



## Meeting note

<b>File reference</b>	EN010060
<b>Status</b>	<b>FINAL</b>
<b>Author</b>	The Planning Inspectorate
<b>Date</b>	13 June 2013
<b>Meeting with</b>	Progress Power Ltd
<b>Venue</b>	Conference Room 3, 2 Rivergate, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6HE
<b>Attendees</b>	<b>The Planning Inspectorate (PINS)</b> 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)  <b>Applicant</b> Chris McKerrow – Stag Energy Norman Campbell – Stag Energy Chris Girdham – Peter Brett Associates Chris Leach – PB Power Andy Gregory – PB Power Richard Griffiths – Pinsent Masons
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Introductory meeting for Progress Power Station
<b>Circulation</b>	All attendees

### Introductions

The Planning Inspectorate and the developer introduced their respective teams and roles to each other. The 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 site chosen for this project is located on an industrial estate on a former American airbase. The applicant advised that it was chosen due to its proximity to the national gas and electricity network. Part of the industrial estate has been identified as an energy park by the local authority in its emerging development framework. The developer has secured an option to buy the site. The developer advised that it had started informal consultation with local communities. 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.

The developer indicated that approximately 150 - 250 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 their aim is to create as many local jobs as possible, but the outcome is dependent on the skills of the local workforce.

### **Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)**

The applicant advised that the draft SoCC is due to be formally consulted on in a matter of weeks. The applicant confirmed that they will send the Planning Inspectorate a copy of the draft SoCC with a copy of its wider consultation strategy at the same time as the draft SoCC goes out for informal consultation with the local authority.

The Inspectorate clarified that the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (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.

### **Consultation**

The Planning Inspectorate advised the developer that it was preferable for the PEIR to be published at the same time as the s.42 and s.47 notices. The Planning Inspectorate also advised on the risk of not meeting the minimum 28 day period for response to the s.42, s.47 and s.48 consultation. The applicant advised that to ensure maximum impact of the formal consultations, s.42 and s.47 consultations will commence after the school holidays in September 2013. The Planning Inspectorate advised the applicant of their duty to notify under s.46 before starting s.42 consultation.

The Planning Inspectorate advised that it would be of benefit for the applicant to prepare s.106 agreements and Statements of Common Ground as soon as possible, and preferably in advance of the start of the examination.

The Planning Inspectorate advised that the applicant should build in enough time in their project plan to properly evaluate consultation responses and to cite all the evidence used in the consultation report.

### **Gas and Electricity Connections**

The applicant advised that they plan to include both electricity and gas connections in the DCO as they are integral to the power station. The applicant provided an explanation as to why they view the connections as integral. The Planning Inspectorate advised that this explanation should be provided with the application.

The applicant advised that they were in discussions with National Grid over the options for the electricity connection and that, depending on the outcome of these discussions, it may be necessary to deal with the electricity connection separately

outside the DCO application. The applicant confirmed that they would keep the Planning Inspectorate updated. The applicant advised that the electricity connection would be east of the site and the applicant has negotiated access to most of the affected land. The final route will be decided by National Grid. Whether the connection will be below ground or not has not been decided yet.

The applicant advised that there are currently several corridor options available for the gas connection but the developer is aiming to reduce them to one preferred route and an alternative before s.42 consultation commences.

The Planning Inspectorate advised that it is important to be clear in the consultation material on how and why the preferred routes for grid and gas connections were chosen.

### **Compulsory Acquisition**

The applicant advised that compulsory acquisition of land is currently regarded as unlikely, but there may be a need to compulsorily acquire some land rights.

### **Environmental Impact Assessment**

The applicant was advised that letters of comfort should be obtained before the examination starts and that it is advisable to try to resolve issues with statutory nature conservation bodies before acceptance. The applicants confirmed that most environmental surveys and studies had been done and confirmed that they have had no problem with access to land needed for survey purposes. Issues that were identified by the applicants as likely to be of importance were landscape, hydrology and air quality.

The applicant was referred to the on-line advice notes and that some of these are planned to be updated by the end of July 2013. The applicant was advised that cumulative effects would have to be addressed by the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and would need to confirm that if there is to be more than one route for connections, each must be assessed within the EIA and with the worse case scenario. It should therefore be clear what route and what process is being assessed.

### **Preliminary Project Timescales**

Draft SoCC consultation – June/July 2013

SoCC publication – August 2013

S42 and s47 consultation – September - October 2013

Draft documents to the Inspectorate – September/October 2013

Submission – early in Q1 2014

### **Draft Document**

The applicant indicated that they would like two to three draft Development Consent Order (DCO) reviews with the Planning Inspectorate. The Planning Inspectorate informed the applicant that we would need six weeks for the first review and that we can comment on the following additional draft documents: consultation report, Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) and plans. However the Planning Inspectorate does not comment on the Environmental Statement (ES). In regards of the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA), the Inspectorate can only comment on it if

there are resources available. It was also stated that the comments on the draft documents were not published. The Planning Inspectorate advised that the applicant should share its draft documents with the relevant Local Authorities.

### **Rochdale Envelope Principles**

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 making 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. 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 developer 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 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.

### **Consents Service Unit**

The Inspectorate explained that this is an optional service for developer and that it deals with non-DCO consents. It was agreed that the Planning Inspectorate would ask the Consents Service unit to contact the developer.

### **Specific actions**

- Draft SoCC to be sent to the Planning Inspectorate together with the developers overarching consultation strategy.
- Two to three draft DCOs to be reviewed
- The Planning Inspectorate to notify the developer of appropriate contacts in the Consents Service Unit
- The applicant to provide the Planning Inspectorate with site visit dates
- The applicant to inform the Planning Inspectorate if there was any changes to the time table
- The applicant to send the Planning Inspectorate their Local Authority contacts.