



## Meeting note

### File reference

<b>Status</b>	Final
<b>Author</b>	Steffan Jones
<b>Date</b>	22 October 2014
<b>Meeting with</b>	Snowdonia Pumped Hydro
<b>Venue</b>	Room M3, Temple Quay House, Bristol
<b>Attendees</b>	Tom Carpen – The Planning Inspectorate Ken Taylor - The Planning Inspectorate Steffan Jones – The Planning Inspectorate Georgina Murray – The Planning Inspectorate Dave Price - The Planning Inspectorate  Dave Holmes – Snowdonia Pumped Hydro Sarah Nixon – Snowdonia Pumped Hydro Catherine Anderson - AECOM Julian Boswall - Burges Salmon Kevin Fiske - Sage Partnership
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Snowdonia Pumped Hydro to introduce the proposed Glyn Rhonwy Pumped Storage to the Planning Inspectorate
<b>Circulation</b>	All

Snowdonia Pumped Hydro were made aware of the Planning Inspectorate's openness policy, once a Regulation 6 notification is received (or at an earlier date agreed with the applicant) a project page will be created on the Planning Inspectorate's website and that any advice given, including this meeting note, will be published on the project page under s51 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008), as amended by the Localism Act 2011. Any advice given does not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) can rely.

Glyn Rhonwy Pumped Storage is a proposal already approved under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA) by Gwynedd County Council. Approval was granted for a generating station with a generating capacity up to 49.9 MW, however the developer has decided it wishes to increase the generating capacity of up to 99.9 MW. The developer has sought its own legal advice and will now apply for development consent under the PA 2008.

The proposal is for the development of a pump storage facility which will include an upper reservoir at Chwarel Fawr and associated dam; a lower reservoir at Glyn Rhonwy also with dam; the erection of a powerhouse to include turbines and

associated engineering works including the creation of new slate spoil heaps and diversion of public rights of way.

In order to increase the amount of power being generated, the developer informed the Planning Inspectorate it will need to increase the size of the turbine and transformers from those included within the approved application. The Planning Inspectorate was informed that a larger turbine and transformers would fit in the footprint of the design of the approved turbine house and substation. The developer confirmed that within the application for development consent under the PA 2008 the works above ground would not differ from those works included in the already approved application.

The reason the developer has decided it wishes to increase the generating capacity is due to electricity market reform. An increase in demand for electricity over the next few years in the area has been forecast which has also informed the developer's decision.

The Planning Inspectorate asked the developer for confirmation on what the main issues identified by those who responded to the consultation were. Concerns from those who did respond were mostly regarding issues around landscaping and visual impact and traffic and access. Public exhibitions were locally held, bilingually with between 140 members of the public attending the exhibitions and 74 responding to the developer.

Some concerns were raised by the developer regarding the statutory consultation under s42, 47 & 48 of the PA 2008. The developer believes the consultation could cause some confusion with consultees who have already responded to previous consultation on the approved application under the TCPA. However the developer acknowledged the requirement to carry out the statutory consultation. The Inspectorate advised that clear information within the consultation material should avoid confusion and advised that the changes between the previous TCPA application and the revised proposal were set out clearly. Although the developer has a refined project ahead of its consultation under the PA 2008, it confirmed it would potentially be open to amending the proposals should anything be raised during the consultation period which would be considered an improvement to the scheme and had not been raised previously. The Planning Inspectorate reminded the developer of its duty under s49 of the PA 2008 to have regard to any responses received during statutory consultation; consultation events, strategies and responses should be included within the submitted Consultation Report.

The developer also informed the Planning Inspectorate that it is aware of some additional statutory consultees who it will need to consult with under the PA 2008 which it has not done so previously such as public health bodies and the fire service.

SP Manweb has been approached by the developer to provide a connection from the proposed generating station to the substation at Pentir. The developer has asked that any connection be entirely underground. To date the developer has not received a connection offer. The Planning Inspectorate asked whether any potential connection project had been included in the cumulative impact assessment; the developer advised the Planning Inspectorate that the connection project will be assessed within the Environmental Statement submitted as part of its application for development consent under the PA 2008.

Gwynedd Council has been identified as a major landowner in the area. The developer confirmed that the TCPA application was not subject to a s106 agreement, as it was envisaged that any matters would be secured as part of any lease/land transfer agreements with the council. The developer also confirmed it does not need to compulsorily acquire any land.

The developer hopes it will be able to obtain one protected species licence for bats from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and that the abstraction and discharge license discussions are currently on-going.

The Planning Inspectorate was informed by the developer that it intends to complete an informal exercise with statutory consultees instead of a formal Scoping process as it has liaised closely with them during the consultation on the approved application. The Planning Inspectorate advised that although the developer is not required to request a formal scoping opinion from the Planning Inspectorate, it is entirely at its own risk should it decide not to do so as there is always the possibility that there is difference of opinion from when the original scope of the ES was agreed.

The developer was reminded that the requirements of Regulation 6 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 are a mandatory step in the process and must be undertaken before commencing consultation under s42 of the PA2008.

The Planning Inspectorate requested that the developer provide a GIS shape file (in the format specified by Advice Note 7) of the scheme's red-line boundary in advance of any request/notification under EIA Regs, Regulation 6. The Planning Inspectorate informed the development that the GIS shape file will be used to help establish the bodies required to be notified in accordance with Regulation 9 of the EIA Regs

The Planning Inspectorate advised that it offers a service to view and comment on draft documents prior to submission should the developer wish it to do so. The developer will confirm dates with the Planning Inspectorate should it wish to do so utilising the Contact Plan template within the pre-application prospectus. The Planning Inspectorate also advised the developer to begin thinking about drafting Statements of Common Ground as recent common practice has been for appointed Examining Authorities to request them early on in the examination stage.

The developer explained that there is common land at the northern end of the site and that the necessary consents will be sought outside the DCO process.

Statutory consultation under s42, 47 & 48 of the PA 2008 is expected to take place in Q1 of 2015.

The Planning Inspectorate requested the developer clearly demonstrate how the approved application and the application for development consent under the PA 2008 differ from each other.

The developer requested that the Planning Inspectorate consider the possibility of implementing an accelerated examination timetable should the application be accepted for examination; the Planning Inspectorate has a statutory duty to complete an examination of an application for development consent within 6 months. In this instance the developer declared its hope that any potential examination stage could be done in a shorter timescale due to large parts of the proposals already have been consented.

The Planning Inspectorate takes an impartial approach to the timetabling of examinations of applications for development consent; the applicant was informed that the requirements and availability of all interested parties, not just the developer, must be taken into consideration when scheduling a timetable for examination. The possibility of conducting an accelerated examination will be considered and discussed by the Planning Inspectorate.

It was agreed that a further meeting, in the near future, should take during the pre-application stage leading up to the submission of the application. The developer also offered the opportunity for Planning Inspectorate staff members to conduct a site visit of the proposed development prior to the submission; this opportunity was welcomed.