



Meeting note

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Author	Steven Parker / Adam Price
Date	25 February 2014
Meeting with	Wrexham Power Ltd / Meaford Energy Ltd
Venue	The Planning Inspectorate, Rivergate, Bristol
Attendees	The Planning Inspectorate Tracey Williams - Case Manager, Wrexham Power Station Jeffrey Penfold - Case Manager, Meaford Power Station Pat Pikniczka - Case Officer Steven Parker - Assistant Case Officer Adam Price - Assistant Case Officer Robert Hanson - Lawyer Helen Lancaster - Senior EIA and Land Rights Advisor The Developer Daniel Chapman – Wrexham Power Ltd / Meaford Energy Ltd Simon Keefe - Wrexham Power Ltd / Meaford Energy Ltd Rupert Wood - Wrexham Power Ltd / Meaford Energy Ltd Mark Brown – Local Dialogue Darren Mace – Atkins Karl Cradick – Savills
Meeting objectives	Project update
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

Introduction

The Planning Inspectorate outlined its openness policy and ensured the developer understood that any issues discussed and advice given would be recorded and placed on the Planning Inspectorate's website under s.51 of the Planning Act 2008. Further to this, it was made clear that any advice given did not constitute legal advice upon which the developer (or others) can rely.

Wrexham Power Station Project

The developer outlined changes they have made to their proposed development as a consequence of responses received during non-statutory consultation. The revised plans have scaled down the size of the power station and no longer include the installation of a 400 Kilovolt (KV) overhead electricity grid connection which previously formed part of their proposed development.

The revised project will be for a 299 Megawatt (MW) Combined Cycle Gas Turbine (CCGT) power station. This proposal will address several considerations, including smaller physical size, no requirement for carbon capture equipment, reduced gas main requirements and a 132 kV connection to the electricity grid, rather than the 400 KV connection proposed previously.

The developer outlined its proposals to improve the electricity supply grid, which includes upgrading existing infrastructure and building new transmission lines, running both overhead and underground.

The Inspectorate asked how the developer intended for the scheme to be consented, and advised that there was no provision for associated development applications located in Wales.

The developer stated that the electricity could be exported by Scottish Power Electricity Networks (SPEN) and be considered under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 regime by the local planning authority, except for a 1.5 km section of 132 KV overhead line to be constructed adjacent to Bangor-on-Dee.

The Inspectorate advised the developer to continue consultation with key stakeholders, local authorities and the local community and to ensure that their website is kept up to date.

The developer confirmed that the website is up to date and that previous documents that have been superseded were there for reference and would not be updated. It reaffirmed that it would continue with the on-going process of consultation and would make a public statement regarding the changes to the proposal shortly.

The Inspectorate asked if the developer had been in contact with Natural Resources Wales (NRW). The developer explained earlier discussions had taken place with NRW but that the company had not yet been in contact with NRW concerning the revised proposals, as the scheme was not fully defined.

The Inspectorate encouraged the developer to engage with NRW and other key stakeholders early to ensure that all parties are kept up to date with the proposal.

The Inspectorate advised that Consultation Report must clearly explain how the scheme developed as a result of non-statutory and statutory consultation, therefore it is recommended to keep details of both responses received and also of parties that had not responded to non-statutory consultation.

The Inspectorate also advised the developer to keep a record of all responses received from statutory consultation as the Inspectorate may request all original responses once the application has been submitted, during the acceptance period.

The developer was also advised to clearly explain in their consultation report about comments received from key statutory consultees and to explain how the developer has had regard to responses received.

Planning Inspectorate Advice Note 14 provides a template of how responses to consultation can be presented in the report.

As parts of the proposed development are going to be considered under different consenting regimes, the project description must be clear, on what is being considered and under which regime it falls. This is particularly important with regard to information published as part of statutory consultation.

The developer confirmed that the amended proposal had not changed the gas connection requirements within the DCO application.

Land Surveys and EIA

The developer informed the Inspectorate that no further requests for land access under section 53 of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) are anticipated.

The developer asked if it should seek a further scoping opinion, even though the red-line boundary of the power station site has not changed.

The Inspectorate advised that it is for the developer to justify whether their project has changed significantly and to decide whether it is necessary to submit another scoping request. The developer needs to be sure that all project effects have been considered.

The Inspectorate advised that should the developer decide to submit a further scoping request that this should be done before notifying the Secretary of State under section 46 and commencing its consultation under section 42.

The developer stated that it is attempting to stay within the established project parameters and is aware of the implications of not doing so.

The Inspectorate reminded the developer to ensure that the worst case scenario is assessed and clearly explained in the Environmental Statement (ES)

Design

The developer confirmed that it would be adopting a 'Rochdale Envelope' approach to design. The developer enquired how it should incorporate flexibility, for example using the same red line boundary, but with either one or two power station turbine buildings.

The Planning Inspectorate advised that the developer would need to assess the worst case scenario in the Environmental Statement and provide justification for the choice of worst case scenario. It should also be aware that the worst case scenario might be

different for different topics in the Environmental Statement - e.g. the worst case scenario for landscape and visual impacts might not be the same as for ecology. For clarity it would be helpful to address effects topic by topic.

The developer asked if it could potentially apply for both approaches to design. It was advised that both approaches must be assessed in the DCO and Environmental Statement and that it is for the Examining Authority (ExA) to examine the application and consider this.

The developer described the parameters of the power station (power island) site. The revised design would occupy a smaller footprint, and is no longer required to be carbon capture ready, as the output will be under the threshold (299MW). The stack height is expected to be no more than 45m high.

Consultation

The developer will write to all existing consultees on their database regarding the amendments to their scheme ahead of its statutory consultation.

A draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) has been prepared and this will be sent to Wrexham County Borough Council in the week commencing 3 March 2014. A minimum of 28 days should be given to key local authorities for receipt of their comments on a draft SoCC.

The developer was advised to submit its draft SoCC to Inspectorate in advance of the developer's statutory consultation. This will be submitted to the Inspectorate early in April 2014. The developer was advised to give notice of when it intends to submit its draft SoCC.

The developer underlined that the red line boundary of the wider scheme and therefore the core consultation zone would be changing but that no new areas were to be included. The Inspectorate advised the developer to be clear about its project description in their SoCC.

The Inspectorate advised that submitting a draft SoCC to the Inspectorate for review is not a statutory requirement but is good practice to do so and that it is recommended that developers submit their draft SoCCs for comments. The Inspectorate advised the developer that timescales for issuing comments on any draft documents will depend on resources at the time. The developer was advised to incorporate the submission of its draft documents in the project timetable. The developer was advised that at least three weeks' notice must be provided to the Inspectorate before submission of any draft documents.

Meaford Power Station Project

Project Update

The Inspectorate queried if the developer holds an electricity generation licence. The developer confirmed this and explained that Meaford Energy Limited owned both the site and an electricity generating licence.

The Inspectorate inquired if the developer's proposed access to the Meaford Business Park constituted part of an extant planning permission. The developer confirmed that the site already benefits from an existing planning permission that includes highway improvements. Moreover, should highway improvements be included in the application for a DCO, such improvements will not be incompatible with the improvements that already have consent.

The Inspectorate asked if the existing on-site substation could be used for the electrical connection. The developer explained that a substation was present and that partial reconstruction would be required.

The developer confirmed that, following preliminary discussions with the distribution network operator Western Power Distribution (WPD), it was confirmed that the existing WPD infrastructure within Meaford Business Park could accommodate the connection of the MEC without the need for new 132kV lines or significant network reinforcement. The developer confirmed that no competition is envisaged in acquiring such a connection.

The Inspectorate queried whether powers of compulsory acquisition would be sought as part of the DCO application. The developer explained that such powers would not be sought and that no land or rights acquired by statutory undertakers are sought to be compulsorily acquired.

The proposed CCGT power station element of the MEC will need to obtain gas from National Grid's gas network, the National Transmission System (NTS). The connection point will be on the lower pressure Local Transmission System (LTS) which is supplied from the NTS.

The developer stated that some Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) might be required as part of the gas connection. This connection is likely to be in the form of an Above Ground Installation (AGI), subject to availability of service corridors.

The Inspectorate asked if this would involve a change in apparatus for the purposes of s.138 PA2008. The developer stated that new rights might be required from National Grid.

The developer stated that the preferred site for the power station is located broadly centrally within the Meaford Business Park, adjacent to the existing sub-station compound. This reflects feedback from informal stakeholder consultations and dialogue with local authorities.

The developer described the possibilities for the approach to cooling, noting that an air-cooling approach would be opted for.

Engagement

The developer explained that thorough engagement was on-going with local parish councils and that there is local support for the Meaford business park site being a centre for employment in the area.

The Inspectorate asked if parish councils in the vicinity of the site were familiar with the NSIP process. It was explained that they have had previous involvement with other NSIP applications in Staffordshire.

The developer has met with Staffordshire County Council (SCC) and local residents on numerous occasions. Constructive dialogue between the developer and both Staffordshire Borough Council (SBC) and SCC was reported. It was specifically mentioned that discussions remain on-going with said local authorities in relation to highway access.

The Inspectorate quizzed the developer about the current stages of any Local Impact Reports (LIR). It was explained that there is the possibility of a joint LIR between the local authorities as a means of utilising resources efficiently. Moreover, the developer stated that discussions remain on-going with relevant statutory bodies and surveys were being undertaken as part of the production of LIRs.

Consultation

The Inspectorate asked about the developer's proposed phasing of consultation. The developer explained their desire to submit an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Inspectorate in autumn 2014 and as such statutory consultation is planned to be carried out between the end of April and the end of May 2014.

The Inspectorate enquired into the developers anticipated duration of the DCO. The developer explained that the current thinking was that it would seek an Order valid for five years. In response to this the Inspectorate advised that, should a different duration be decided upon, the developer should be prepared to explain why this is sought and provide a robust justification within the DCO and Explanatory Memorandum as this might be queried by the appointed Examining Authority (ExA) during examination.

Specific decisions / follow up required?

Both parties agreed to hold monthly teleconferences to discuss updates for both projects.