

REPORT BY THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION

NORTH WALES CONNECTION PROJECT

**APPLICATION BY NATIONAL GRID FOR AN ORDER GRANTING DEVELOPMENT
CONSENT FOR NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report provides background information in relation to the National Grid proposals to run a grid connection from the proposed Wylfa nuclear power station to a substation at Pentir, near Bangor.
- 1.2 It outlines the basis of the proposals and the procedural steps involved in the examination of the application by the Planning Inspectorate, which include notification to Denbighshire County Council as an authority with a shared administrative boundary with Gwynedd, one of the Counties in which the development would take place.
- 1.3 It seeks member resolution on the Council's actions in response to consultation on the project and future engagement in the formal examination of the application.

2. BACKGROUND.

- 2.1 Members may be aware that an application has been submitted to the UK Secretary of State for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy by Horizon Nuclear power, to develop a new nuclear power station located adjacent to the existing station at Wylfa A, on the north coast of Anglesey. The scheme is referred to as the Wylfa Newydd Nuclear Power Station, and is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project which will be the subject of examination by the Planning Inspectorate in due course.
- 2.2 The Wylfa Nuclear Power Station development will give rise to the need for related infrastructure developments. One is the provision of an additional electricity grid connection. This connection is the subject of a separate Nationally Significant Infrastructure project application, involving a new line of pylons running alongside an existing overhead line across Anglesey, an underground section below the Menai Straits and a connection to an existing substation at Pentir, near Bangor. This is an application submitted by National Grid and is referred to as the North Wales Connection project. It will be subject to examination by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 2.3 Information on the Wylfa Nuclear Power Station and North Wales Connections projects, and the progress on the applications can be viewed on the Planning Inspectorate website through the following link
<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

- 2.4 Regulations governing the processing of such infrastructure projects require applicants to undertake specific consultations / notifications with affected communities, and with those County Councils which share an administrative boundary with the Counties where the developments are actually located. As the development affects land near Pentir, Bangor, this involves land within Gwynedd County Council. Gwynedd shares a section of administrative boundary with Denbighshire east of Bala, and accordingly Denbighshire have been made aware of the proposals in the preliminary stages of the submission to the Planning Inspectorate.
- 2.5 The North Wales Connections project has reached the stage where the Planning Inspectorate have requested Denbighshire to comment on the adequacy of consultation on the application, as a preliminary to the start of the lengthy Development Consent Order Examination process. In order to comply with the deadline for submission of comments, Officers have sent the response in Appendix A to the report, confirming there has been relevant communication with Denbighshire in relation to the scheme.
- 2.6 Looking to the next stages in the examination of the Development Consent Order application, Officers are seeking members' agreement to the most appropriate actions, as it is apparent from basic scrutiny of the application proposals that the implications for Denbighshire from an overhead line connection to the Wylfa scheme are negligible. The nearest part of the development to Denbighshire would be some 40 kilometres (24 miles). A National Grid information leaflet in relation to the North Wales Connection project is in Appendix B, and provides useful background to the scheme and the examination process, including a map showing the physical extent of the proposed grid connection.
- 2.7 In circumstances where there are no anticipated impacts on the County, Officers do not consider it would serve any useful purpose to engage further in the Examination process, which would involve commitment to preparation of a detailed Local Impact Report, and attendance at a Preliminary meeting and Hearing sessions.
- 2.8 It is therefore suggested that unless members consider there are specific reasons why the Council should commit to engagement in the detailed Examination process, for example in terms of impacts on the Council from the project, Officers inform the Planning Inspectorate at the relevant time that the County Council do not propose to participate further in the process.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Committee agree to Officers notifying the Planning Inspectorate that Denbighshire County Council do not wish to engage further in the Examination stage of the North Wales Connection project.

EMLYN GWYNEDD JONES

HEAD OF PLANING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION