development uses and seeks to facilitate and accommodate economic growth in ways compatible with social and environmental objectives and sustainable development. For the purposes of PPS 4 economic development is defined as comprising industrial, storage and distribution uses. The current proposal falls within Class B3; General Industrial of the Planning (Use Classes) Order (NI) 2015 and as such PPS4 form part of the appropriate policy context.
- 8.22 As outlined above an existing economic use exists adjacent in the form of the animal feed milling business which operates in conjunction with the original piggery. The proposal represents an expansion and diversification of the existing commercial use and therefore falls to be considered under Policy PED 3 of PPS4 (Expansion of and established Economic Development Use in the Countryside) as well as PED9 (General Criteria).
- 8.23 Policy PED3 states that the expansion of an established economic development use in the countryside will be permitted where the scale and nature of the proposal does not harm rural character or appearance of the local area and there is no major increase in the site area of the enterprise.
- 8.24 The current application proposes a significant increase in site area. However, similar to the SPPS an exception does permit the major expansion of an existing industrial enterprise in exceptional circumstances where it would not meet the normal policy provisions outlined and where three criteria are met. In relation to the three criteria the relocation would not be possible for operational reasons and the proposal has the potential to make a significant contribution to the local economy.

Sustainable development

- 8.25 RG5 of the RDS is guidance for delivering a sustainable and secure energy supply and identifies the need for a robust and sustainable energy infrastructure.
- 8.26 The Best Practice Guidance to PPS18 (BPG) - Renewable Energy outlines the use of biomass technology to provide energy and heat. The BPG states that feedstock to fuel combustion materials is generally grown rather than harvested and that it gives off carbon dioxide when burned. It also states that because the carbon released on combustion is only that which was absorbed during crop growth, these fuels are regarded as carbon neutral and when used in place of fossil fuels, a net reduction in carbon emissions is achieved. One of the three main categories of biomass plant is a combined heat and power (CHP) plant.
- 8.27 The BPG to PPS18 also states that biomass materials can be incorporated into fuel pellets which are particularly suited to domestic scale boilers and while pelletising adds to the cost of the fuel, it renders it into a form which can be easily transported in bags or bulk containers.
- 8.28 PPS18, Policy RE1 states that development which generates energy from renewable sources will be permitted provided the proposal, and any associated buildings and infrastructure will not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the five outlined criteria (see further consideration below).
- 8.29 This policy also states that the wider environmental, economic and social benefits of all proposals for renewable energy projects are material considerations and will be given significant weight in determining whether planning permission should be granted. This is reiterated in para 4.1 of the Justification and Amplification of this policy and it is clear that the policy intent is to support proposals for renewable energy, including associated infrastructure unless there is clear, demonstrable harm not outweighed by the benefits of the proposal.
- 8.30 The current application proposes utilising both technologies to create wood pellets using an industrial process for which the heat and electricity will be provided by a separate CHP plant powered by the same base materials. Based on the above information the

wood pellets can therefore be created using a process which is effectively carbon neutral and considered environmentally sound with the end product providing heat and energy from a renewable source. Based on the above consideration, the principle of the proposal is acceptable subject to meeting other planning and environmental considerations.

Impact on the Environment / Nature Conservation / Built Heritage

- 8.31 Para 4.5 of Policy RE1 states in all cases careful consideration will be given to the scale, siting and design and layout of proposals for renewable energy in relation to natural and built heritage considerations. Further information regarding these issues are outlined in PPS2 – Natural Heritage and PPS6 Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage.
- 8.32 PPS2 outlines the criteria for specific areas of nature conservation importance including European and Ramsar sites and Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance among others. The current proposal does not fall within any specific designations in terms of natural heritage or archaeological designations. In terms of natural heritage the most relevant policies within PPS2 are: NH2 which relates to species protected by law; and Policy NH 5 which relates to habitats, species or features of natural heritage importance.
- 8.33 The submitted Environmental Statement considers the potential impacts on the Environment / Nature Conservation including the impact on air quality, water quality, heritage and archaeology.

Air Quality

- 8.34 One of the main potential environmental effects of the proposal is in relation to air quality. As part of the submitted information five source types were identified associated with the potential emission to atmosphere of pollutants:
- 1) Fugitive dust emissions from the chipping and handling of the virgin timber feedstocks;
 - 2) Emissions from off-site vehicle movements;
 - 3) Emissions from on-site vehicle movements;
 - 4) Emissions of atmospheric pollutants from the chimney of the biomass CHP plant; and

5) Odorous emissions from raw material reception storage and handling.

8.35 Consultation has been carried out with the local Environmental Health Office (EHO) in relation to these issues and an Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQI), report dated, November 2015 has been submitted as part of the Environmental Statement.

It states that, "The overall conclusion from detailed atmospheric modelling is that the pollutant emissions from the temporary biomass boiler and the biomass CHP plant will not have a significant impact on local air quality and the health of people living and working nearby."

8.36 It is confirmed that the proposed Biomass Combustion Plant installation will take place in two phases:

Phase 1 Installation of a temporary 8MWth boiler which will supply all heat requirements for the wood pellet manufacturing process.

Phase 2 of the development will be the development of a dedicated 14MWth Biomass Combustion Plant, which will be capable of generating 2MWe.

8.37 The focus of the Atmospheric Dispersion Modelling report is on the CHP stack emissions, in terms of predicting air pollutant emissions. The emission from the stack vents to the dryers has also been considered. Modelling for emissions of the following substances has been undertaken:

- Nitrogen Oxides (as NO₂);
- Carbon Monoxide;
- Particulates (PM₁₀); and
- Volatile Organic Compounds.

8.38 EHO has confirmed that the predicted concentrations of emissions indicate, based on the plant specified (and process data supplied and inputted into the model) for the site parameters as shown and with the 8MW and 14MW plant restricted to operating in isolation, that relevant Air Quality Standard (AQS) objective values may be met.

8.39 It is proposed that pollutant emissions will be quantitatively monitored continuously and the local Environmental Health Department has stated that in order to ensure that emission rates of relevant atmospheric pollutants are effectively controlled and air

quality is not adversely impacted it will be necessary to control the emission source parameters and ensure that there is compliance with the emission rates for atmospheric pollutants. If this is not restricted accordingly there is a potential for air quality to be adversely impacted and it is therefore necessary to ensure controls and suitable planning conditions are imposed to secure air quality parameters are met.

Water Quality, Heritage and Archaeology

- 8.40 The NI Environment Agency has also been consulted in relation to any potential impact on the surface water environment, environmental receptors, archaeology and the natural environment. Historic Monuments Unit, Water management Unit, Industrial Pollution and Radiochemical Inspectorate and Waste Management Unit have not raised any issues of concern. Natural Environment Division considered the impact of the proposal on Glarryford ASSI, Main Valley Bogs SAC and has not raised any objection, nor has any objection been raised in relation to any species or habitat.
- 8.41 Shared Environmental Service has been consulted and a Habitats Regulation Assessment carried out. The potential impact of this proposal on Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites has been assessed in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) and it has been concluded that the proposal would not be likely to have a significant effect on the features of any European site.
- 8.42 While the site is affected by Pluvial Ponding, however Rivers Agency has no objection.

Visual Impact

- 8.43 The SPPS states that all development in the countryside must integrate into its setting, respect rural character and be appropriately designed. This is reiterated throughout the relevant policies outlined above. The existing use on site certainly has a significant visual presence within the local landscape comprising a large industrial building complex (including industrial hoppers) in relation to the milling business with further agricultural buildings to the immediate west.

8.44 The current proposal includes extensive built form and associated works including upgraded access, outside debarking and chipping zones, outside storage areas, and extensive industrial scale buildings comprising three purpose built storage buildings between 8-10m high two of which have a footprint of 40m x 20m, one which is 32m x 49m, a pelleting plant (15m high 36m x 11m footprint not including associated dryers and silos), boiler and turbine house (over 21m high with 26m x 26m footprint (and associated equipment including 30m stack), moving floors, staff car parking, gatehouse and weighbridge.

8.45 The submitted environmental report includes assessment of the visual impact of the proposal which includes the identification of a number of viewpoints as well as a zone of theoretical visibility map. This indicates from where the structures may be visible. This technique does have some limitations as the analysis does not take account of any landscape features such as trees buildings etc, but is made on the basis of topography alone. The results are not intended to show the actual visibility of the structures, but are intended to indicate where they may be visible from, known as the zone of visual influence (ZVI). Further information in the form of photo-montages has also been submitted. The ZVI indicates a wide ranging theoretical visual influence from the proposal extending beyond Loughgiel in the north, Glarryford in the south, Dunloy in the west and almost to Newtoncrommelin in the east.

8.46 Site inspection indicated a number of critical vantage points from the public vantage points within the immediate surrounding area.

- Travelling east along Lisnasoo Road the site is generally well screened and views obscured due to localised topography comprises a number of drumlins. This continues until just before the junction with the Old Frosses Road. Similarly on approach from the Old Frosses Road to the junction with Lisnasoo Road and onto Drumbare Road, views of the site are open and sustained travelling in a north-easterly direction along Drumbare Road (site frontage before being lost on entering Cloughmills village).
- Travelling north along Ballycreagh Road the site is generally well screened due to orientation and existing road

side vegetation up until the existing lay-by approximately 350m from the junction with Drumbare Road. From this point onwards the site is openly visible and view sustained with the existing built form comprising a considerable visual presence although it is closely visually linked with the existing settlement.

- Within Cloughmills village the site is generally well screened from the public road due to existing built form. The exception to this is along Ballycregagh Road (opposite Church Hill Avenue extending to the junction with Drumbare Road and a smaller portion of land north of No 21) where the lands to the east of the public road are outside the settlement development limit and currently comprise agricultural land. From these vantage points views of the site are open and viewed from both the road and public footpath and obviously represent a critical view from within the urban context.
- Travelling out of the village (south-west) along Drumbare Road from the junction with Ballycregagh Road, the site is remarkably well screened due to existing built form and mature boundary vegetation. Views of the site only open up from beyond the settlement limit (No 23) with the site access only a short distance from here. Due to the distance back from the public road combined with the angle of view, critical views of the site from Drumbare Road travelling in this direction are limited to a fairly short distance.
- To the west of Cloughmills village Drumadoon Road links to the Frosses Road. From here views of the site are quite limited and where they do exist are fairly long distance (over 1km away) and not significantly sustained due to intervening topography, vegetation and existing built form.
- To the east of Cloughmills village Loughill Road rises in an easterly direction with a fairly sharp bend in the road just beyond the development limit. Travelling out of the village there is no awareness of the site while travelling in the opposite direction back into the village the site is well screened due to existing built form and orientation of the road.
- To the north of Cloughmills there are two key vantage points. Firstly travelling south along Ballyveely Road (from

approximately No 217 onwards) the view beyond the junction with Culcrum Road the site is dominated by the existing and proposed site with the view from here framed by existing built form along Ballyveely Road. Views from here are open and sustained. From Culcrum Road (which is elevated above the village) the site is well screened in part due to topography although views do open up due to the elevated nature of the road in relation to the site. Although views do exist over a distance the separation distance is considerable with the site not appearing prominent and comprising some degree of backdrop due to the land in the distance.

- 8.47 The proposal will undoubtedly have a considerable visual impact within the landscape and will appear industrial in nature comprising numerous large buildings as well as a 30m chimney stack. The scale of the proposal in proximity to what is a small rural village in itself would be out of character with the rural area. However, the existing milling business does comprise a small grouping of industrial scale buildings and storage bins which are set towards the public road and do already have a considerable existing visual presence. The proposed site is set to the rear of these buildings (when viewed from the Drumbare Road) and there will be considerable visual linkage between the milling business and the piggery buildings (which although low in height are much more elevated). The localised nature of the views off-sets the impact to a considerable degree and mid to long range views would be reasonably restricted.
- 8.48 The proposal generally meets the requirements of Policy PED 3 taking into consideration the increase in site area. In terms of visual impact, although considerable, it is located at an edge of settlement location and the critical views are not so wide as to prove fatal to the proposal when assessed against the economic and social benefits.
- 8.49 The submitted ES refers to mitigation measures in relation to the visual impact in the form of a landscaped buffer 5m wide along the north and north-western boundaries comprising a mix of native and coniferous species. A landscaping plan has not been submitted indicating this, however it could be dealt with by way of an appropriate condition.

Residential Amenity / Public Safety / Human Health

- 8.50 A proposal of this scale has the potential to significantly impact on residential amenity of local residents in a wide range of ways (particularly due to the close proximity to an urban area) and as such carries considerable weight in the consideration of such a proposal. The site is located within 150m of nearest third party residential receptor and within 300m of a number of third party residential receptors.
- 8.51 The application has the potential to impact on residential amenity in a number of ways from: noise; dust; pollutants; odour; traffic generation; and pests.

Noise

- 8.52 Due to the nature of the proposal, noise will be generated from: the construction phase (expected to be 24 months with some operatives proposed to arrive on site between 6-7am); operational noise from plant (including moving floors, dryers etc.) in addition to noise from existing uses and additional wind turbines; the plant is proposed to operate 24hrs per day; from deliveries (81 trips from HGV's per working day between the hours of 6.00 - 18.00); and from on-site activities including external debarking and chipping as well as the movement of materials and staff around the site.
- 8.53 Use of noise reducing methods in relation to the building include cladding and in line attenuators in relation to the chimney. Noise reducing bunds and barriers in relation to external noise sources on site as well as wood stockpiles located to act as a noise bund.

Dust

- 8.55 Dust sources will be from construction works as well as during operation from machinery, the movement of materials, external debarking and chipping processes.

Pollutants / Impact on air quality and health

- 8.56 Emissions of oxides of nitrogen, particulates, carbon monoxide and other volatile organic compounds from the 30m stack.

Odour

- 8.57 From emissions as well as from external timber treatment activities on site.

Pests

- 8.58 Potential impact for vermin due to the storage of materials on site.
- 8.59 In terms of noise, air quality, public health, dust and odour, a significant level of information has been submitted within the environmental statement in relation to the potential impact from the proposal. Environmental Health has been consulted in relation to these issues in conjunction with the NI Environment Agency and Rivers Agency.
- 8.60 The submitted Environmental Statement concludes that the results from the submitted health impact assessment demonstrates that effective control of pollutant emissions from the CHP plant will result in exposure levels at nearby residential properties that are very low, and which will not pose a significant risk to the health of people living and working there.
- 8.61 Environmental Health has stated that based on the further Environmental Noise Impact Assessment report taking into consideration the concerns and issues highlighted by Environmental Health, and an Atmospheric Dispersion Modelling of Emissions Report, they are satisfied that the content of both noise and air quality reports may be concurred with and that the proposal does not present an unacceptable impact on residential amenity or public health as a result of air quality, noise odour etc. A number of conditions and informatives are proposed. NIEA has not raised any issues.

Traffic Generation

- 8.62 In terms of traffic and based on the conclusions of Environmental Health in relation to air quality and noise this issue has the potential to have the greatest impact on residential amenity. The information submitted indicates that the construction phase will take approximately 24 months with a peak workforce of approximately 120 operatives.
- 8.63 It also indicates that on becoming operational (not including staff trips) the proposal will require HGV deliveries amounting to 81 trips per working day spread over the 12 hours. This equates to

approximately 1 trip every 9 minutes and as per the submitted information is spread evenly between the hours of 06:00 to 18:00. The plant operates 24 hours a day 350 days per year (two week shut down for maintenance), but for traffic / delivery purposes is limited to 6 days a week in line with Coleraine harbour from where the vast majority of feedstock will be imported.

- 8.64 These levels of heavy goods vehicle traffic would represent a significant increase which could potentially have a substantial impact on the locality and residential amenity of those who live along the related road network. Four residential properties are accessed off the proposed traffic route only one of which is set back from the public road. These properties could potentially suffer significantly in terms of noise and disruption. However, it would be extremely difficult to control the extent of traffic on any public road on the basis of noise disturbance alone as it is to be expected that living in proximity to a public road has the potential to result in noise disturbance as a result of traffic. It should also be noted that the proposed traffic plan incorporates an acoustic barrier at the site entrance and utilises the shortest route along a public road network which is not 'A' Class ensuring no related heavy goods traffic through the village, therefore limiting the impact on residential amenity. Environmental Health as the competent authority in relation to noise do not have a remit in relation to this issue as their assessment relates to potential noise emanating from the site while Transport NI's assessment relates to the road network capability to handle the proposed traffic.

Transportation and Traffic

- 8.65 Traffic movements are as outlined above and also include traffic related to employees working on the site. The submitted information indicates an expected increase of 8 employees and Transport NI has been consulted in relation to access and parking. Transport NI has confirmed no objection to the proposal subject to conditions.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposal is considered acceptable in this location having regard to the Northern Area Plan, and other material considerations, including the SPPS. While the proposal will have a significant visual impact, the proposed extension and diversification of the existing businesses is in line with policy for

sustainable economic development in the countryside. It will improve employment opportunities within the Cloughmills area with the creation of up to 21 full time jobs. The proposed development will not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on the natural or built environment. Environmental Health, Transport NI and NIEA have no objection. All other matters can be secured by planning condition.

10 CONDITIONS

10.1 Regulatory Conditions:

1. As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, the development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Time Limit.

2. The vehicular access, including visibility splays and any forward sight distance, shall be provided in accordance with Drawing Nos 10 and 11 bearing the date stamp 17-FEB-2016, prior to the commencement of any other development hereby permitted. The area within the visibility splays and any forward sight line shall be cleared to provide a level surface no higher than 250mm above the level of the adjoining carriageway and such splays shall be retained and kept clear thereafter.

Reason: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

3. The access gradient to the dwelling hereby permitted shall not exceed 8% (1 in 12.5) over the first 5m outside the road boundary. Where the vehicular access crosses footway, the access gradient shall be between 4% (1 in 25) maximum and 2.5% (1 in 40) minimum and shall be formed so that there is no abrupt change of slope along the footway.

Reason: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

4. The development hereby permitted shall not become operational until hard surfaced areas have been constructed in accordance with approved Drawing No. 03A bearing the date stamp 14 December 2015 to provide adequate facilities for parking, servicing and circulating within the site. No part of these hard surfaced areas shall be used for any purpose at any time other than for the parking and movement of vehicles.

Reason: To ensure that adequate provision has been made for parking, servicing and traffic circulation within the site.

5. A 2.5 metre high acoustic barrier shall be erected along the site's entrance as presented on stamped approved drawing 'MCG2000m – Preliminary Site Layout' prior to the production of wood pellets within the permitted development. The barrier shall be constructed of either masonry, timber panelling (Close lapped with no gaps) or of earth and shall have a minimum self weight of 25 Kg/m² and shall be maintained throughout the lifetime of the permitted development.

Reason: To control the noise levels from the development at noise sensitive locations.

6. The rated noise levels (L_{Ar} - Target Noise Levels) shall not exceed those as detailed within Table 1: Noise Limits

Measurement Location	Between 07:00 to 18:00 hours	Between 18:00 to 23:00 hours	Between 23:00 to 07:00 hours
NML 1 – Irish Grid reference 306570, 417382	60.1 dB $L_{Aeq,1hour}$	58.2 dB $L_{Aeq,1hour}$	39.7 dB $L_{Aeq,15min}$
NML 2 – Irish Grid Reference 306547, 417206	56.8 dB $L_{Aeq,1hour}$	48.6 dB $L_{Aeq,1hour}$	45.6 dB $L_{Aeq,15min}$

Table 1: Noise Limits

7. Within three months of the approved development coming into operation (and at any other time requested by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council), a noise survey shall be undertaken, submitted to and agreed in writing with Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council which measures and reports the cumulative noise impact from the permitted development at measurement locations as detailed within Table 1: Noise limits.

Reason: To control the noise levels from the development at noise sensitive locations.

8. All vehicles operating within the permitted development site shall be fitted with white noise (full spectrum) reversing alarms.

Reason: To control the noise levels from the development at noise sensitive locations.

9. The temporary/standby 8 MWth biomass boiler shall not be operated simultaneously with the combined heat and power 14 MWth biomass boiler.

Reason: In the interest of environmental and human health protection

10. Substance emissions from the temporary/standby 8MW_{th} biomass boiler and the combined heat and power 14 MW_{th} biomass boiler shall not exceed the emission rates as included within Table 1: Maximum Mass Emission Rates Biomass Plants.

Substance	Maximum Mass Emission Rate (g/s) (mg Nm ⁻³)	
	14 MW _{th} Biomass CHP Plant	8 MW _{th} Temporary Biomass Boiler
Nitrogen Oxides (as NO ₂)	2.23 (270)	1.00 (270)
Carbon Monoxide	1.24 (150)	0.55 (150)
Particulates (PM ₁₀)	0.21 (25)	0.18 (25)
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)	0.41 (50)	0.36 (50)

Table 1: Maximum Mass Emission Rates Biomass Plants

Reason: In the interest of environmental and human health protection

11. Emission source parameters associated with the temporary/standby 8MW_{th} biomass boiler and the combined heat and power 14 MW_{th} biomass boiler shall not be less than the emission source parameters as included within Table 2: Emission Source Parameters Biomass Plants.

Parameter	14 MW _{th} Biomass CHP Plant	8 MW _{th} Temporary Biomass Boiler
Stack height (m)	30	24
Stack diameter (m)	0.77	0.7
Efflux Temperature (°C)	68	197
Efflux Velocity (m s ⁻¹)	22.2	22.2

Table 2: Emission Source Parameters Biomass Plants.

Reason: In the interest of environmental and human health protection

12. Substance emissions from the dryer exhausts associated with the wood to energy plant shall not exceed the emission rates as included within Table 3: Maximum Mass Emission Rates Dryers.

Substance	Maximum exhaust emission rate (g/s)			
	Exhaust Vent 1	Exhaust Vent 2	Exhaust Vent 3	Exhaust Vent 4
Particulates (PM ₁₀)	0.28	0.11	0.08	0.06
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)	0.28	0.11	0.08	0.06

Table 3: Maximum Mass Emission Rates Dryers.

Reason: In the interest of environmental and human health protection

13. Emission source parameters from the dryer exhausts associated with the wood to energy plant shall not be less than the emission source parameters as included within Table 4: Emission Source Parameters Dryers.

Parameter	Exhaust Vent 1	Exhaust Vent 2	Exhaust Vent 3	Exhaust Vent 4
Stack height (m)	10	10	10	10
Stack Diameter (m)	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
Efflux Temperature (°C)	36	36	36	36
Efflux Velocity (m s ⁻¹)	19.9	14.9	10.0	5.0

Table 4: Emission Source Parameters Dryers

Reason: In the interest of environmental and human health protection

14. Prior to commissioning of the development, an emissions monitoring scheme shall be compiled detailing the monitoring methodology and monitoring schedule to be applied for the substances/emissions and emission parameters as prescribed within Tables 1-4. The scheme shall be submitted by the applicant for approval in writing by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

Reason: In the interest of environmental and human health protection

15. On commissioning of the development, the applicant shall submit a declaration of installation of all arrestment plant installed (with details of the specification of the plant : make/model) which are required to capture pollutant emissions from the flues serving the combined heat and power plants and the dryer exhausts. All arrestment plant required for the purpose of controlling pollutant emissions shall be maintained and operated in full working order, all failure of plant shall be rectified immediately.

Reason: In the interest of environmental and human health protection

16. The applicant/operator of the development shall ensure that the monitoring and test data for the pollutant emissions and emissions parameters as detailed within Table 1-4 are conducted in accordance with the approved monitoring scheme under Condition 13.

A monitoring report encompassing the monitoring results data of the monitoring scheme shall be submitted on an annual basis, commencing on the date of commissioning.

Reason: In the interest of environmental and human health protection

17. During the first available planting season after the commencement of operations, or as otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority, landscaping shall be carried out along the north and north-western boundaries comprising a 5 metre landscaped buffer consisting of native species. Details of this scheme shall be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority before development commences.

Reason: In the interest of visual and residential amenity.

18. A detailed Construction Method Statements (CMS) and Construction Environmental Management Plan for this proposal shall be submitted to the Planning Authority for consultation in agreement with NIEA Water Management Unit, at least eight weeks prior to the commencement of construction. The CMS should include all necessary pollution prevention measures to protect groundwater and surface waterways during the construction and operational phases of the development. The CMS should include all chemical cleaning required.

Reason: In the interest of public health.

19. No development should take place on-site until the method of sewage disposal has been agreed in writing with NIW or a consent to discharge has been granted.

Reason: To ensure a practical solution to sewage disposal is possible at this site.

20. Each building shall be provided with such sanitary pipework, foul drainage and rain-water drainage as may be necessary for the hygienic and adequate disposal of foul water and rain-water separately from that building. The drainage system should also be designed to minimise the risk of wrongly connecting the sewage system to the rain-water drainage system, once the buildings are occupied.

Reason: In order to decrease the risk of the incorrect diversion of sewage to drains carrying rain/surface water to a waterway.

21. If during the development works, new contamination or risks are encountered which have not previously been identified, works should cease and the Planning Authority shall be notified immediately. This new contamination shall be fully investigated in accordance with the Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (CLR11). In the event of unacceptable risks being identified, a remediation strategy shall be agreed with the Planning Authority in writing, and subsequently implemented and verified to its satisfaction.

Reason: Protection of environmental receptors to ensure the site is suitable for use.

22. After completing any remediation works under Condition 20; and prior to occupation of the development, a verification report needs to be submitted in writing and agreed with Planning Authority. This report should be completed by competent persons in accordance with the Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (CLR11). The verification report should present all the remediation and monitoring works undertaken and demonstrate the effectiveness of the works in managing all the risks and achieving the remedial objectives.

Reason: Protection of environmental receptors to ensure the site is suitable for use.

10 INFORMATIVES

1	This permission does not confer title. It is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that he controls all the lands necessary to carry out the proposed development.
2	This permission does not alter or extinguish or otherwise affect any existing or valid right of way crossing, impinging or otherwise pertaining to these lands.
3	This determination relates to planning control only and does not cover any consent or approval which may be necessary to authorise the development under other prevailing legislation as may be administered by the Department or other statutory authority.
4	Precautions shall be taken to prevent the deposit of mud and other debris on the adjacent road by vehicles travelling to and from the construction site. Any mud, refuse, etc. deposited on the road as a result of the development, must be removed immediately by the operator/contractor.
5	Notwithstanding the terms and conditions of the Department of Environment's approval set out above, you are required under Articles 71-83 inclusive of the Roads (NI) Order 1993 to be in possession of the Department for Regional Development's consent before any work is commenced which involves making or altering any opening to any boundary adjacent to the public road, verge, or footway or any part of said road, verge, or footway bounding the site. The consent is available on personal application to the TransportNI Section Engineer whose address is Trillick House, 49 Queen Street, Ballymoney. A monetary deposit will be required to cover works on the public road.
6	All construction plant and materials shall be stored within the curtilage of the site.

7	It is the responsibility of the Developer to ensure that water does not flow from the site onto the public road (including verge or footway) and that existing road side drainage is preserved and does not allow water from the road to enter the site.
8	The applicant shall ensure that noise during the construction phase of the proposed development will be conducted having due regard to best practice under BS 5228: 2007. Construction shall only occur during daytime, and construction noise levels shall be controlled in order to achieve levels as per Table 3.3 "Modelled Construction Noise Levels at NSRs" as detailed within "Environmental Noise Impact Assessment", November 2015.
9	The fuel inputs into the CHP plant will be a pivotal issue in terms of pollution control, should waste wood (other than virgin timber) be utilised this would require a review to ascertain whether the process would be regulated under the Pollution Prevention Control Regime/Waste Incineration Directive requirements pertain.
10	The applicant should be aware of the requirements of the Medium Scale Plant Directive, with potential forthcoming legislative requirements for existing/new plant to meet emission limit values for key pollutants with potential regulation for existing plant by 2025.
11	The applicant should be aware that the regulation of solid fuel furnaces up to 20MWth are regulated under the Clean Air (NI) Order 1981, which requires all new furnaces to be notified to the relevant Council and for a prior approval of the chimneys serving the furnaces. The relevant documentation should be requested from and returned to Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Environmental Services Department (please contact on 028 70347171 for further information).
12	Inconsiderately directed or scaled luminaries can negatively impact on neighbouring residents. The applicant is requested to give due consideration to the location, scale and direction of proposed luminaries as per the Institute of Lighting Professionals – Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light GN01:2011 and specifically ensuring compliance with “Table 2 – Obtrusive Light Limitations for Exterior Lighting Installations – General Observers”.
13	Under the terms of Schedule 6 of the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973 the applicant must submit to Rivers Agency, for its consent for any proposal to carry out works which might affect a watercourse such as culverting, bridging, diversion, building adjacent to or discharge of storm water etc. Failure to obtain such consent prior to carrying out such proposals is an offence under the aforementioned Order which may lead to prosecution or statutory action as provided for.

14	Developers should acquaint themselves of their statutory obligations in respect of watercourses as prescribed in the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973, and consult the Rivers Agency of the Department of Agriculture accordingly on any related matters.
15	Any proposals in connection with the development, either temporary or permanent which involve interference with any watercourse at the site:- such as diversion, culverting, bridging; or placing any form of structure in any watercourse, require the written consent of the Rivers Agency. Failure to obtain such consent prior to carrying out such proposals is an offence under the Drainage Order which may lead to prosecution or statutory action as provided for.
16	If, during the course of developing the site, the developer uncovers a watercourse not previously evident, he should advise the local Rivers Agency office immediately in order that arrangements may be made for investigation and direction in respect of any necessary measures required to deal with the watercourse.
17	Where a Designated watercourse flows through or adjacent to a development site, it is considered essential that a working strip of minimum width 5m is left along the bank in order to facilitate future maintenance of the watercourse by the Rivers Agency. Actual requirement should be determined in consultation with the Agency.
18	<p>NIEA Water Management Unit would advise the following: All hardstand areas where storage or handling of fuel or fuel feedstock occurs must be designed to contain any potentially contaminated runoff.</p> <p>Water Management Unit notes that the source of water supply serving this proposal will be from both the mains and a borehole. Depending on the volumes of water required by this development from the borehole, a licence or authorisation may be required in accordance with the Water Abstraction and Impoundment (Licensing) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006. Please refer to DOE Standing Advice Note No.18 – Abstractions & Impoundments (May 2015), for further guidance on this element of the proposal.</p> <p>Effective mitigation measures should be in place to protect the water environment and surrounding water bodies from any discharge into them that may damage ecological status and to ensure that the Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives for the water body are not compromised nor the WFD objectives in other downstream water bodies in the same and other catchments.</p>

	<p>The applicant is informed that it is an offence under the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 to discharge or deposit, whether knowingly or otherwise, any poisonous, noxious or polluting matter so that it enters a waterway or water in any underground strata. Conviction of such an offence may incur a fine of up to £20,000 and / or three months imprisonment. The applicant should ensure that measures are in place to prevent pollution of surface or groundwater as a result of the activities on site, both during construction and thereafter.</p> <p>NIEA would advise that the applicant should refer and adhere to all the relevant precepts contained in DOE Standing Advice Note, No 4, No 5, No 11, No 18 and No 23.</p>
<p>19</p>	<p>The purpose of the Conditions 20 and 21 is to ensure that any site risk assessment and remediation work is undertaken to a standard that enables safe development and end use of the site such that it would not be determined as contaminated land under the forthcoming Contaminated Land legislation i.e. Part 3 of the Waste and Contaminated Land Order (NI) 1997. It remains the responsibility of the developer to undertake and demonstrate that the works have been effective in managing all risks.</p>
<p>20</p>	<p>The applicant should ensure that the management of all materials onto and off this site are suitably authorized through the Waste Management Regulations (NI) 2006 and/or the Water Order (NI) 1999.</p> <p>The applicant's attention is drawn to Article 4 of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended) under which it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kill, injure or take any wild bird; or • take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or • at any other time take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird included in Schedule A1; or • obstruct or prevent any wild bird from using its nest; or • take or destroy an egg of any wild bird; or • disturb any wild bird while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or • disturb dependent young of such a bird. <p>Any person who knowingly causes or permits to be done an act which is made unlawful by any of these provisions shall also be guilty of an offence.</p> <p>It is therefore advised that any tree, hedge loss or vegetation clearance should be kept to a minimum and removal should not be carried out during the bird breeding season including 1st March to 31st August, unless pre-clearance surveys show an absence of breeding birds.</p>

21	<p>The applicants attention is drawn to the requirements / information laid out in the consultation response dated 28-SEP-2015 from NI Water available to view on public access.</p> <p>The applicant is advised to contact NIW through its Customer Relations Centre on 08458 770002 or waterline@niwater.com, in relation to this consultation to ensure compliance and discuss any areas of concern.</p>
22	<p>The applicant should comply with all the relevant Pollution Prevention Guidelines (PPGs) in order to minimise the impact of the project on the environment, paying particular attention to DOE Standing Advice Note No. 4 – Pollution Prevention Guidelines (April 2015) for the demolition, construction and operational phases of the development.</p>