

Developments of National Significance Inception Meeting:
DNS CAS-02913-L1W3K0 - Rhiwlas Grid Connection
Thursday 17th August 2023 at 10.00
Via Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

Bute Energy

Fatima Rana
Will Spencer

**Planning and Environment Decisions
Wales (PEDW)**

Chris Pang – Planning Student
Marloes Holtkamp – Planning Officer
Robert Sparey – Planning & Environment Manager

Meeting Note:

Representatives from Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) met with the above-named project team regarding the proposed Rhiwlas grid connection project located within Powys.

The project team explained that Green GEN Cymru, part of the Bute Energy Group, will be taking forward the grid connection project. Green GEN Cymru will operate independently from Bute Energy, allowing other green energy projects to connect to the proposed grid connection.

The project team provided an overview of the proposed grid connection project and explained an extensive strategic routing study has been undertaken to determine the best route selection. The proposed development consists of a 33 kV underground cable between the Banc Du Energy Park and Rhiwlas Energy Park (approximately 3 km). Furthermore, a 132 kV single circuit Overhead Line, supported on wooden poles, is proposed from the Rhiwlas Energy Park to the Llyn Lort substation near the Llyn Lort Energy Park (approximately 35 km). The latter is in the design phase, but the wooden poles are not expected to be higher than 16 m.

The project team highlighted that there will be separate DNS applications for the Banc Du (including substation) and Rhiwlas Energy Parks. There will be a separate Development Consent Order application, through the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects process, for the 50 km connection from the Llyn Lort substation to the National Grid substation in Shropshire. The project team are awaiting the outcome of their application for an IDNO licence from Ofgem, which will enable them to operate the network.

The project team outlined their anticipated timescales:

- November 2023: First round of non-statutory public consultation
- Early 2024: EIA Scoping
- October 2024: Second round of non-statutory public consultation
- 2025: Statutory public consultation
- Later in 2025: DNS submission
- 2028: Project operational

PEDW asked to be given advance notice of the timings for the intended Scoping request.

Regarding anticipated submission dates, PEDW advised that the new Infrastructure Bill will bring in a new consenting process and the detail of that would be set out in secondary legislation in due course. Any questions in this regard would best be directed to the Welsh Government Planning Directorate.

PEDW advised that after the initial Inception Meeting, any subsequent meetings or advice would be charged for under the pre-application services rates (Planning Officer rate is £55 plus VAT per hour). Normally up to one hour is allowed for such meetings with two Planning Officers in attendance. The Planning Officer time spent preparing for and following up on the meeting will also be chargeable.

PEDW advised that due to resource constraints within the Planning and Environment Team there may be delays to the usual turnaround time for producing pre-application advice or Scoping Directions.

The project team were advised that the main point of contact for PEDW remains the PEDW.Infrastructure@gov.wales mailbox.

The project team asked for the note of this meeting to be kept confidential at this stage but agreed it can be published once the project is in the public domain.