

Bishop's Castle biomass power project

Planning application

by

Bishop's Castle Biomass Power Ltd

to

South Shropshire District Council

Design and access statement

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March 2008
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Subject to submission and registration
SSDC will consult all those who have
previously contacted them in writing on
matters in the Design and access
statement.

Bishop's Castle Power Generation Project Planning application

Design and access statement

1. Site and building uses

The site is an industrial estate SE of Bishop's Castle off the A488 (Figure 1) with existing roads and infrastructure. The site is in the ownership of AWM, SSDC and SCC; and the Applicants (BCBP Ltd) have an option on the purchase of the proposed development site. The Design and Access Statement is presented responsive to the CABE guidelines for inclusion in all planning applications on architecture and the built environment (Figure 2) (www.cabe.org.uk).

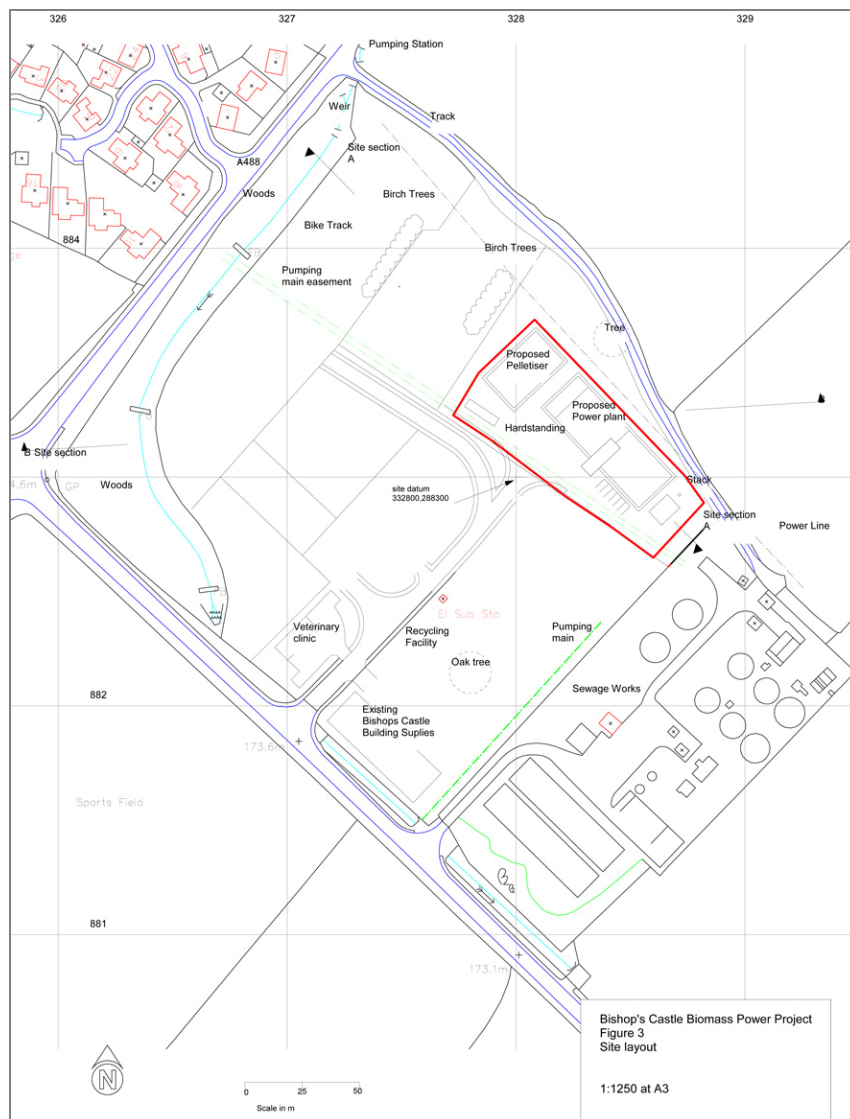


Figure 1. The site, current building and site uses and the site access

To the W of the road is a residential area. Its limited residential traffic has access from the S and E, independent of the site. A screen of mature trees on the site isolates the development visually (Figure 3). To the SE is the community college and school with notable peak hour traffic. The site itself has limited present business use with one industrial building and one service office and a number of plots which have been vacant for some time. Traffic is very little; but HGV vehicle access is in place. To the East is a sewage works and to the N are fields. Across the A488 to the NW is another industrial estate.

The proposed project will take up a limited area on the NE of the industrial site (Figure 1). The project -in access and location - is within a setting established for such industrial end purposes; and the infrastructure in place is more than adequate.

The project is a wood chip and energy crop fuel power plant to provide combined heat and power to the local community, responsive to policies on climate change. The building has been designed for its functionality; but presents a low profile with a ridge height of 12m and an elevation to the industrial estate of reasonable quality (Figure 2). Some diversity has been introduced into the ridge height and form, into facades and into the green and grey-green colours to reduce the perception of monolithic scale.

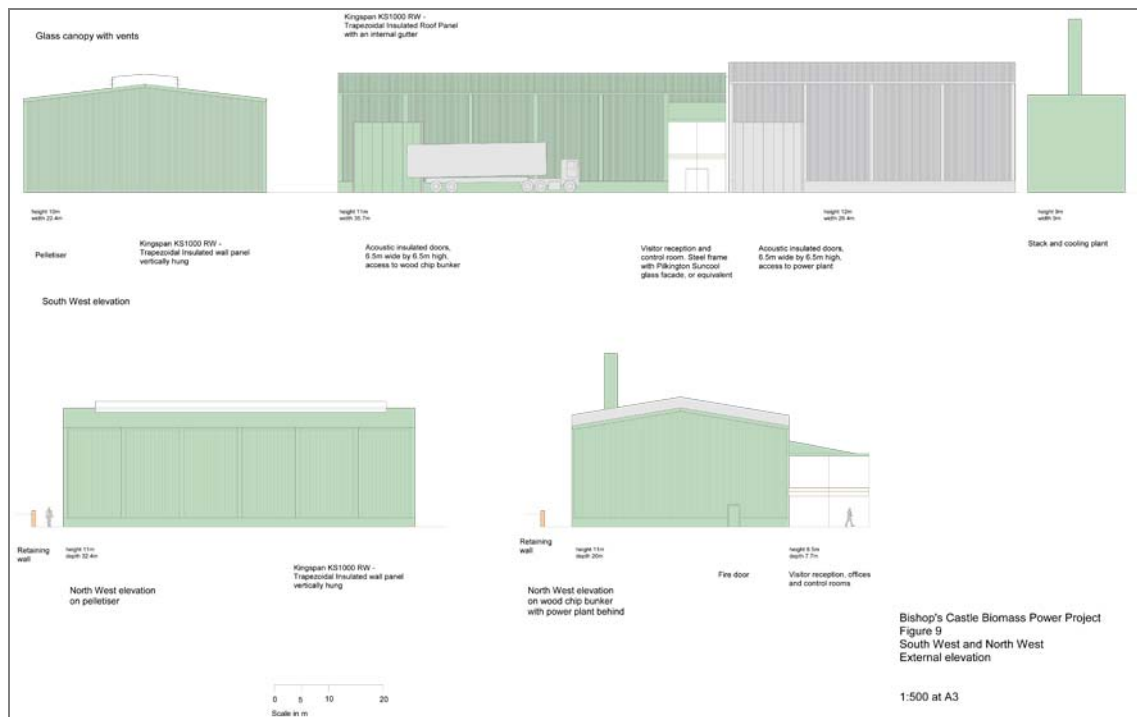


Figure 2 Elevations on the proposed buildings.

Road access for the wood chip fuel deliveries is more than adequate off the B4385 and presently used by HGVs. The buildings consist of a delivery bay, isolated by concertina doors behind which HGVs discharge to a large bunker with over 10 days storage. This is

under negative pressure for odour control and health and safety. The power plant is in an acoustic building with the cooling plant and stack outside. Staff and visitor access is from a car park isolated from the HGV areas (Figure 1). This leads into a control room designed for visitor accessibility. There is no visitor or public access to the power plant for health and safety reasons. Disabled access is normally limited to the reception ground floor.

However, the control room allows viewing of the power island and the plant operational and monitoring display with CCTV links to the reception or elsewhere by arrangement.

2. The scale of the building and operation

The scale of the operation at 60t/day using an average of 4 deliveries /day, Monday to Friday, has negligible impact on the capacity of the A488 and does not impose undue threat on the rural roads from the SE. The 2.5 MWe generated can be exported to the local “grid” from which it provides base load demand to Bishop’s Castle. Heat from the project will be used by being distributed in hot water heat mains and in the drying of wood chip for pellets. Long term wood chip fuels are targeted to be sourced within about 30 Km. Scale is compatible with the local infrastructure, fuel supply and heat and power use.

The building scale is limited to 12m high – very low for a power plant. Sitting well below the skyline and with a backdrop of trees of comparable height from most vantage points, the scale is compatible with the setting and site (Figure 3).

3. The layout and local area

The proposed plant is on an existing industrial estate, well screened by existing mature trees from the nearby residential estate. Visibility into the site is already low, but added standard trees and a new drift of trees connecting with the existing woodland will enhance and integrate the development into the local area.

There are houses at over 250m to the NW; and the environmental engineering for noise, air quality and visual impact reduces effects to ‘non-significant environmental impacts’. Other business may well come on to the industrial estate in the future between this proposed project and the A488 and the residential area across the road.

4. Landscaping

Landscaping of the industrial estate was completed many years ago and the trees on the significant W boundary are now mature (Figure 3). The retention of trees around the proposed site and planting of new trees in a drift and around the existing perimeter will provide a positive contribution to this landscaping. The gap in the trees is the line of a

sewage main easement and this easement crosses the proposed site. No structures are planned over it.



Figure 3. The landscaping viewed from the proposed project towards the residential area in the W. There are no lines of site from this development or Bishop's Castle into the site.

5. Appearance

The buildings are essentially functional (Figures 1 and 2) with two essential operations – storage and power generation. The storage area layout accommodates long, straight crane rails and the power island /acoustic building accommodates all the plant. The building is essentially functional. The adjacent pelletiser is also an essentially functional layout dictated by the need to accommodate machinery.

However, the height and functionality have been designed to limit the building to 12m to the ridge to minimize visual impact. The external profiled steel cladding is planned in a light green with darker green vertical, non-structural elements at 6m intervals (on the stanchion lines). The reception / visitor area will be more attractive in glass and steel.

Lighting is presently installed on the estate; but added lighting on the proposed development will be down-lighting conforming to DEFRA guidelines on lighting in the countryside.

6. Access

The HGV delivery access is through the existing delivery route off the B4385 to the industrial estate. Staff access is through the same entrance from the rural road. Visitors will use the same route but only on a pre-arranged basis, parking next to the reception.