



Meeting note

File reference

Status

Final

Author

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Meeting with

Snowdonia Pumped Hydro, Gwynedd Council and Natural Resources Wales

Venue

Caban, Brynrefail, nr Llanberis, Gwynedd, LL55 3NR (preceded by a visit to the site).

Attendees*The Applicant*

Dave Holmes –

Snowdonia Pumped Hydro

Sarah Nixon –

Snowdonia Pumped Hydro

Catherine Anderson -

AECOM

Ben Lewis -

GVA

Gwynedd Council (GC)

Glyn Llewelyn Gruffudd

Gareth Jones

Natural Resources Wales (NRW)

Gareth Thomas

The Planning Inspectorate (PINS)

Kenneth Taylor

David Price

Jenny Colfer

Meeting objectives

For the Planning Inspectorate Staff to visit the site. To meet GC and NRW representatives, for the Planning Inspectorate to outline the Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008) application process and for the applicant to provide a project update.

Circulation

All

Snowdonia Pumped Hydro was made aware of the Planning Inspectorate's openness policy. A project page will be created on the Planning Inspectorate's website and any advice given, including this meeting note, will be published on the project page under s51 of the PA 2008, as amended by the Localism Act 2011. Any advice given does not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) can rely.

A site visit was conducted with PINS staff and the applicant (GC and NRW were not present).

Prior to departing, the applicant provided an overview of the site, including some intended changes to the Order limits, compared to the application site for the previous Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA) application. The applicant outlined the various approach roads to the site highlighting which would be used for construction traffic.

A visit to both quarries was conducted, starting with the higher quarry (Q1) followed by the lower quarry (Q6). The applicant outlined the extent of the dam walls proposed to be constructed, pointed out the location of the proposed permanent slate tip and the proposed alteration to the existing public right of way. At the lower quarry (Q6) the extent of the proposed dam wall was also described.

The visit continued to the adjacent vacant industrial site where the proposed power house would be located on platform 5. The applicant outlined the approximate location of the proposed building and the sub terrestrial turbine house.

The meeting then continued to the location of the proposed pumping station near Llyn Padarn.

Meeting

Following introductions, PINS outlined the application process under the PA 2008. GC was advised of the parts of the process where their input would be sought, including providing comments on the adequacy of consultation and the production of a Local Impact Report (LIR). PINS advised that preparation for the production of an Adequacy of Consultation report and the LIR could be carried out at an early stage to assist with meeting timescales. GC was advised to ensure that the necessary delegations were in place to aid with meeting time scales. PINS advised GC to look at Adequacy of Consultation responses and LIRs on the Planning Portal for recently submitted NSIPs to aid with structuring their documents.

GC, NRW and the applicant asked various questions clarifying the process, which PINS responded to.

GC and the applicant highlighted that transportation during the construction phase and the transmission connection had been issues of particular concern to some local residents during the consideration of the TCPA application and these could well be raised again through the course of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application.

There was a discussion as to the approach to structuring the Environmental Statement (ES) in view of the recently approved development under the TCPA. The applicant was informed that whilst the TCPA application had been subject to the necessary process this did not circumvent the requirements of the PA 2008. Therefore, it would be necessary for the ES to provide a robust assessment of the significant impacts associated with the proposed development allowed for in the DCO. It was also explained that the Examining Authority would be free to exercise discretion in identifying the main issues for the examination and it could not be assumed that the issues identified as part of the TCPA process would be consistent with the TCPA. The applicant was reminded of the relationship that exists between EIA Regulations 6 and 9 as well as s42 of PA 2008 and the need for statutory consultation. The applicant was

also informed about the EIA scoping process followed by PINS and the potential benefits this has to the process. PINS emphasised the benefits to the process of closer working relationships in the pre-application stages and reminded the applicant of the offer included within the PINS pre-application prospectus. This includes the ability to provide useful s51 advice and to review and comment on draft application documents.

The applicant provided an update on the project time scales, which were currently envisaged to be as follows:

- Submit a letter to PINS, under Regulation 6 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 (as amended), notifying of their intention to provide an environmental statement in respect of the development in December 2014.
- Statutory consultation to be carried out from January 2015.
- The application to be submitted in the latter part of Q1 or the early part of Q2 2015.

The applicant also confirmed that they had recently issued a press release outlining the intention to increase the generating capacity and therefore the need to seek a DCO. The applicant confirmed that had also recently written to occupants of properties in close proximity to the site, and those who had previously attended their consultation events, outlining the intention to submit an application for a DCO.