



Meeting note

File reference	None
Status	Final
Author	Steffan Jones
Date	18 June 2013
Meeting with	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Venue	Meeting Room 1 – Temple Quay House, Bristol
Attendees	Mark Wilson - Principal Case Manager Jessica Potter – Principal Case Manager Robert Ranger – Case Manager Sheila Twidle – Head of Environmental Services Steffan Jones – Case Officer Gareth Hall – Major Energy Programme Delivery Manager Christian Branch – PPA Implementation Lead Rhys Jones – PPA Design Lead Amy Owen - PMO Support Officer Dafydd Roberts – PMO Technical Assistant
Meeting objectives	To identify best practice in the planning process and identify opportunities for joint working with other parties.
Circulation	All

Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

Overview of major energy projects on Anglesey

Gareth Hall began the meeting by giving the Planning Inspectorate an overview of Anglesey County Council and their vision for the proposed National Infrastructure projects on and in the vicinity of the Isle of Anglesey.

Anglesey County Council gave the Planning Inspectorate an update on all Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects proposed in the Anglesey area and their relationship with the developers. Currently proposed in the area are:

- Wylfa New Nuclear Power Station proposed by Horizon Nuclear Power,
- Rhiannon Wind Farm (Round 3 Irish Sea Zone) proposed by Celtic Array Ltd; and
- North Wales Connection proposed by National Grid

The Planning Inspectorate asked how the Council intended to resource these applications and the discussion moved on to the use of Planning Performance

Agreements (PPA). The Council informed the Planning Inspectorate that they have a PPA in place with all three major developers. The Planning Inspectorate emphasised the need for clarity between the developers and the Council about the level, if any, of funding before **and after** submission of the applications.

Isle of Anglesey County Council (IACC) Major Energy Consents Mapping

The Council produced a project spreadsheet for members of the meeting, mapping the high level timescales of the proposed projects.

The Council highlighted the importance of developers' consultation phases not clashing, and that the community are clear on exactly who is consulting on what at any given time, therefore avoiding consultation fatigue.

The Council was advised by the Planning Inspectorate that once a Scoping request has been made, that the clock is ticking and stipulated the importance of timescales and resourcing at this stage of the process. Other amendments to the schedule were also suggested by PINS in respect of the likely progress of the Wylfa project, according to statutory timescales, and using other large project timelines as a guide (Hinkley Point C and Thames Tideway Tunnel).

Overview of other DCOs in Wales

The Planning Inspectorate gave the Council a brief overview of which projects are currently 'live' in Wales; information on these projects can be found on the National Infrastructure Planning website.

The Planning Inspectorate has a Welsh Language Scheme.

Public Outreach Event

The Council welcomed the potential of the Planning Inspectorate holding an outreach event to the public on Anglesey later this year. The Council invited the Planning Inspectorate to run an outreach event to Council members in order to set the framework and give the Council members and the community a better idea of the process under the Planning Act 2008. It was advised that the outreach event be conducted in Welsh to the Council members and bilingually to the public.

Both parties agreed it would be best practice to ensure that the Planning Inspectorate's outreach events do not conflict with any consultation events being carried out with the public by developers in order to prevent consultation fatigue. However, it was recognised that the outreach programme was required prior to any consultation undertaken by the developers to inform Members of the DCO planning process.

Examples of Best Practice

It was explained to the Planning Inspectorate that the Council is currently liaising with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) who are the principle adviser to the Welsh Government on the environment, enabling the sustainable development of Wales' natural resources.

The Council informed the Planning Inspectorate that they have been in contact with

Somerset Council in order to identify their knowledge and experience of the Planning Act 2008 regime and nuclear proposals from the Hinkley Point C project.

The Planning Inspectorate stated the importance of the production of Statements of Common Ground (SoCG); it was advised that the Council thinks of topic areas to include within the SoCG and to progress these topics throughout the production, whilst ensuring that those matters that cannot be agreed on between parties are also included within the SoCG. PINS commented that experience to date suggested the production of a suite of smaller SoCGs, rather than a large "omnibus edition", can help to expedite the production of these documents. Examining Authorities will use the SoCG to focus the matters which they will deal with at the examination (written and at hearings).

The Planning Inspectorate commented on the importance of the Local Impact Report (LIR) and advised the Council to use the pre-application period to start its own evaluation of the impacts of the proposal. In particular, they should explore the links between the SoCG, the LIR and their written representations. Also any early work done on the proposed Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and its evidence base could benefit the production of the LIR. The LIR needs to be a useful document for the Examining Authority in terms of providing an objective technical assessment of the positive and negative impacts of the scheme on the local area; drawing on a diverse range of inputs from across the full range of the Council's functions (not just planning). There is no requirement for the LIR to come to any conclusions about the Council's view of the application. The Council's Corporate "political" view of the application is better expressed through the Council's written representations.

IACC responsibilities in relation to Associated Development

The Planning Inspectorate informed the Council that there is no definitive list of what is identified and not identified as ancillary or associated development. The Council may want to look at the DCLG Guidance on Associated Development to help inform, their view on this, although this is only applicable to projects in England.

Cumulative Impacts with other developments

The Council was informed by the Planning Inspectorate that information on other projects that would need to be taken into account as part of any cumulative impact assessment in the EIA is presented in all Scoping Opinions by the Planning Inspectorate in Appendix 3. The Council was also advised to consider the Planning Inspectorate's 'Advice Note 9: The Rochdale Envelope' which also set out this information.

The Planning Inspectorate also suggested that the Council may care to consider the publication by RenewableUK entitled 'Cumulative Impact Assessment Guidelines: guiding principles for cumulative impacts assessment in offshore wind farms'. This provided similar guidance but from the perspective of the wind farm industry.

Lessons learnt on Hinkley Point C

The Council was advised to access a power point slide via the National Infrastructure Planning website for information on this. In particular, it was recommended that the Council should talk to the Suffolk authorities' officers involved in the Sizewell C project. This is in addition the contact already made with the Somerset authorities involved in the Hinkley application.

Developers Workshop – 12 July 2013

A workshop is due to be held on 12 July 2013 in Llangefni, Anglesey which will involve bilateral discussions between the developers. This is an opportunity to discuss best practice and find common ground between developers, consider cumulative impacts of the proposed projects, identify baseline consistencies in the data captured and consider jointly commissioning findings.

The Planning Inspectorate reminded the Council that all the required data collected should be robust.

The Council has invited a member of the Planning Inspectorate along to the developers' workshop on 12 July 2013.

AOB

The Planning Inspectorate asked for clarification on how the Anglesey Energy Island Programme differed from the Council, if at all. It was explained that the Energy Island Programme is made up of stakeholders within the public and private sector and deal with developers directly; the Energy Island Programme is used as a vehicle by the Council to promote employment growth and development opportunities.

The Council informed the Planning Inspectorate that following legal advice on the discharge of statutory functions, the Energy Island Programme falls outside of any statutory function and decision making processes. Such separation of roles was essential for the legal robustness of the planning decisions to be taken.

The Planning Inspectorate informed the Council that Hearings are a formal and inquisitorial procedure and the appointed Examining Authority will expect responses to written questions and those asked at hearings on a tight timescale. Questions and topics raised at Hearings will be on what information the Examining Authority seeks clarification on in regards to the proposal.

The Planning Inspectorate reiterated the importance of an open, honest and pragmatic relationship between Council officers and the Planning Inspectorate case management team. The Council was encouraged to copy the Planning Inspectorate into any correspondence and asked the Council to encourage others to do so too.

Specific decisions / follow up required?

Lines of communication between the Planning Inspectorate and the Isle of Anglesey County Council are to continue.

A member of the Planning Inspectorate is to attend the Developers Workshop on 12 July 2013, held in Llangefni, Anglesey.