

SUBMISSION BY CLLR MICHAEL MORRIS. DENVERRA, S [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

IN RESPECT OF WREXHAM ENERGY CENTRE

REGISTRATION REFERENCE 100321821

I submit these observations as the County Councillor for the Holt Ward in which the site is situated. I have also had regard to the several representations I have received from residents in Isycoed.

My comments are not representing the corporate view of elected Members of Wrexham County Borough Council as they have not commented on the application. I am aware that an officer (Rebecca Morgan) has submitted her own views as an officer of the Council and this is recorded as a relevant representation. Unfortunately it is not apparent that her submission was her own view although I understand she has subsequently corrected this by email.

1. Site selection / Visual Impact

The site and land requirement was selected for the initial proposal for a 1200mw power station and because the land was made readily available by the vendors immediately following the successful planning appeal (in part) to erect a warehouse on the site for an existing employer wished to expand. The Inspector recognised the sensitivity of this site and in fact refused permission to develop the adjoining site to the North. His appeal decision APP/H/6955/A/09/2113258 clearly articulates the sensitivity of the site as does the subsequent later successful appeal on the northern site APP/H/6955/A/12/2188910.

I would contend that:

- The applicant has failed to assess alternatives for the smaller proposal which would have a less damaging environmental and visual impact.
- The community are concerned that there is insufficient detail in relation to stack heights and final building heights given the sensitive location on the edge of the Industrial Estate and largely within open countryside. There needs to be clarity over the need to disperse emissions to air safely and to keep stack heights to a minimum. The community well remember the towers from the former Fiberglass/Owens Corning factory which were 60m high and dominated the skyline and could be clearly seen from the Shocklach and Worthenbury areas of Cheshire. Whilst Kellogs provides a backdrop of relatively large scale buildings and the warehouse consent allowed a building onsite of up to 19m high, this is still an edge of settlement development of large proportions.
- The original site selection was promoted on the basis that the development would reinforce the electricity supply to the Wrexham Industrial Estate and allow for the use of heat produced to be offered to neighbouring factories. There is no evidence to suggest that either will happen as the connection feeds to the national grid and there is nothing to suggest that a third party is interested in acquiring the heat produced. The location is not therefore strategic or necessary and could be located

anywhere less sensitive. As this was the main thrust of the applicant's original submission consideration should be given to conditioning these factors in the event of a successful development consent order.

- The location of residential properties 230m to the West and up to 400m to the East and the direct effect on them is of concern
- In undertaking any future site visits I would respectfully ask that the views from the B5130 to the site from Hillview to the Ridleywood Road junction as well as the relationship of the properties situated on Bryn Lane (nos 2, 4 & 6) and the avenue of trees protected by order to the northern boundary of the site are considered.

2. Relationship with gas and electricity connections

We are informed that the electricity connection is now to be underground to Legacy and that this has been confirmed in a connection offer from the energy providers.

As the planning process is protracted, the applicant should demonstrate that this offer will be valid and extended to cover the planning decision and if successful, the subsequent development phase. There was a lot of local objection to the possibility of increased or enhanced pylons crossing the countryside and the community will require reassurance on this point.

The separate application for the gas connection is a matter, in law, for the local planning authority to determine. It is however material to the power station proposal in terms of gauging the environmental impact. It follows that without the power station there would be no need for the gas pipeline. There is recognition of the link between the two applications by the Examining Inspector given the intention to visit the Maelor Gas Works site on 27th September.

The applicant should be asked to justify why they did not consider a site nearer to the Maelor Gas Works to minimise the environmental impact of a 3km pipeline. It is not really good enough to say that land was not available without demonstrating what effort they have made to identify such as site, particularly as the land requirement for the smaller power station is much reduced.

3. Noise and air quality

Historically there have been issues with both air quality and noise emanating from the Industrial Estate which, because of prevailing winds, affects properties to the East of the site. Cumulatively problems already exist.

Attribution is difficult given the diverse nature of the industries located there but there is evidence of "creeping" background noise levels particularly noticeable at night and at weekends when vehicular movement is considerably less. Similarly

air quality, although better in recent times, has been continuously monitored at a sensitive receptor for a number of years until very recently.

The consented warehouse development would not give rise to the same degree of concerns. Whilst the emissions to air will, or should, be the subject of a permit and regulated accordingly, experience has shown that when complaints are received from the community, the statutory agencies are generally slow to respond or have issues correcting things in a timely manner. The site is also bounded by watercourses and Marshlea stream that ultimately feed into the River Dee and so this is also a possible contamination route.