



Meeting note

Project name	Medworth Energy from Waste Combined Heat and Power Facility
File reference	EN010110
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	21 October 2021
Meeting with	MVV Environment Ltd / Wood plc
Venue	Microsoft Teams Meeting
Meeting objectives	Project Update
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which Developers (or others) could rely.

The Inspectorate informed the Applicant that Hefin Jones has taken over from Mark Wilson as Operations Manager for the Inspectorate's Energy Team.

Anticipated submission date

Q1 2022.

Project update

The Applicant gave an account of the statutory consultation that it carried out between 28 June and 13 August 2021; the approach to consultation had been agreed with the host local authorities (Fenland District Council, King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and Norfolk County Council). Physical consultation exhibitions were held in July at eight locations and documents were available to inspect at five locations. Virtual exhibitions were available on the Applicant's website. Notices advising of the consultation period were placed in both local and national press and information was sent to addresses within the inner consultation zone. A website, email address and telephone number were made available for consultees to contact the Applicant.

The Inspectorate advised that it would be helpful if the Applicant included details of attendance, both at physical and virtual events, in its Consultation Report. The Applicant received approximately 700 responses to its consultation, which it is currently analysing. The responses shall be categorised by topic, which will allow the Applicant to better respond to the comments received.

Examples of these topics are; air quality, socioeconomic issues, environmental issues and traffic and transport, including route optionality. Evidence of this undertaking will be documented in the Consultation Report.

Design Changes

The Applicant has engaged with Network Rail's planning team, but these negotiations had not been productive, resulting in an objection in response to the statutory consultation.

The Applicant has since had further engagement with Network Rail, which has led to constructive discussions in relation to laying infrastructure, such as a steam pipe along a disused railway line, the crossing of Network Rail land and the compatibility with any future proposal to reinstate the Wisbech to March line. Monthly follow up meetings are scheduled, which will include discussions on protective provisions.

The Inspectorate advised that progress should be covered in a Statement of Common Ground with Network Rail when the application is submitted.

Grid connection

The Applicant has previously approached UK Power Networks (UKPN) for a grid connection, either at Walpole or Walsoken. UKPN had proposed that a connection at Walpole was appropriate. This approach formed the basis of the grid connection options during the Statutory Consultation.

The Applicant requested UKPN to reconsider the proposal for Walsoken for the connection, which they have now agreed to. Subsequently, the option for a grid connection at Walpole will be removed from the DCO application. This will significantly reduce the land required for the project.

The Applicant explained that the cables would leave the site underground. Discussions have been ongoing with National Highways (formally Highways England) to allow these cables to run under the verge of the A47.

The Applicant clarified that the project will require its own substation adjacent to the UKPN substation at Walsoken, and is working to identify what land may be required to deliver this.

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to document in the Consultation Report, how they had taken views into account in shaping the final proposal.

The Inspectorate suggested that the Applicant should consider if a further round of consultation was required or if targeted consultation, where new landowners have been identified, would enable it to demonstrate that it has undertaken adequate consultation. Adequacy of consultation during the pre-application stage is a key test in the acceptance of any application.

The Applicant stated that it was planning a community newsletter in the new year to help inform stakeholders of the changes to the proposal since statutory consultation.

Draft Documents

The Inspectorate encourages all prospective Applicants to submit draft documents for review, ahead of any application. The Applicant would like to take advantage of this service.

The Inspectorate advised that the Applicant should supply, in advance, a list of which documents they are planning to submit along with a time frame for when the documents would be submitted. The Applicant was also advised to note any specific issues within the documents on which advice was requested and to highlight any novel drafting of the DCO it wanted reviewed. The Inspectorate confirmed that the documents will not be published but any advice given on them will be published under s51 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008).

The Inspectorate advised that the Applicant have regard to Advice Note 6, which has recently been updated, specifically in relation to hyperlinks within application documents.

Submission Matters

The submission date was discussed and the Applicant; it is now targeting a Q1 2022 submission date for the application.

The Applicant asked if hard copies of documents would be required. The Inspectorate stated that electronic copies were preferred, but that it retains the possibility of requesting certain hard copy documents, such as plans.

The Applicant asked if there is a requirement to have hard copy documents on display in the local vicinity. The Inspectorate advised that there was no requirement to have hardcopy documents available, but that it would suggest places where stakeholders without access to IT could access the electronic copies on the Inspectorates website (such as in local libraries).

The Applicant asked if it were necessary to include information in relation to commercially sensitive business arrangements. The Inspectorate advised that it is under a duty to publish all examination documents, excepting matters that have legal implications (such as information on badger setts etc.), and that the Applicant should not include any information which it does not want in the public domain.

The Inspectorate suggested that a summary of information is included, and gave the example of how compulsory acquisition was a matter for examination, but not the specific restitution offered to land owners.

Any other business

Specific decisions/ follow-up required?

The following actions were agreed:

- Next meeting to be scheduled for January 2022

