

KEY INFORMATION

Ward East Port

Proposal

Electricity substation to reinforce existing underground electricity network

Address

Land to North of Camerons Close and East of 21 Albert Square
Dundee

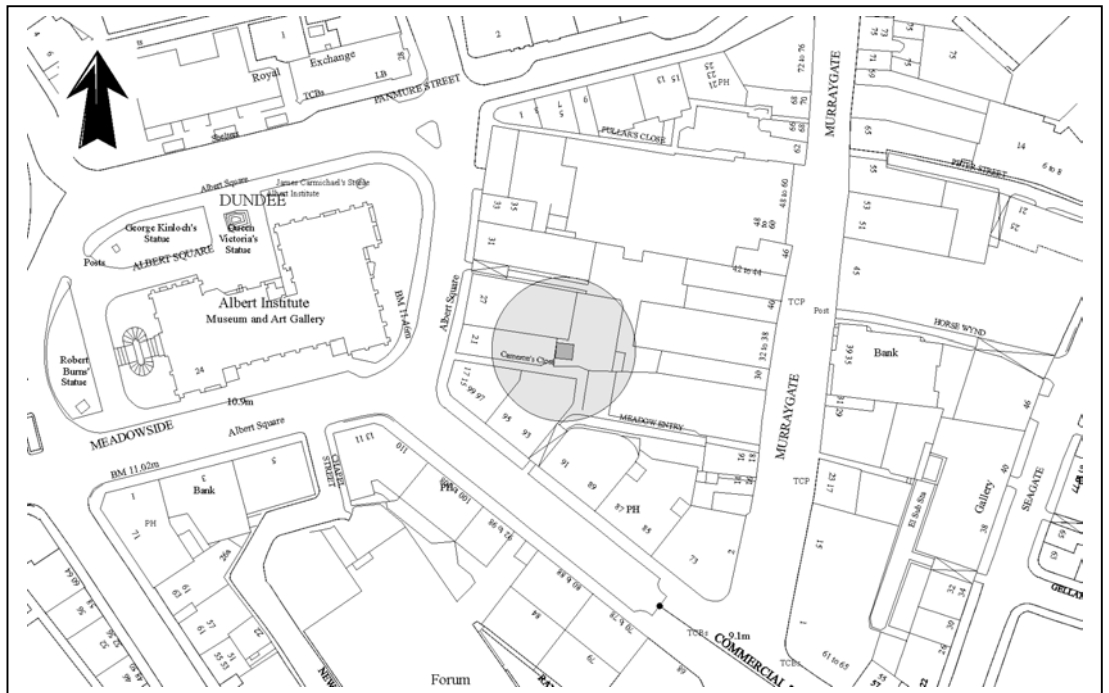
Applicant

Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution Ltd
Ruthvenfield Way
Inveralmond Industrial Estate
Perth PH1 3AF

Agent

Registered 17 April 2003

Case Officer J Finlay



An electricity substation to reinforce existing underground electricity network is **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS**. Report by Director of Planning and Transportation

RECOMMENDATION

The development complies with the policies in the Dundee Local Plan 1998 and the Finalised Dundee Local Plan Review. The application is recommended for **APPROVAL** subject to conditions.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

- Planning permission is sought for the erection of a substation for Scottish and Southern Energy within a car park area at the rear of Cameron's Close and 21 Albert Square.
- The building will be finished in materials to match an existing extension at the back of 21 Albert Square.
- Policy BE11 of the Dundee Local Plan 1998 is relevant, which states that development proposals will be expected to complement and enhance the character of the surrounding area. Policy 61 (Development in Conservation Areas) of the Finalised Dundee Local Plan Review is also relevant
- It is considered that the proposal is acceptable at this location in terms of design and materials and will not detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a substation at the rear of 21 Albert Square to reinforce the existing underground electricity network. The building will measure 2.4m wide by 4m long and 3.8m high and will be designed to blend in with the single storey modern extension to the building at 21 Albert Square and finished in a red/brown harled render.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is located to the rear of 21 Albert Square and on the north side of Cameron's Close. The close is located on the east side of Albert Square and leads to parking and open areas at the rear of buildings along Albert Square and Commercial Street. There are 1m high black metal railings along the south boundary of the site and along Cameron's Close. There is a 3 storey traditional stone building fronting onto Albert Square and this has a modern single storey extension at the rear, adjacent to the car park. The extension has part flat and part pitched roof, slate type tiles and red/brown harled walls.

POLICY BACKGROUND

Dundee and Angus Structure Plan 2001-2016

There are no policies relevant to the determination of this application.

Dundee Local Plan 1998

The following policies are of relevance:

BE11: Within Conservation Areas all development proposals will be expected to complement and enhance the character of the surrounding area.

Dundee Urban Nature Conservation Subject Local Plan 1995

There are no policies relevant to the determination of this application.

Finalised Dundee Local Plan Review

The following policies are of relevance:

Policy 61: Within Conservation Areas all development proposals will be expected to preserve or enhance the character of the surrounding area. This will require the retention of all features which contribute to the character and appearance including unlisted buildings of townscape interest, trees and landscape features and the historic pattern of streets and spaces, as identified in the Conservation Area management plans to be advanced in the near future.



Scottish Planning Policies, Planning Advice Notes and Circulars

There are no statements of Government policy relevant to the determination of this application.

Non Statutory Statements of Council Policy

There are no non statutory Council policies relevant to the determination of this application.

LOCAL AGENDA 21

Key theme 13 is relevant which says that places, spaces and objects should combine meaning and beauty with utility. Key theme 15 is also relevant which states that diversity and local distinctiveness should be valued and protected.

SITE HISTORY

There is no planning history of direct relevance to the application site.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Statutory neighbour notification was carried out and two letters of objection were received from neighbouring businesses stating concerns about access, contrary to the Local Plan Policies, adverse impact on residential amenity due to visual appearance, adverse effect on setting of listed buildings and inappropriate development at this location.

CONSULTATIONS

There were no adverse comments from statutory consultees.

The Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection has concerns about potential noise breakout from the development for nearby flats and requires a condition to restrict the noise level to NR35 as measured 1m external to any bedroom window.

OBSERVATIONS

In accordance with the provisions of Section 25 of the Act the Committee is required to consider

- whether the proposals are consistent with the provisions of the development plan; and if not
- whether an exception to the provisions of the development plan is justified by other material considerations.

The Development Plan

The provisions of the development plan relevant to the determination of this application are specified in the Policy background section above.

The substation will be designed to blend in with the existing modern extension at the rear of 21 Albert Square and will look like another extension to the building with a slate pitched roof and red/brown harled walls. The floor area will be less than 10sqm and it is not considered that this will have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the area.

Therefore it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with Policy BE11 of the Dundee Local Plan 1998.

It is concluded from the foregoing that the proposal complies with the provisions of the development plan.

Other Material Considerations

The other material considerations to be taken into account are as follows:

Finalised Dundee Local Plan Review

Policy 61 reiterates the advice in the adopted Local Plan regarding development in Conservation Areas. No new issues are raised and it is considered the development will not adversely impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas advises that:

"New development which is well designed, respects the character of the area and contributes to its enhancement should be welcomed." It is considered that the applicant has taken this advice from Historic Scotland on board in the design of the proposal.

Objections

The applicant has responded to the points of objection raised from neighbouring businesses. Firstly, access to the proposed substation is by a private vehicular access to the north of 27 Albert Square and through the private car park which is owned by Home in Scotland (21 Albert Square). Access to the construction site will be via this route over a two week period. When operational the substation will require one routine visit every 3 months by the access route previously indicated or by foot using Cameron's Close. Emergency access will be required as and when necessary. The proposal will be developed on a small piece of land which is currently surplus parking space and will not block access along Cameron's Close, Commercial Street or Albert Square. If others use the car park for machinery to carry out maintenance at their building, it is a legal matter, which is dealt with under separate legislation.

An objection was raised regarding the adverse impact on proposals by Dundee Civic Trust to regenerate the closes. No pre-application discussions have taken place or applications submitted on any such proposals to date. The substation is of such a small scale that it is considered it will not, in its proposed location, prejudice any future proposal by Dundee Civic Trust to regenerate and promote public access to Cameron's Close. There will be sufficient space to incorporate landscaping adjacent to the substation at a later stage, if necessary.

Another objection was raised about the appearance of the substation and the adverse impact on the character of the Conservation Area. The original plans were amended to incorporate a development that would blend in more appropriately with the surrounding buildings. It is considered that the area has little architectural merit. The substation will be contained within a building with the design and materials exactly matching the adjacent modern extension.

The need for a substation at this location will have a bearing on the reopening of the former Arnotts building. There is currently insufficient electrical capacity to supply the existing businesses and dwellings in this area in addition to the large electrical load required for the Arnotts building.

It is concluded from the foregoing that insufficient weight can be accorded to any of the material considerations such as to justify the refusal of planning permission contrary to the provisions of the development plan. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted with conditions.

Design

The substation building will be designed and use materials to blend in with the adjacent modern extension and is considered appropriate.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development is in accordance with the development plan and there are no material considerations that would justify refusal of the application in these circumstances. It is therefore recommended that planning permission is granted with conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:-

- 1 the development hereby permitted shall be commenced within five years from the date of this permission
- 2 All mechanical and electrical noise from the development must not exceed NR35 as measured 1m external to any bedroom window

Reasons

- 1 To comply with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997
- 2 In order to protect the amenity enjoyed by nearby residents from unacceptable noise levels from the substation