



Meeting note

Project name	Lighthouse Green Fuels Project
File reference	EN010150
Status	FINAL
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	01 November 2023
Meeting with	Lighthouse Green Fuels Limited
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Meeting objectives	Project Update Meeting
Circulation	All attendees/ additional contacts to share meeting note

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 applicants (or others) could rely.

Update on the scheme

Changes to scheme

The Applicant provided an overview of the changes to the site boundary since the Section (s) 35 direction decision on 25 October 2022. It explained that in principle the site area had increased as a result of engineering maturity and other elements of the plant had increased in size. It explained that there is a larger storage requirement for feedstock due to the patterns for feedstock processing which the plant needs to accommodate. The Applicant confirmed that the footprint of the rail terminal has remained the same since the s35 direction. The Applicant explained that there is a preference to have provision for silos at the terminal, although the choice for silos has not yet been made, and that the land boundary has expanded for liquid storage tanks. It confirmed that studies are underway to determine the optimal mode of transport of the product to airports, road, rail, and ship options are being explored. The rail line had expanded in response to cover the ownership transfer point between Navigator and Network rail. The Applicant explained that it expected to put new track at the rail terminal to receive solid material at the east of the site.

The Inspectorate asked whether the rail works were included in the NSIP. The Applicant explained that it has a private strategic partnership with Navigator and that the new private track would be contained within Navigator land. It confirmed that the new track length would not exceed 400m and therefore does not meet the criteria for an NSIP in the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008).

The Applicant explained that the heavy haul road had been refined and that the purpose of the plot is to seek Temporary Possession (TP) for an offloading facility. The offloading facility will be designed to handle prefabricated modules. The Applicant explained that cable infrastructure will be needed to provide power to the LGF plant as well as associated infrastructure, for example conveying equipment, and that flexibility is needed for the number of pipelines required. It explained that the pipes located next to the terminal are to be used for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) and naphtha products. The existing pipeline corridor outside TV1 and TV2 will be utilised, as well as potentially other pipeline corridor routes. The Applicant explained that it may be advantageous to bring pipes immediately north to the central corridor as there may be an issue with capacity in existing pipeline corridor.

The Applicant explained the possibility of a commercial agreement instead of acquiring land for the Navigator terminal. It explained that Navigator are conducting a study whether existing bulk liquid storage tanks can be repurposed. If not, new tankage will need to be constructed within the Navigator terminal.

The Inspectorate enquired whether the new layout presented was the same as what was provided in the Scoping Report. The Applicant explained that there had been minor changes to pipeline routes and that jetties in southern point had decreased. It explained that the red line boundary had been reduced on wharfs but was principally the same. The Applicant explained that it is exploring two options for wharfs during construction which will remain in the PEIR and refined down at ES stage.

The Applicant explained that the plant has a large demand for oxygen and as a result it intends to acquire the plot of the existing adjacent air separation unit.

The Inspectorate queried what the implications of the changes were on the s35 direction. The Applicant explained that it intends to request a new s35 direction from the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero.

Update following issue of EIA Scoping Opinion and EIA update.

The Applicant stated that discussions with Natural England (NE) and the Environment Agency (EA) were on-going.

The Applicant asked for clarification on some of the matters scoped in in the Scoping Opinion, including cultural heritage and geology and soils. The Inspectorate advised that the Scoping Opinion is based on the information provided within the Scoping Report at that moment in time and will not be changed after it is issued. Notwithstanding this, should further information come to light (in the course of producing the Environmental Statement (ES)) there is the potential for the scope of the ES to be refined further in agreement with consultees – justification for any divergence from the scope in the Opinion should be provided in the ES. The Applicant is referred to paragraph 1.1.4 of the Scoping Opinion for information on this. It advised that during the Acceptance stage, checks will include whether scope of the ES follows that in the Scoping Opinion.

Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)

The Applicant stated that it intends to finalise the PEIR before Christmas.

Surveys

The Applicant explained that further surveys on site and the wider area had been undertaken since the Scoping Opinion was provided. The Applicant explained that it had experienced issues with land access for seasonal surveys. It explained that on the TV1 and TV2 site it had since discovered indicator species for salt marsh habitat which the current landowner is in the process of assessing. The Applicant had had discussions with Natural England and local authorities (LA) over the extant permission and the impact on the future baseline which has a bearing on the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

With respect to the HRA, the Applicant offered to submit draft screening and integrity matrices to the Inspectorate at PEIR stage. The Inspectorate advised that screening and integrity matrices are no longer required by PINS, though the Applicant is at liberty to include them within their shadow HRA Report. The Inspectorate advised that the draft HRA Report would be best received within a bundle of draft documents nearer to the submission date, due to the Applicant's ongoing discussions and consultation.

Consultation and engagement

The Applicant stated that since the last update meeting held on 12 June 2023, it had had discussions with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, neighbouring LAs and the local community. It stated that the project website had launched, which features an animation to visualise the SAF process. Media adverts had featured in the local press, and they had completed further meetings with local MPs and local authorities in early October 2023.

The Applicant stated that discussions with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council as the host authority had influenced the consultation approach. The Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) period closes at the end of November 2023. Statutory Consultation is intended to run between 31 January 2024 and 10 March 2024.

Programme and ways of working with PINS.

Indicative Programme

Statutory consultation: 31 January 2024 - 10 March 2024.

Draft document review: Q2/Q3 2024

DCO submission: Q3 2024

The Inspectorate asked to be provided with updates on any factors which may cause the submission date to be delayed.

The Inspectorate asked for how the s35 direction fits within the timeframe. The Applicant explained that it intends to apply for and receive the direction before the start of statutory consultation.

The Applicant stated it intends to share draft docs in Spring 2024 and requested one meeting before doing so. The Inspectorate suggested a meeting in March. The Inspectorate advised the draft review process can take between six and eight weeks.

AOB

The Inspectorate requested to be notified of the s35 decision.