



Meeting note

File reference	EN010017 Rhiannon Offshore Wind Farm
Status	Final
Author	Ewa Sherman
Date	22 August 2013
Meeting with	Celtic Array Limited
Venue	Temple Quay House, Bristol
Attendees	<u>Celtic Array Limited:</u> Kirsty McGuiness - Rhiannon Development Manager Alice Mason – Legal Counsel Sean McNulty – Offshore Consents Manager Stuart Barnes – Stakeholder Manager Kate Hopkinson – Onshore Consents Manager David Bishop – Deputy Project Manager <u>The Planning Inspectorate:</u> Jessica Powis – Principal Case Manager Lynne Franklin – Lawyer Frances Russell – EIA and Land Rights Manager Katherine Chapman – Case Manager Ewa Sherman – Case Officer
Meeting objectives	Project update meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

Project Overview and Update

Celtic Array Limited (CAL) provided an update on the Rhiannon Development Team changes and introduced a new team member Kate Hopkinson, the new Onshore Consents Manager.

CAL confirmed that they have recently completed a project programme review and that the submission date for Rhiannon Wind farm (RWF) is likely to be 2014, Stage 2 Consultation will not be held in 2013. CAL propose to submit applications for all the consents required to the relevant bodies at the same time as submitting the Development Consent Order application to the Planning Inspectorate.

Offshore Update

Cable route and substation locations

CAL summarised their approach to consenting for the export cable and explained their requirements to maintain need for flexibility. CAL confirmed that the approach being taken has been discussed with Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).

A cable site selection process has been undertaken by CAL which has now narrowed down the number and locations of the cable landfall points. All locations are orientated on the north Anglesey coastline (about 5 km horizontal extent).

CAL confirmed that the overall approach to assessing and consenting the export cable area was met with positive feedback from the NRW licensing team. CAL also confirmed that NRW requested the approach in writing before they can formalise an official view.

CAL confirmed that a constraints map for the export cable corridor (shipping and other issues) will be included in the Environmental Statement.

In response to the Planning Inspectorate's query regarding the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), CAL stated that each topic area will be identified separately and worst case scenario, based on receptors, will be assessed. The Planning Inspectorate also queried the approach being taken to securing flexibility for the export cable route by way of a constraints map. The Planning Inspectorate advised CAL to take legal advice on this proposed approach, with reference to powers in the Planning Act, and addressing potential SEA considerations.

Consultation

CAL confirmed that it has established a working group for fishing groups providing non statutory consultation prior to the statutory consultation stage. It has been agreed with the working group that CAL will provide information on the EIA at appropriate stages in the development.

Offshore Environmental Impact Assessment

CAL stated that the offshore EIA is currently underway and is due to be completed Quarter 4 2013. This will be followed by non-statutory consultation. A number of statutory stakeholders will be issued with the preliminary findings of the EIA with the main findings and assumptions underlying the assessments ahead of Stage 2 Consultation. CAL noted the challenges in agreeing assessment approaches with some stakeholders due to their limited resources.

The Inspectorate emphasised early submission of the SoCG as it assists the examination, although it is not a statutory requirement. In the past the applicants have submitted signed SoCG, however, draft documents are very useful during the examination.

Competent Authority Feedback

CAL and the Inspectorate discussed the letter, dated 20 June 2013, which has been submitted by CAL to the Inspectorate, Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and NRW

seeking clarification on the competent authority for environmental impact assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment. CAL confirmed that they intend the DCO to apply to the entire area of wind farm site, including the part of the wind farm site in the Welsh Territorial Waters. This means that if a single ES and single Habitats Report are produced, they will need to be considered by 3 different bodies under three separate planning regimes. CAL expressed a preference of having a single ES and HR considered by a lead organisation, through agreement with the other organisations.

The Inspectorate noted Defra's guidance on a lead CA under the Habitats Regulations.

The Inspectorate said that they understood that the MMO is leading on joint response to the letter dated 20 June 2013 and The Inspectorate stated they would liaise with the MMO and NRW on this matter. The Inspectorate advised that it would be wise to consider the presentation of the ES and HR such that each Authority was aware of the impacts and implications of the project they were consenting and the relevant mitigation (whole project and all of its components in relation to the different jurisdictions). The Inspectorate suggested a tabular approach to this. The mitigation relied upon for each component would need to be deliverable for the specific part of the overall project under each of the relevant consenting regimes.

CAL stated that they would be applying for a single Marine Licence to cover both generating and transmission aspects. However, they intend to split the Marine Licence for Welsh Waters and provide non-binding draft Marine Licence to NRW.

Additional s51 advice

If it would be more appropriately assessed by another CA, Regulation 65 of the Habitats Regulations allows a CA to rely on the appropriate assessment carried out by another CA in relation to a consent, permission or authorisation for the same project. A coordinated approach allowing sharing of data/agreement as to baselines etc between the relevant bodies (as proposed by CAL) seems sensible. The Inspectorate advised that CAL should be clear in their wish to have one organisation (say DECC) take the role of lead CA and then more appropriately carry out the AA upon which say NRW could rely before deciding to issue the marine licence.

Onshore Update

CAL provided an update in relation to the onshore elements of the RWF project. A substation site selection process has been undertaken and three site options are currently being considered and were included in the Onshore Scoping Report.

The landfall sites included in the Onshore Scoping Report are still under consideration. Studies are ongoing to look at drill feasibility. CAL confirmed that it is likely that more than one landfall site will be required.

Isle of Anglesey County Council (IACC) issued an Onshore Scoping Opinion on 28 June 2013 and CAL are discussing the scoping issues raised. The following issues were noted: number of landfall sites, assessment of multiple substation site options; and points related to cumulative impact assessment, HRA and Health Impact Assessment.

CAL are in the process of undertaking the following EIA Surveys and Studies:

- ecology and ornithology surveys
- archaeology desk based assessment and evaluation strategy
- landscape and visual appraisal
- noise, air quality, hydrology, geology, land use and traffic
- socio-economics
- cumulative impact assessment.

Regarding the onward connection to electricity transmission system CAL are working closely with the National Grid. National Grid is completing a Strategic Optioneering Report (SOR) to identify the preferred location and broad technology for the onward connection. This includes connections from each of the three substation site options included at Scoping Stage, and considering both overhead and underground connection options. The selection process of the final connection will consider the whole connection between landfall and the existing electricity transmission network. National Grid's representatives attended all CAL's events, which included engaging with key stakeholders.

Consultation Update

The developer continues to engage with the Energy Island. CAL explained that Onshore Engagement Events had been held in five Community / Town Council areas in May and June 2013, with newsletters sent to all properties in the Onshore Scoping Study Area to notify the public of the events. A total number of 172 people attended five different consultation events. Immediately prior to these public events CAL met with all 5 Community/Town Councils in the Onshore Scoping Study Area and explained their approach and programme, prior to the public announcement of scoping. CAL are keen on early engagement with the stakeholders and members of the public even if there are no firm project details. Other engagement activities undertaken have involved: mailings to every property in five Council areas; presentations to Community / Town Councils; sending letters to all elected representatives on Anglesey and placing adverts in local papers for two weeks. In the summer of 2013 CAL commenced monthly Drop-in events in Llangefni and Amlwch; continued to use social media to target hard-to-reach groups (time poor and young); and attended regular Community Events during summer (Anglesey Agricultural Show, Moelfre Lifeboat Event, CopperFest Welsh Music Festival in Amlwch). Other events for the key stakeholders involved: fact finding visit for Energy Island Stakeholders to Grimsby O&M base and offshore visit to Lincolnshire Wind Farm.

CAL have recently taken a group of landscape and ecology officers from NRW and IACC around landfall and substation site options and received very positive feedback. They have also arranged technical site visits and meetings with landowners.

CAL stated that all non-statutory consultation dealing with onshore elements will be presented with the DCO application, including: substation options, National Grid infrastructure, cable landfall sites and onshore underground cable system. They anticipate publishing the interim Consultation Report in Autumn 2013, prior to the statutory Stage 2 Consultation in early 2014. The Inspectorate confirmed that they would be happy to provide comments on the report document providing notice is given. In relation to the content of the Consultation Report, it is helpful if this includes a list of s42 consultees, summary of consultation, appendix of tables etc. CAL were advised to provide all information to demonstrate the dialog and on-going communication with local authorities, statutory consultees and other bodies even if there are no firm responses. The Inspectorate also advised to look at the section 55 checklist which might be beneficial when assessing the DCO application.

Specific decisions / follow up required

CAL suggested scheduling quarterly meetings until submission of the DCO application to the Inspectorate, with the next meeting due in December 2013. They also would appreciate holding monthly telephone conference, following the practice with NRW already. The Inspectorate encouraged regular communication.

The Inspectorate emphasised that reviewing draft documents such as the Development Consent Order, the Explanatory Memorandum, and works plans may be beneficial during the pre application stage, and stated that comments on draft DCO and other documents will be published as s51 advice but the documents themselves will not be published.

The Inspectorate stated that they are looking into arranging outreach events in north Wales as there are several infrastructure projects with the potential of events being held during the day for local authorities and in the evening for the public. In particular the Isle of Anglesey County Council requested a tripartite meeting with the Planning Inspectorate and Celtic Array Limited.