



Meeting note

File reference

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Meeting with Storelectric
Venue Temple Quay House, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS3 1RE

Attendees

Storelectric
Mark Howitt – Director
Tallat Azad – Director (by phone)

The Planning Inspectorate
Mark Wilson – Infrastructure Planning Lead
David Price – EIA and Land Rights Manager

Meeting objectives Project introduction

Circulation All attendees.

Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

Attendees were informed about the openness policy and that any advice given will be recorded and placed on the Planning Inspectorate's (PINS) website in the form of a meeting note. PINS explained that any advice given does not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) should rely.

Storelectric described the basic principles that underpin their electricity storage technology. Compressed Air Energy Storage (CAES) is an existing technology which is in operation at facilities in Germany and the United States (US). Storelectric have developed the technology further and have made it more efficient and competitive, with project IRR's calculated at plus 15% and efficiencies approaching 70% with further upside on both.

The technology involves the compression of air that is undertaken at times of low energy demand. The compressed air is then stored in underground salt caverns at pressure and until there is a higher demand for energy at which point the compressed air can be released to drive a turbine and generate electricity for export to the grid.

Storelectric explained they are currently working towards the development of 2 projects in Cheshire, utilising existing salt caverns and creating new ones. One of the

proposed projects may have a generating capacity of up to 500MW and is therefore likely to be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).

PINS asked whether the proposal would be a net consumer of electricity. Storelectric said that several technology solutions were included in their portfolio, one of which would be a net consumer and 100% green and the while the others would not be net consumers and also not 100% green they would represent a carbon footprint substantially lower than that of the current state of the art conventional combined cycle plants. Storelectric further explained that the real value in the technology was to smooth energy flows to the grid, particularly from renewables such as wind farms, so that off peak electricity could be stored by the compressed air process and made ready for release to generate electricity when demand is high.

PINS commented that the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has recently confirmed that the Government's policy is to regard energy storage infrastructure as a form of energy generation, as referred to in the Planning Act 2008. There is currently a "call for evidence" about energy storage infrastructure policy.

Storelectric explained that their project is included on an initial EU list of potential Projects of Common Interest that may qualify for investment funding in the near future. They were currently in discussions with BEIS about the steps they need to take to progress their project and to secure investment funding. The intention would be to take forward the project as a TEN-E project which is EU legislation designed to expedite critical infrastructure delivery across the Continent.

PINS explained about the statutory pre application process for NSIPs. In particular, the need to consult with technical bodies, land owners / interests and the community as part of the preparation of the application. The length of the pre application consultation stage is dependent on the complexity of the project and the level of interest in it. It is up to a developer to satisfy themselves when they have consulted sufficiently and are ready to submit an application to the Inspectorate. PINS provided an overview of the [Development Consent Order \(DCO\) process](#) and directed Storelectric to the information and advice on the National Infrastructure Planning website.

When describing the proposed NSIP in Cheshire, Storelectric commented that all the land needed for the main site was in a single ownership; however, a grid connection to a nearby substation meant that Compulsory Acquisition (CA) may be required as part of any DCO. PINS advised that any application that included CA would need to have a Statement of Reasons (setting out the case and justification for compulsorily acquiring private land and interests) and a Funding Statement (explaining who the CA would be financed).

PINS acknowledged that the project was in its early stages and advised Storelectric to consider the early involvement of a legal team and EIA specialist. PINS explained that the DCO was usually drafted in the form of a Statutory Instrument and as such early legal involvement in a project would assist greatly in the project preparation phase. PINS also explained that in most instances, given the scale and nature of NSIPs, an EIA was required. Storelectric should therefore consider the need for a screening and/or scoping opinion which PINS would provide on behalf of the Secretary of State.

PINS provided Storelectric with a list of information that would be required in order to create a project page on the National Infrastructure Planning website.

Specific decisions / follow up required?

Storelectric will keep PINS updated on progress