



Meeting note

File reference	EN010059
Status	FINAL
Author	Karl-Jonas Johansson
Date	13 June 2013
Meeting with	Hirwaun Power Ltd
Venue	Conference Room 3, 2 Rivergate, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6HE
Attendees	The Planning Inspectorate Tracey Williams (Case Manager) Oliver Blower (Case Manager) Karl-Jonas Johansson (Case Officer) Helen Lancaster (Senior EIA Advisor) Jill Warren (Senior EIA Advisor) Robert Hanson (Lawyer) Applicant Chris McKerrow – Stag Energy Norman Campbell – Stag Energy Chris Girdham – Peter Brett Associates Chris Leach – Parsons Brinckerhoff Andy Gregory – Parsons Brinckerhoff Richard Griffiths – Pinsent Masons
Meeting objectives	Introductory meeting for the proposed Hirwaun Power Station
Circulation	All attendees

Introductions

The Planning Inspectorate and the applicant introduced their respective teams and roles to each other. The Planning Inspectorate advised that a meeting note would be taken and published on our website in accordance with S.51 of the 2008 Planning Act as amended (PA2008).

Project Introduction

The applicant explained that the site chosen for this project is located on an existing industrial estate and they advised that it had been chosen due to its close proximity to the national gas and electricity network. The applicant explained that they had secured an option to acquire the site and that they had also secured access to all relevant land to enable survey work to be carried out.

The applicant indicated that approximately 150 jobs would be created during the construction phase. The number of permanent jobs was harder to ascertain as it was technology dependent. The applicant advised that it is their aim to create as many local jobs as possible, but the outcome is dependent on the skills of the local workforce.

The Planning Inspectorate enquired if the applicant had started to engage with the local community. The applicant confirmed that they had already started to engage and that the feedback received so far had been positive. The applicant confirmed that they have meetings planned with local councillors in the near future.

The Planning Inspectorate advised that the developer keep a record of all informal consultation for the consultation report. The applicant advised that informal round table talks with the relevant local authorities and statutory parties has also been conducted.

Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)

The applicant also sought advice on whether it was appropriate for the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) to be submitted alongside the SoCC when the SoCC is submitted to the local authority for consultation. The applicant explained that it is often the case that the timings of the SoCC consultation and when the PEIR is completed do not match and therefore it would be more appropriate if environmental information to assist the local authority in reviewing the draft SoCC could be provided in some other format.

The Planning Inspectorate clarified that the PEIR did not need to be submitted alongside the SoCC when the SoCC is submitted to the local authority for consultation. The Planning Inspectorate confirmed, however, that sufficient environmental information must be provided to the local authority to enable the local authority to review the SoCC meaningfully to ascertain whether the consultation zones are appropriate given the environmental information. However, this environmental information need not be in the form of a PEIR.

The applicant confirmed that it would send to the Planning Inspectorate a list of the A, B, C and D authorities for the project,

The Planning Inspectorate advised the applicant to consult with the local authorities in respect of the needs of the local communities and with regard to have some of the consultation documentation available in Welsh. It was also mentioned that other projects located in Wales, although not all as it depended on their location in Wales, had produced high level summaries of various documents in Welsh to cater for Welsh speaking communities.

Gas and Electricity Connections

The applicant is currently investigating four gas corridors options, but is aiming to reduce the options to one or two preferred routes prior to statutory consultation. The applicant views the gas connection as integral to the project and will therefore include it in the Development Consent Order (DCO).

Regarding the electricity connection, the applicant advised that it is likely that any overhead line route would be less than 2km and would therefore not be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) in its own right. However, the applicant

advised that as the power generation plant cannot function without an electrical connection, it is considered that the connection is integral to the NSIP and would therefore be included in the DCO. The applicant also informed the Planning Inspectorate that whether or not the electrical connection is included in the DCO would depend on the status of on-going discussions with National Grid over the connection options.

The Planning Inspectorate advised that it needs to be made clear in the Explanatory Memorandum and other application documentation that each connection included in the DCO is integral to the NSIP.

Environmental Impact Assessment

- Scoping report has been published, and the Planning Inspectorate will issue a Scoping Opinion in July 2013.
- The applicant advised that most of the on-site ecological surveys have been completed.
- The Planning Inspectorate advised that hydrology and air quality could be major issues.
- The Planning Inspectorate advised the applicant to try to resolve issues with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) before the acceptance stage, particularly around impacts on sites protected under the Habitats Regulations, and around modelling requirements for air quality.
- The Planning Inspectorate advised that some of the current Advice Notes, particularly those relating to scoping and screening, Section 52 and 53 requests and Habitats Regulations Assessment are being updated and the applicant should be aware that the existing advice notes will be amended.
- The Planning Inspectorate advised the applicant to consider cumulative effects

Preliminary Project Timescales

Draft SoCC consultation – August 2013

S42 and s47 consultation – October (28-35 days)

Draft documents to the Planning Inspectorate – September/October 2013

Submission – Q1 2014

Draft Documents

The applicant indicated that they would like two to three draft DCO review meetings with the Planning Inspectorate. The Planning Inspectorate informed the applicant that it would need at least six weeks to review draft documents and that the Planning Inspectorate can also comment on the following additional draft documents: Consultation Report, Land and Works Plans and SoCC. However, the Planning Inspectorate advised that it does not comment on the Environmental Statement (ES). As regards the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA), the Planning Inspectorate may be able to comment on it but only if there it has resources available. The Planning Inspectorate advised that the applicant should share its draft documents with the relevant local authorities.

Rochdale Envelope

The applicant sought guidance on the degree of flexibility that would be considered appropriate with regards to an application for a nationally significant infrastructure project under the Planning Act 2008 regime.

The Planning Inspectorate advised the applicant that there is very little scope for changes to the DCO once it has been submitted for examination and that any flexibility needs to be written into the order.

The applicant explained that it had yet to decide on the technology for the project and therefore would like to use the Rochdale Envelope approach to the design of the power station (it was explained that the parameters could be for between one and five generators and between one and five stacks). The applicant requested some clarification on their proposed approach, being to assess the likely worse case with an explanation at the beginning of each topic chapter explaining why it was the likely worse case in that topic. The applicant also suggested that it include a schedule in the DCO which cross-referenced the various turbine options to the relevant works plans. The Planning Inspectorate highlighted that the applicant needs to be very clear in the ES which works plans related to which option in the DCO. The Planning Inspectorate highlighted that the Examining Authority could always request further environmental information in relation to a parameter if it considered it necessary. It was also suggested by the Planning Inspectorate that the developer review the Burbo Bank Extension application as it had included several options for the wind farm in the DCO.

Specific decisions / follow up required?

- The applicant to provided the Planning Inspectorate with site visit dates
- The applicant to send the Planning Inspectorate details of their local authority contacts.
- The applicant to inform the Planning Inspectorate if there are to be any changes to the time table
- Two to three draft DCO meetings to be reviewed