



Meeting note

File reference

Status

FINAL

Author

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Date

30 October 2013

Meeting with

National Grid

Venue

Temple Quay House

Attendees

Kathryn Powell – Planning Inspectorate
Jan Bessell – Planning Inspectorate
Tom Carpen – Planning Inspectorate
Caroline Harvey – Planning Inspectorate
Anna Eastgate – Planning Solicitor National Grid
Tim Bull – National Grid
Catherine McCloskey – National Grid

Meeting objectives

General Meeting Update

Circulation

All

The Planning Inspectorate advised that a note of the meeting will be taken and it is unable to provide legal advice on which applicants and others can rely.

National Grid (NG) explained their Consents Team Organisational Structure and the cases they were responsible for. Timothy Ball the Gas Sector Leader, and Catherine McCloskey the Electricity Sector Leader, explained their role is to provide an oversight of the projects. However, in future they will oversee a mix of projects, not just those in their sector specialism.

An outline of the Planning Inspectorate's team structure for national infrastructure was explained. Infrastructure Planning Leads focus on pre-application advice to applicants and are internally responsible for the management of the cases assigned within their teams including resourcing, as well as other strategic work. Each team which is led by an Infrastructure Planning Lead is made up of Case Managers (who manage the projects through the process), Case Officers and Assistant Case Officers. In some instances Examining Inspectors have provided advice to applicants, in these cases they will not examine and report on such projects following submission.

Update on National Grid NSIP Proposals

NG gave a brief update and overview of their infrastructure projects as follows:

Pre-application

NG has undertaken pre-statutory consultation on the Mid Wales Connection project. The anticipated submission date is not confirmed, however it is considered to be in or around Q1 of 2015.

A review on the need case for the Bramford to Twinstead project was underway and NG will update the Planning Inspectorate shortly.

Discussion is ongoing regarding the preferred route for the North West Coast Connection Project.

The Richborough Connection proposal consultations had a very good response. 600 feedback questionnaires had been given out with 400 responses. This application is due to be submitted in Q3 in 2015.

Consultation for the Yorkshire and Humber Carbon Pipeline proposal was due to commence on 1 November 2013 with a predicted submission date in early 2015.

NG will be in contact shortly regarding a replacement gas pipeline under the river Humber.

Submitted Applications

The Examining authority (ExA) closed the examination stage for the North London Reinforcement project on 23 October 2013. The ExA is expected to submit its recommendation to the Secretary of State by 23 January 2014.

The King's Lynn Connection decision is expected on 10 January 2014.

NG and the Planning Inspectorate will hold a feedback meeting for each proposal following the issue of the decision.

What Constitutes a NSIP

NG is currently compiling a corporate view on what constitutes a NSIP in accordance with section 14 of the Planning Act 2008 as amended (PA 2008) and what constitutes associated development.

The Planning Inspectorate advised NG to liaise with Welsh Government on this issue and to ensure Welsh Government is consulted on the draft DCO for projects in Wales. The Planning Inspectorate also advised that when forming a view on what constitutes a NSIP for each proposal, applicants should first review the primary legislation. The PA 2008 refers back to the Electricity Act 1989 for certain definitions; this may assist NG in deciding on their approach.

NG was also advised to liaise with the Department for Energy and Climate Change and the Department for Communities and Local Government on the subject of associated development.

Expiration of a DCO

NG queried if the expiration of a DCO could be over the standard of 5 years. The Planning Inspectorate advised that the applicant's evidence for this would need to be robust. This can be tested by the applicant at the pre-application stage through consultation and should be picked up in the Environmental Statement. It may be an examination issue so any variation should be justified.

Other Business

NG briefly discussed the EU Projects of Common Interest.

Knowledge building was discussed. NG aims to hold sessions at the Planning Inspectorate to explain their processes and how their networks operate.