



# Meeting note

<b>Project name</b>	Vyrnwy to Frankton
<b>File reference</b>	N/A
<b>Status</b>	<b>Final</b>
<b>Author</b>	The Planning Inspectorate
<b>Date</b>	18 May 2023
<b>Meeting with</b>	Bute Energy & Green GEN Cymru
<b>Venue</b>	Microsoft Teams
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Inception Meeting
<b>Circulation</b>	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 applicants (or others) could rely.

The Inspectorate explained that the publication of the meeting note could be delayed up to six months, or until a formal scoping request had been submitted (if requested by an Applicant for commercial reasons).

## Proposed Development

The Applicant introduced Bute Energy & Green Gen Cymru and explained that there is no existing electricity network in Mid Wales able to accommodate new proposed renewable energy generation. The proposal is to develop a route for a new 132kV electricity connection from the proposed Llyn Lort Energy Park, and other proposed energy parks in mid Wales to the existing 400kV transmission network, at a point near Lower Frankton, Shropshire in mid-west England. Bute Energy & Green Gen Cymru are separate companies but aim to deliver Energy Parks and Grid lines by the end of 2028. The Applicant discussed the grid design, stating that it proposes to use 132kV steel lattice pylons, typically 27m, which can potentially be screened by topography and vegetation. The Applicant had considered other designs, such as wooden pole options, however it was decided that this was not able to achieve the required capacity on single routes, so multiple overhead lines would be required. In its calculations, when considering wooden pole options, the Applicant confirmed it would require approximately four times the number of poles compared to steel lattice pylons to achieve the required capacity.

## EIA Scoping

The Applicant informed the Inspectorate that it aims to submit a Scoping request in Q1 2024.

## **Consenting Plan**

The Applicant discussed the approach to consent, outlining that a Development Consent Order (DCO) is required for a 132kV overhead line from the cable sealing end in Wales, to a National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) transmission substation in England (approx. 45km).

Bute Energy's proposed renewable energy projects do not form part of this project and will follow the Developments of National Significance (DNS) consenting regime.

Associated Development will include a collector (switching) substation in Wales, which could collect energy from existing and new onshore energy parks, and an underground cable from the substation to a cable sealing end compound in Wales. The underground cables would carry the electricity through the planned energy park.

## **Statutory Consultation**

The Applicant aims to begin section 42 and section 47 consultation in late 2024. It also confirmed that it wishes to avoid consulting on too many applications (DCO/DNS) simultaneously.

The Applicant shared that the DNS application was likely to be submitted to Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) at the same time as the NSIP application. The Inspectorate queried the Applicant's intentions regarding Welsh translation. The Applicant confirmed that all elements of the application will be bilingual, aside from the technical documents which will be predominantly English. Welsh versions of these documents will be available on request. These documents will likely consist of the Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Statement, websites and newsletters. In addition, the Applicant shared that fluent Welsh speaking officers will be employed throughout the DCO process.

## **Non-Statutory Consultation**

The Applicant shared that it would start non-statutory consultation on route corridors in September 2023. Parties will be engaged via letters, phone calls and personal visits to landowners along the proposed cable route corridor. Visits will be carried out by surveyors and agents from WSP, along with Bute Energy, to verify ownership, occupation and where required, discuss terms to allow non-intrusive environmental surveys to be carried out on the affected land. The Applicant discussed landowner engagement. All access arrangements are planned to be achieved on a voluntary basis, with s172 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to be used to ensure sufficient survey data is achieved. The Applicant has no intention to use s52 of the PA2008.

## **AOB**

The Inspectorate queried the Applicant's engagement with Natural Resources Wales (NRW). The Applicant have been in discussion with NRW and want to offer support, as there are several proposals promoted outside of its statutory requirements. The Applicant want to engage early, to receive NRW's opinion as early as possible. The Inspectorate queried a similar position with Powys County Council and the Applicant confirmed that it is supporting them where possible.

The Applicant applied to the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM) for a Independent Distribution Network Operator (DNO) which is expected in July/ August 2023.