



Meeting note

Project name	H2Teesside
File reference	EN070009
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	14 June 2023
Meeting with	H2 Teesside Limited
Venue	Telecon
Meeting objectives	Project Update Meeting
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 applicants (or others) could rely.

Proposed Development

The proposed development seeks to build a 'blue' hydrogen production facility targeting 1.2 GW of low carbon hydrogen by 2030. This will be delivered in two phases; 600MW in operation by 2028 followed by a second phase of 600MW by 2030.

The Applicant explained that blue hydrogen is created via a reformation process using natural gas as the feedstock. A by-product of this process is Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) which is captured and stored for secure long-term storage under the North Sea, via the Northern Endurance Partnership pipeline.

A hydrogen distribution network forms part of the Proposed Development, which enables hydrogen to be supplied to users in the area.

The Inspectorate asked if the Applicant had secured sufficient water abstraction rights or whether this could be an issue for the examination. The Applicant explained that it is still considering the supply of water for the Proposed Development and that it anticipates that water can be supplied from an existing Northumbrian Water Limited (NWL) supply at the Net Zero Teesside (NZN) site, which would not require a further water abstraction licence.

The Inspectorate asked if the effluent outfall would be covered by existing licences for NZN. The Applicant explained that effluent discharge would either be by the proposed NZN outfall or treatment of wastewater from the Effluent Treatment plant and reuse as makeup water in the Water Treatment Plant. Liquid waste (concentrate sludge/waste) would be taken off site for further treatment. The Applicant has been in discussions with Natural England and the Environment Agency about the approach to effluent discharge, and is working on modelling to demonstrate that there would be no additional nutrient load as a

result of the Proposed Development. The Applicant has the benefit of discussion at the NZT Examination on this matter..

The Inspectorate asked if the Applicant had considered how the Development Consent Order (DCO) would seek to control and provide flexibility of phasing of the Proposed Development, and any implications for mitigation, and monitoring/ discharge of requirements by the local authorities. The Applicant stated that it is considering the options of how phasing can be managed and that the Environmental Statement (ES) would assess the scenarios. It would seek comments from the statutory consultation bodies on the approach through the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).

Proposed Development Site Boundary

The Applicant explained that the Order Limits have been determined through operational need, such as the hydrogen distribution network, and have been refined since the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Opinion and feedback received through stakeholder engagement. Technical studies are being carried out to ensure delivery of utilities, such as grid connection.

The Inspectorate asked if there were any separate consents or permits being sought outside of the DCO process. The Applicant stated that it currently did not expect there to be any other consents or licences required.

Review of EIA scoping

Following the issuing of the Scoping Opinion, the Applicant has identified issues that require improvement in its assessment. The PEIR shall address the comments that the Applicant has received from stakeholders.

Statutory Consultation

The Applicant has drawn on experience gained through the consultation carried out for NZT and the HyGreen Teesside projects to inform its approach to consultation for the H2 Teesside project. There shall be one round of consultation, which is the Statutory Consultation.

The Applicant has carried out informal consultation on the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) with the relevant local authorities (Cleveland Borough Council, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and Hartlepool Borough Council), and also the Tees Valley Combined authority and the South Tees Development Corporation. Statutory consultation on the SoCC is currently being carried out with Cleveland Borough Council, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and Hartlepool Borough Council.

The Applicant expects the Statutory Consultation period to commence in early July 2023 and end in mid-August. In addition to writing to the prescribed parties, the Applicant plans to carry out community focused activities will include face-to-face events, leaflets, online documents and webinars.

Update on Programme

The Applicant is currently taking into account the information in the Scoping Opinion, finalising the PEIR and producing the documentation for the Statutory Consultation.

Following the Statutory Consultation period, the Applicant will be working on finalising its application documents, with a planned submission in September 2023.

The Inspectorate asked if the Applicant planned to submit draft documents for review, and reminded the Applicant that the usual period for reviewing these is six to eight weeks. The Applicant responded to confirm that it would not seek a general review but instead would request a targeted review of queries in relation to the draft DCO.

The Inspectorate acknowledges the Applicant's team experience in producing documents for a DCO application for a DCO and requests that specific topics for review are provided.

The Inspectorate asked if the delay to the decision by the Secretary of State for the NZT Project would have an impact of the submission for H2Teesside. The Applicant does not envisage a delay to the H2Teesside submission date but will review its options.

The Inspectorate asked if the Applicant had advised Statutory Consultees of the planned summer consultation period, as statutory bodies often have diminished resources during the summer period. The Applicant acknowledged the point and stated it will make contact with these key stakeholders to discuss.

The Inspectorate asked if the alternatives under consideration in the Scoping Report had been refined to preferred options and if this was likely to have an impact on the planned submission date. The Applicant stated that it had taken feedback on board with regard to optionality for the river crossing, main site and electrical connection, but that it still required flexibility and that the various options have been assessed in the ES. The Applicant stated that the preferred option for the river crossing and main site would be indicated but the electrical connection might not be resolved, although the Applicant did not consider that this would be material in terms of environmental effects.

The Inspectorate asked if the Applicant had engaged with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), and if it had, how work was progressing. The Applicant confirmed that it consulted with HSE as part of a roundtable with all major hydrogen projects. Discussion focused on land use and contours. HSE has no major concerns at this stage. The Inspectorate encouraged further consultation with HSE, both for the H2 Teesside project and for the wider sector in general, to help identify key issues and responsibilities for all stakeholders.

Any Other Business

The Applicant asked when it would be useful to hold the next project update Meeting.

The Inspectorate advised that towards the end or following the closure of the statutory consultation period would be useful, to allow key issues from the consultation to be discussed.

The Inspectorate advised for the Applicant to keep it updated with regard to the programme and to arrange for the submission of draft docs with the case team.