Dear Hefin,

Please find attached my written submission on Experience following the Open Floor Hearing on 22 July 2019.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Kind regards,

Marie
Open Floor Hearing – 22 July 2019

Marie King, Graveney resident

I had originally planned to voice my concerns about the applicant’s experience to build and operate a development of this size and type. However, the examiners kindly included most of this in their questioning at the Need hearing last week.

The outstanding concern I have, that wasn’t covered, is about a comment made in Wirsol’s press release on 25 January 2016 which announced agreement for a 60MW solar farm in Scandinavia. This included, and I quote, “the photovoltaic plant is also the first project, since WIRSOL’s fresh start in the year 2013, for which the project planners have obtained secure financial backing…..”.

I have been unable to find any reference to this fresh start on the Wirsol website but Wikipedia included, and I quote, “Between October 2013 and January 2014, several subsidiaries of the company initiated insolvency proceedings. Assets including the brand name were acquired by Wircon GmbH.”

In view of the size of the proposed development, and the amount of investment required, I believe we should be provided with full details of how this situation arose and some assurances that this situation will not be repeated in the future.

The relevant articles / information is included below.
Financial partnership between project planners and LBBW set to run for 15 years

Situated in Lørenskog in Norway, the solar park has been connected to the grid since December 2015. It was built by the project engineering company and energy supplier Wirsol, based in Wiesbaden, Germany. It is the first successful completion of what is the Baden-Württemberg company's biggest solar park to date that offers cause for celebration. "The photovoltaic plant, which is also the first project, since Wirsol's first start in the year 2013, for which the project planners have obtained secure financial backing for 15 years from Landesbank Baden-Württemberg (LBBW) – the Baden-Württemberg federal state bank," says Peter Veit, Managing Director of Wirsol. Over an area of more than 90 hectares, the solar plant contains 270,739 solar modules, and is currently producing around 1795 terawatt hours, making it the biggest solar project in Scandinavia. Past experience has shown that by working with LBBW, we can set up successful and cost-effective financing arrangements for our projects.

LBBW has been involved in the area of renewable energy for many years. The bank has structured and financed numerous projects both within Germany and abroad. This is LBBW's first financing of a photovoltaic project in Denmark. The customer-specific and holistic transaction comprises not just bridge financing and financing to completion; it also incorporates currency hedging arrangements and a precisely defined foreign currency and cash management structure. "says Andreas Sahl, head of LBBW's Large Corporates division.

Wirsol sees the solar park in Lørenskog as being just the curtain-closer for many further projects in its European target markets. The plant on the Baltic coast gives a good impression of what we are capable of as a company," Peter Veit explains, and goes on: "The Lørenskog project is clear confirmation that Wirsol is admirably set up to meet the future - both in its own right as a company, and on the basis of its partners and backers.'
Wirsol

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Wirsol Solar AG ([German pronunciation: [ˈvɪrsɔl]] is an international solar energy provider, specialized in the planning, financing, construction and maintenance of solar power plants of any size. The headquarters of the company is in Germany. Further company offices are located in Spain, Italy, Great Britain, Belgium, Netherlands, Canada, USA, China, Vietnam and the Subcontinent.10

Company history

The company was founded in Waghäusel ([District of Karlsruhe, Germany]) in February 2005 by Markus Wirth, Hans Wirth and Stefan Riet in the “Hausseweiler GmbH”, where the headquarters of the firm are also located. Having specialized in the area of photovoltaics, the firm was named “Wirsol Solar AG” in January 2004 and from this year, the name “Wirsol Solar AG” in 2007. In the same year, the company opened the Bavarian solar test park in close proximity to the company premises. A total surface area of 12 hectares makes it the biggest solar park in the state of Bavaria. Wirsol is one of the 30 companies that installed the plant. The power generation capacity of up to 2.05 MWp and provides 700 households with electricity. This corresponds to a yearly CO2 saving of around 1000 tons. In 2010, the board of directors was expanded by company founders Markus Wirth and Stefan Riet. Since then, Martin Kublisch has been the chief financial officer. Nicolas Krumme, previously part of the Conway board, oversees international financial products and is responsible for international marketing and communications. In April 2010, Wirsol installed a photovoltaic system at the German Formula One race track Nürburgring with a rated output of 546.69 kWp. Along the 40.6 km long race track, 476 solar modules were installed.11

In 2011, the solar energy company generated a turnover of 317 million Euros. Wirsol finalized one of its largest projects in this financial year in Minsk, in Belarus. The company built a system with a peak performance of 24.11 kV with the 61.75 hectare site of a former Russian Air Base. Likewise, in 2010, Wirsol connected the high-output Luziak Solar Park (with almost 21 MWp) to the grid on a conversion site in Szamocin. The solar power plant originated from the former military airport called Altreto. As a result, over 4500 households can be provided with energy.12

On a global level, Wirsol is responsible for the development and implementation of many large-scale projects. Its global footprint reaches from China (a total CO2 saving of over 180,000 tons per year) to the United States and further promotes good business relations with Asia. Wirsol co-founder Stefan Riet relocated to Beijing as the first representative of a German company and created a company location in China with Wirsol Solar Technology Beijing Ltd.13 In June 2012, Wirsol opened a location in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia to coordinate activities in Southeast Asia.

Between October 2013 and January 2014, several subsidiaries of the company initiated insolvency proceedings. Assets including the brand name were acquired by Wircon GmbH ([acquired by Deilmann Hopp) in March 2014.14

Portfolio

Wirsol offers complete technical and commercial projects of solar energy from advice, planning, procurement and maintenance to service and financing.

Wirsol offers companies:

1. Solar power plants for private households
2. Solar power plants for companies and industrial applications
3. Solar energy research
4. Commerce with components and complete systems
5. Operations & Maintenance
6. Hybrid systems / Substitution of Diesel

International Projects

Worldwide, Wirsol is active in a variety of projects. The company founded the joint venture named “Wirsol RE Matkasse” with REM (Renewable Energy Matkasse), where solar power stations have already been installed on six of the Maldives islands and where electricity is supplied to schools and hospitals.15 Further significant international projects have been finalized by Wirsol in Spain (Barcelona, Girona), Italy (Molise & Basilicata), Belgium (Scheldt), Lebanon and Colorado (Fort Collins).16

Sponsoring

From 2011/2012 Bundesliga soccer season, Wirsol Solar AG has been the official sponsor of TSgov. It has been the official sponsor of TSG 1899 Hoffenheim. In Sinsheim, Wirsol gave the Würth Rhein-Neckar Arena its name. This is where 1899 Hoffenheim hold their home games, since the second half of the 2019/20 season, the stadium got a new naming partner17. The former Würth Rhein-Neckar Arena is now called PreZero Arena, which is a landmark of German Green Cycle Center18.

References

1. “Vorschau auf die Bundesliga” ([German]). Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 2011-09-10[retrieved 1 October 2012]
3. Solar makes Hochkernplant the first green F1 race track in the world ([German]) Hochkernplant.net, 2010-07-31[retrieved 1 October 2012]

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wirsol