Renewable Energy Plant at Leith – Scoping Opinion Response

From Leith Links Community Council

6.2 Landscape and Visual impact

The proposed plant will dominate the historic Leith Shore area which will impact on local business and tourism. The height of the buildings in the Shore area will dwarfed by the scale of the proposal. Why have Forth Energy not considered a smaller scale of plant as was proposed in their original regeneration plan?

The nearest housing at Ocean Drive/Tower Place will only be 200m from the plant which will be 65m(approx 190ft) high with 100m(300ft) high stack.

Future investment in housing may be jeopardised by a plant so large.

In the Forth Energy document section 6.2.25 states 17 viewpoints have been identified. They have chosen some points were there will be no visual impact and left out obvious ones.

For example Links Gardens, Great Junction Street and Constitution Street have been chosen where there will be little or no impact. But the junction of Bernard Street and the Shore which will be effected have been left off the list. Another view point could be from the Kings Wark housing development.

In the document there are maps showing the proposed location of the plant but no artists impressions of the visual impact. During the recent public consultation held at Ocean Terminal the display boards had no visual representation of the plant.
Can Forth Energy be asked to produce drawings to scale showing the visual impact on the existing buildings in the Shore area?

6.3 Air Quality and Climate

Using Forth Energy's own figures from there display boards

1 ship = 36000 tonnes of biomass= 1000 truck trips

If as the document says a maximum of 30% of fuel comes by road this works out at 390,000 tonnes transported by road. I work that out at 22000 road trips (return journey after delivery)

Where will biomass be brought from?
How long will each trip be? 50 miles?100miles?

Forth Energy state that 20000 tonnes of ash will be generated by the plant to be transported by road this will add even more truck trips.

The road network in the Leith and surrounding areas is already under pressure from existing traffic without creating more.
Can accurate figures be supplied for the increased road traffic emissions in the area?

Will the proposed chimney be adequate to disperse the exhaust from the plant?

Sea Haar is common to the coastal area. What guarantees can Forth Energy give that the emissions from the plant will add to it blanketing the area with any chemicals within the exhaust?

The sewage works at Seafield produce a by product in the form of sludge cake.Is it true that Forth Energy are considering this for use as part of the 30% fuel sourced in the UK?

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6.4 Noise and Vibration

The proposed plant will be operating 24 hours a day.

What effect will this have on existing neighbours and would it not put off other plans for housing next to the plant?

6.6 Esturine Ecology

The plant at Leith is one of three of the same size planned to be built on the Forth. Each needs 1.3 million tonnes of biomass fuel to operate. The scoping documents for all three state 70% will be transported by ship which equals 2.73million tonnes being delivered by sea.
Using Forth Energy's own figures this would mean 76 ship loads (1ship= 36000 tonnes) This would mean 152 trips as they have to return.

What impact will this have on the ecology of the Forth?

Will the pilot service be able to cope with this increased traffic?

6.7 Transport, Traffic and Access

If 30% of fuel is transported by road this would create 22000 truck trips each year on top of existing traffic which the current infrastructure is struggling to cope with.

What routes will these trucks take? How far will they travel to load biomass fuel?

6.9 Cultural Heritage

Within 300m of the proposed plant are buildings connected with the history of Leith, Edinburgh and Scotland. The old custom house which is currently occupied by National Museums of Scotland has been identified as the preferred site for a Leith Museum. The Darien Scheme set sail from the historic waterfront and George IV arrived there having been persuaded by Sir Walter Scott to visit Scotland making him the first British Monarch to come to Scotland in over 100 years.

The area surrounding the plant played a major part in the making of Scotland and now attracts tourists due to Leith being made a more vibrant place.

The scale of the power plant would destroy the visual impact of the water front.

6.10 Socio-economic and Land Use

The 4 plants proposed by Forth Energy will require a total of 5.2 million tonnes of fuel to operate each year. Forth Energy hope that 70% will come by sea or approx 3.6 million tonnes.

Which countries will this fuel come from and what will be the ecological effect on these countries who may increase biomass production by changing land use?

Can it be cost effective to buy and transport fuel large distances?

How long does it take to grow biomass fuel?

Is there enough sustainable growth to supply the needs of Forth Energy and all the other biomass plants currently in use?

The document states heat generated by the plant has a potential to be used in residential areas. What does the potential depend on?

How will the scale of the proposed plant impact on the future development of residential housing in the dock area which was one of the reasons for the business case for the tram network?