

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Report to a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

Date of meeting: 27 November 2018

Cabinet Member: Councillor Dafydd Meurig

Contact Officer: Gareth Jones, Senior Planning and Public Protection Service Manager

Contact Telephone Number: 34092

Title of Item: Local impact statement in light of the development of the new nuclear power station, Wylfa Newydd, Anglesey.

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1. That the Cabinet approves the draft statement of local impact in Appendix 1.
- 1.2. That the Cabinet delegates powers to the Head of Environment Department, to undertake minor amendments and corrections as necessary to the draft statement and to add relevant evidence to support the direction of the draft statement, prior to submitting the document to the Planning Inspectorate by 4 December 2018.

2. THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 2.1. On 1 June 2018, the Horizon Nuclear Power (HNP) company submitted an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Secretary of State (via the Planning Inspectorate), for a new nuclear power station to develop the Wylfa Newydd project.
- 2.2. In accordance with statutory arrangements, the Planning Inspectorate was given 28 days to verify the application to ensure that submitted information met relevant requirements, and it was formally confirmed on 28 June 2018 that the application had been accepted. Following the receipt of the application, it is noted that the timetable for the process from here on in is entirely in the hands of the Planning Inspectorate.
- 2.3. Although Wylfa Newydd is not located in Gwynedd, the development on the one hand will be an opportunity for the local economy, however on the other hand it will create challenges for Gwynedd in terms of matters such as infrastructure and transport, housing supply, the labour market, public services and the Welsh language.

- 2.4 Therefore, a decision is needed as the (Draft) Statement of Local Impact in Appendix 1, will convey the Council's opinion on the local impact on Gwynedd, in light of the Wylfa Newydd scheme, and will be submitted as evidence to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the examination process.

3. INTRODUCTION AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

3.1. Background

- 3.1.1 The principle of locating a new nuclear station in the north of Anglesey was established in the UK Government's Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy in 2011 and a new enterprise, namely Horizon Nuclear Power, announced their intention to develop the site. More recently and prior to the submission of the DCO, the UK Government made a statement that supported contributing towards funding the project.

What does the DCO application include?

- 3.1.2 It is noted that the DCO application includes:
- i. The power station which includes two reactors and other on-site developments such as drains, accesses and parking, temporary structures, landscaping etc.
 - ii. Temporary and permanent marine work including unloading facilities, water cooling system and temporary structures
 - iii. Alternative facilities such as an emergency control centre
 - iv. Associated developments which include employees' accommodation, temporary park and ride facilities, temporary logistics centre, highway alterations and habitat creation work
- 3.1.3 After the nuclear station becomes operational, it will be in operation for 60 years before it is decommissioned. There is not much change in terms of the nature of the development since the consultations that were held prior to submission of the DCO, although the cost has increased to approximately £15 billion. Up to 9,000 people will work on site at the peak of the construction period and 850 will work there when the Station becomes operational. The application also includes the provision of temporary fit-for-purpose accommodation in campus form on the site, for approximately 4000 employees specifically for the station construction phase.

What is the process and timetable for dealing with the application?

- 3.1.4 Since the DCO application was received, the Planning Inspectorate has confirmed the timetable for dealing with the application and details are included in a letter in the following link:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/document/EN010007-002070>

- 3.1.5 The letter outlines a timetable for examining the DCO application and it is noted that there is a statutory period of six months to examine the application. Here are some dates that are likely to be more relevant to the Council in terms of the examination:

- 23 October 2018: Preliminary Meeting (which has been held and attended by the Council)
- 24 October 2018: First day of the examination with a hearing on the draft DCO has been held which was attended by the Council
- 4 December 2018: Need to submit the **statement of local impact** and statement of common ground
- January 2019 to March 2019 - attend relevant hearings using the **statement of local impact** as the evidence base
- 23 April 2019: Examination closes

3.1.6 It is noted that the examination will include hearings on various fields of work that will be based on the 11 main matters that have been identified in the Inspectorate's recent letter. The Council will attend some of the hearings that will be held in the examination, and also respond to questions raised by the Inspectorate throughout the process.

3.1.7 The statement of local impact that will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate will include the evidence base used by the Council to respond to matters that will be raised at relevant hearings, and to respond to questions by the Planning Inspectorate during the Examination.

These will be the next steps after the examination is closed:

- Recommendation and decision by the UK Government (six-month period) before the end of October 2019

Following the decision, these are the anticipated steps and timetable:

- Submit information to correspond with DCO requirements (this is similar to applications to correspond with the requirements of planning conditions) – six-month period
- Construction work commencing in late 2020 until 2027

3.2. The Council's response to the submitted DCO application

3.2.1 Since the DCO application submission period, the Council has established a Major Developments Group, which is a cross-departmental internal group, to respond to applications such as Wylfa Newydd. Through the group's input, the Council has responded to three formal consultations and the informal consultation held on the draft DCO.

3.2.2 Since the DCO application was submitted and received, the Council, through the Major Developments Group, had to provide relevant observations on the application to the Planning Inspectorate by 13 August 2018, with observations expected to be a summary of no more than 500 words. The Council's viewpoint as a result of the DCO review that was submitted, is consistent with the viewpoint provided when responding to various consultations prior to submitting the application. Relevant observations that were submitted to the Planning Inspectorate are attached in Appendix 2, which outlines the Council's high level response and sets the framework for the (draft) statement of local impact in

Appendix 1. It is noted that the response in Appendix 1 and matters raised in the statement of local impact, are consistent with the Council's responses to consultations prior to submission of the DCO application.

3.2.3 It is noted that it is not a statutory requirement for the Council to submit a statement of local impact but having considered the substantial scale of the Wylfa Newydd project, and its potential impacts on Gwynedd, it is believed that it is important for the Council to do this. It can be seen that the draft statement notes the positive, neutral and negative local impacts in light of the development and reference is made to the logic and evidence (where relevant) to support this. The draft statement includes the following main parts:

- i. A profile of Gwynedd and the location of the development in relation to Gwynedd
- ii. Overview and evaluation of planning policies and relevant documents
- iii. Potential local impacts in terms of:
 - Highways and transport
 - Economy matters, such as the labour market and tourism
 - Impact on the Welsh language
 - Housing matters
 - Public services

3.2.4 The main concern still held by the Council is that insufficient consideration is given by HNP to the potential side effects on Gwynedd (more specifically the Arfon area), nor any consideration to what will happen if their presumptions are inaccurate in terms of:

- i. where employees will live during the construction work,
- ii. what the side effects will be in terms of transport matters (traffic and transport),
- iii. what the impact will be on the Welsh language and communities
- iv. what the impact will be on the labour market and the economy, and
- v. what the impact will be on public services?

3.2.5 Concerns raised by the Council about impacts that are different from the ones that are anticipated, are seen to be substantiated with the development of the Hinkley Point Nuclear Power Station in Somerset, which is currently in its construction process. An important point to note here is that approximately 5600 employees are expected in Hinkley at its peak compared to up to 9000 with the construction of Wylfa Newydd. The statement in Appendix 1 refers to what is / has happened with the Hinkley development, as a current example of potential impacts of the Wylfa Newydd development. It is also noted that the Council has already referred HNP to examine what is taking place in Hinkley, and to ensure that any lessons are learnt with the DCO application for Wylfa Newydd. The Council has also emphasised the need to ensure that robust mitigation measures are put in place in consultation with the Council and other stakeholders.

3.2.6 The DCO application includes high level information regarding the initial contents for a 106 agreement and a framework for monitoring and responding in good time to any negative impacts. Reference to Gwynedd Council is scarce in these documents, despite the Council's observations when responding to consultations before the DCO application was submitted. It is noted that the statement includes

a wish that the Council expects to have an input in discussions regarding the 106 agreement to try to ensure:

- i. that mitigation measures are provided to address the impact, wherever the impact is caused geographically and that mitigation measures address impacts on Gwynedd in situations where the impact is different / worse than what is anticipated by HNP.
 - ii. reference to Gwynedd where relevant in a 106 agreement, including any monitoring framework, mitigation measures and funding / associated resources and that Gwynedd wishes to be part of discussions involved with preparing and agreeing on these documents.
 - iii. that the Council has representation on the Programme Board / or similar which will be established for the project's construction period to take an overview and to make decisions on releasing funds / resources to mitigate impacts in good time, as well as field groups (e.g. Housing, Language, transport etc.) that will sit under the Programme Board.
- 3.2.7 It must also be noted that there will be positive side effects as a result of the Wylfa Newydd development and that as a Council we would wish to be part of discussions to ensure that interests are disseminated to Gwynedd and the region.
- 3.2.8 With this type of application, the developer and the Council (as well as other stakeholders) are expected to hold discussions to see whether or not there is common ground on aspects of the application. The intention is to try to ensure that discussions in the examination will focus on matters where there is no agreement. The output of this will be a statement of common ground, which is a technical document and is in the process of being prepared, and will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate at the same time as the Statement of Local Impact.

4. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

Submit the Statement of Local Impact to the Planning Inspectorate by 4 December 2018

5. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

Consultations and input of all of the Council's relevant Departments.

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Chief Finance Officer:

Providing a comprehensive declaration of local impact on behalf of Gwynedd Council is essential. I am satisfied that the contents of the response does not place financial obligations on the Council, therefore I have no comments on the contents from a financial perspective".

Monitoring Officer:

The timetable for lodging the Statement of Local impact has been introduced by the Planning Inspectorate as part of the wider Development Consent Order process. The Council must present the statement by the 4th December 2018 so that the impact of the development on Gwynedd may be considered within the process, and specifically so that the Council may contribute within the scheduled hearings. It is noted that considerable work has been undertaken on a cross department basis in order to assess the impact on Gwynedd, and I am satisfied that the statement addresses the legal requirements on the Council within the process."

Appendices

Appendix 1: (Draft) statement of local impact

Appendix 2: The Council's relevant observations