HEMIKO

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Development
Management,
Adur & Worthing Councils,
Worthing Town Hall,
Chapel Road,
Worthing,
West Sussex,
BN11 1HA

Our Ref: 2389
29th August 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION
PROPOSED INSTALLATION OF BURIED DISTRICT HEATING PIPE NETWORK ACROSS WORTHING TOWN CENTRE WITH ASSOCIATED REINSTATEMENT OF SURFACES

On behalf of Hemiko Ltd please find enclosed an application for the installation of a buried district heating pipe network across Worthing Town Centre with associated reinstatement of surfaces.

In addition to this cover letter and the completed application forms, the following documents are submitted to support this full planning application:

- Location Plan (drawing ref:Worthing Phase A Location Plan) – which shows the route of the distribution pipework and the proposed extent of the buried District Heat Network works, which is the area the installation works will be carried out within (a site plan is submitted to comply with the submission requirements but is the same drawing as the location plan which is the same in this context)
- Technical Supporting Details - Standard details for valve chambers, expansion pads and other technical elements that are installed along the route shown in the site plan – please note the specific locations along the distribution route of these elements is to be determined during the detailed design stage so cannot be detailed at present but all are buried underground so have no above ground visual impact.
- Pipe Installation Methodology Statement (including reference to Environmental Impacts and mitigation measures, transport, trees, green space, excavation, pipe installation, and reinstatement) – this is a technical document so should be read in conjunction with this cover letter which gives a higher level overview

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The requisite fee of £766 has been paid directly to Adur and Worthing Council via Planning Portal ref PP-12396852.

CONTEXT

Hemiko Ltd is developing the Worthing Heat Network (WHN), a low-to-zero-carbon (LZC) district heating network in Worthing. The project has won £4.4m of grant funding from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to further the development of the WHN and it is planned to move into the construction phase in November 2023.

Hemiko ltd are a specialist district heating developer who will be funding the delivery of the scheme via an Energy Services Company (ESCO) Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) of which Worthing Borough Council hold a golden share in. Hemiko have secured funding to develop and deliver zero-carbon heat networks across the UK which will form a key contributor to the UK's decarbonization targets. In addition to provision of funding Hemiko hold in house expertise in the design, construction and operation of heat networks and will be the Principal Contractor building the Worthing Heat Network on behalf of the ESCO. Hemiko have extensive experience in building and operating heat networks in the UK.

The Worthing Heat Network is a key element in Worthing Borough Council's Carbon Neutral Plan (AECOM, 2019) which identified the scheme as the most economic and efficient way to decarbonize the Civic Quarter and other large users of heat such as the Hospital and new planned residential developments. Once the Worthing Heat Network is built it will produce a range of benefits including:

- Delivering low carbon heat and significantly improving air quality in the town centre by offsetting gas combustion;
- providing a simple and more economical option for the decarbonisation of heat in individual buildings within close proximity to the heat network;
- providing a means to aggregate heat from sources not able to be accessed by single buildings such as recovering heat from waste water treatment plants;
- create a greater incentive for developers to build in Worthing as meeting carbon emission regulations and local planning conditions will be cheaper in Worthing due to the heat network, thus influencing investment into Worthing;
- speed up the decarbonisation of both Council and Privately Owned building stock, bringing substantial carbon savings earlier; and

- providing new skills and jobs for local residents, as well as delivering additional local social value.

This application seeks full planning permission for the buried pipework and other ancillary equipment such as valves associated with that pipework. The pipework will run underground across the town centre of Worthing and provide heat energy to multiple buildings across the Town. Please note, the infrastructure subject to this planning application is entirely underground so has no visual impact once the installation is complete.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

We are not aware of any other permitted district heat network pipe proposals in Worthing.

PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

Worthing Council

A pre-application for the scheme including the Underground Pipe Network and Energy Centre (Ref: PREAPP/0046/23) has been submitted to get initial planning feedback for the scheme as a whole and to explain how the underground pipe network integrates with the energy centre and other elements of the scheme. The Energy Centre is the building and associated equipment that will generate the low carbon heat to be distributed around the network of underground pipes included in this application. The Energy Centre building will be subject to a separate planning application once the design has been developed to a level of detail to allow the application to be made. It has been agreed with the Worthing Planning department to split the Distribution Network Planning application from the Energy Centre Planning Application to allow the project to move forward according to the required programme and because it is such a different type of asset (being an underground utility) compared to the energy centre building.

Extensive engagement has been held to date with Worthing Borough Council and their appointed technical and commercial advisors on the heat network scheme both during the tender period for the project and during the preferred bidder contract development period. Before this the Council had also commissioned several feasibility studies for the heat network funded via the Government Heat Networks Delivery Unit (HNDU).

The required Connection and Heat Supply Agreements for the Phase 1 Council heat offtakers have been progressed as part of this engagement and will be signed in parallel with the main ESCO contract giving confidence in the scheme progressing. These Buildings are: Town Hall, Assembly Hall, Connaught Theatre, Portland House and The Museum/Art Gallery. This is in addition to the same agreements to be signed with Worthing Hospital, which presents a major heat user.
Informal preapplication engagement has also been held with the Worthing Borough Council Head of Planning and other senior members of the Council involved in the development of the project. The principal of the scheme is supported by all.

Other stakeholders

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) have been engaged by Hemiko from the early concept stages of the project and are supportive of the scheme. Several workshops have been held to review the proposed routing. All engagement has been positive.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks full planning permission for the construction of an underground pipe network across Worthing Town Centre. This is the first phase of the heat network which has longer terms plan to grow further to decarbonize more of Worthing's building stock.

The pipe network will be approximately c.1.5km long (for Phase 1 — this application) and is generally contained beneath the highway network, with some beneath adjacent pavements and areas of hardstanding surrounding the buildings served by the network. All of the infrastructure is underground. The full extent of the network can be seen in the enclosed Location Plan. It should be noted that the plan includes the car park area of the Hospital which is because, subject to agreement of a lease with Worthing Hospital, it may be more efficient and less disruptive overall to run certain sections of the network through the car park as opposed to in the highway.

In simple terms the pipework is installed by excavating a trench and laying the pipework within that trench, which is then backfilled and the original surface reinstated. Along the pipe route other ancillary pieces of equipment are also installed underground such as valves and expansion pads, which are required for the functioning of the network. For completeness a technical annex has been included with this application setting out the

detailed method of installation, including excavation and backfilling, as well as a schedule of standard details of the trenches and ancillary equipment to be installed underground along with the pipework. The final positions of valves and other anciliary equipment will be specified during the detailed design stage of the project but will ultimately sit along the route shown in the [location plan] and will be completely underground. The only visible element above ground will be manhole covers in the highway such that underground valves can be accessed if required in future (equivalent to other utilities).

The network plans to provide heat to [8] buildings in the town centre (Phase 1), including buildings owned by the City Council and University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust (future phases of the scheme will connect additional large public and privately owned buildings within Worthing Town Centre).

As discussed above the network will bring significant benefits to the city including:

- Delivering low carbon heat and significantly improving air quality in the town centre by offsetting gas combustion;
- Providing a simple and more economical option for the decarbonisation of heat in individual buildings within close proximity to the heat network;
- Providing a means to aggregate heat from sources not able to be accessed by single buildings such as recovering heat from waste water treatment plants;
- Create a greater incentive for developers to build in Worthing as meeting carbon emission regulations and local planning conditions will be cheaper in Worthing due to the heat network, thus influencing investment into Worthing;
- Speed up the decarbonisation of both Council and Privately Owned building stock, bringing substantial carbon savings earlier; and
- Providing new skills and jobs for local residents, as well as delivering additional local social value.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

Local planning policy

The Local Plan for Worthing contains several relevant sections related specifically to this application Namely:

- Strategic Objective 21 – ‘Facilitate affordable, clean, secure energy through the delivery of sustainable, energy efficient, low carbon development and an increase in renewable, decentralised, low carbon energy and heat networks to achieve radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.’ – The pipe distribution network

that is the subject of this planning application is a key element of the heat network referred to in this Objective.

- Policy DM17 - Energy :
  - 5.247 - heat networks are identified as a means of ensuring clean, affordable, secure energy into the future for high density and mixed used developments
  - 5.248 - connection to a heat network is listed as the top of the heating hierarchy
  - 5.253 – 5.256 – heat network clusters are identified in which there is enhanced opportunity for the development of a heat network. The pipe distribution route within this planning application falls within 'Cluster A: Worthing Town Centre.'
  - Policy DM17 itself – Major Developments within heat network opportunity clusters must demonstrate that they have considered connecting to a heat network where the network exists at the time of the permission being granted, where the network lies adjacent to the site or if the network is planned how the developments can be ready for a connection in future. The pipework distribution network in this application will run directly past the significant developments of Union Place and Gasworks, where the policy will directly apply if the network goes ahead. Hemiko are already proactively engaging with both Berkeley Homes regarding the Gas Works and Roffey Homes and WBC regarding Union Place. This policy will apply to several other future developments (such as Stagecoach and Teville Gate), in future phases of the heat network.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021)

National planning policy is set out within the NPPF, which is supplemented by the Planning Practice Guidance. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay (paragraph 11).

Section 14 of the NPPF is concerned with meeting the challenge of climate change and is supportive of development for low carbon energy. Paragraph 158 confirms that local planning authorities should support proposals for renewable and low carbon development and should approve such development where its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.

Section 15 seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

This application seeks to secure permission for the buried pipework associated with Worthing Heat Network. As previously discussed, the network will bring significant environmental benefits to the region and will create new jobs in the delivery and operation phases.

As demonstrated by The Worthing Local Plan particularly Policy DM17 and section 16 of the NPPF, local and national planning policy is supportive of development for low carbon energy, including district heating networks. It has also been confirmed by the Worthing Borough Council team involved in developing the heat network scheme and Worthing Borough Council head of planning that the principle of the district heat network is supported.

As such, the principle of the heat network pipework is considered to be accepted.

Heritage

As the pipework will run entirely underground, none of the heritage assets within the town centre or their settings will be affected by the proposals.

Hemiko are aware that the connection of the pipework to listed buildings has heritage implications that will need to be assessed. As such, it is important to note that those connections are not subject to the current application. Connections from the pipe network into historic buildings will be dealt with separately through future applications for listed building consent. Notwithstanding that, the pipework will generally enter buildings underground and will therefore have no visual impact on them.

Trees and Ecology

As the pipe network will run predominantly under roads, there are some street trees within proximity to the proposed network route. It is the intention that all pipes will be

laid without the felling of trees, and every effort will be made to avoid the root protection zones of trees.

Any less sensitive planting (e.g. flower beds and bushes) that are required to be removed will be re-instated / renewed following completion of the works.

A detailed approach to dealing working around trees is set out in the Pipe Installation Methodology Statement in the technical annexes.

Highways

As the pipe laying process will result in the temporary disruption to the road network during the installation stage, permission for the works in highways terms will be secured from the Highways Authority via Section 50 agreements. As stated previously Hemiko have already been proactively been engaging with West Sussex County Council Highways department with regards to the distribution network within the highway.

A Traffic Management Plan will also be prepared for each section of work which impacts on the highways, and will form part of the Section 50 application.

Further details relating to highways and the Section 50 application are included in the Pipe Installation Methodology Statement in the technical annex.

Flood Risk

None of the proposed pipe route fall within flood zones 2 or 3. In addition, due to the temporary nature of the installation process and the fact that there is no associated flood risk with the laying of the pipework, it is considered that flood risk is not a relevant factor to the determination of the application.

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CONCLUSIONS

This application seeks to secure full planning permission for the buried distribution pipework for the Worthing Heat Network. When linked to the proposed Energy Centre (see pre application ref: PREAPP/0046/23), that pipework will provide heating and hot water to multiple buildings across the Town Centre of Worthing. The Worthing Heat network will be one of a small group of pioneering networks that will kick start the mass rollout of decarbonized heat networks across the UK, which are required for the UK to achieve its target of 18% of heat from heat networks by 2050 to facilitate the countries wider net zero goals. The proposals are therefore fundamental to the development of Worthing's Net Zero Infrastructure and to the Council's objectives for decarbonising the Town.

As discussed above, the principle of the development is supported in local and national planning policy and has been supported by planning officers at the pre-application stage.

Furthermore, the proposed development will result in a wide range of benefits for Worthing including:

- Securing reductions in carbon emissions;
- improving the air quality in the Town Centre
- facilitating quicker and more economical decarbonisation of heat in individual buildings; and creating jobs.

The proposals should therefore be supported and approved without delay in line with the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development.

I trust that the enclosed is sufficient for you to register and determine the application. Should you require any further information however, or have any queries at all, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Will Cooter
Hemiko Development Manager
Enc. : As listed above