



Oldbury on Severn Parish Council

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New Nuclear Build Committee

Minutes of the joint Meeting with Horizon Nuclear Power

Held on 5th December 2017 @1400 hours

At the Memorial Hall, Camp Road, Oldbury on Severn

Present:

Oldbury PC

Mr Barry Turner
Mrs Emma Pattullo, Clerk
Cllr Dylan Griffiths, Vice Chair
Cllr Keith Sullivan, Chair
Cllr Glynn Poole
Cllr Ian Bell
Mr Malcolm Lynden
Cllr Matthew Clothier
Dr Tony Acton
Mrs Gillian Ellis-King (SGC)
Mr Robin Pitman, Sound

Horizon

Mrs Claire Loveday, Communications Manager
Mr Leon Flexman, Corporate Affairs Director
Mrs Samantha Stagg, Stakeholder Relations
Mr Tim Proudler, Planning Specialist
3DWebtech representative

Apologies: Cllr Matthew Riddle

1. Introductions.

Cllr Sullivan welcomed all attendees and introduced the Horizon representatives.

2. Exclusion of the public

Due to the confidential nature of the material to be presented, it was proposed by Cllr Poole that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Griffiths and resolved by all councillors present.

3. Presentation by Horizon

Copy of slides attached at Appendix A.

Leon Flexman gave the first presentation which gave an overview of the Horizon projects at Wylfa and Oldbury and how these fit in to UK energy policy as a whole. The proposed timescales for the Wylfa project were shown. Wylfa has been chosen as the lead site and the final investment decision for that site is expected by the end of 2019, such that the first unit might be operational in the mid 2020s. The Oldbury site would follow on from Wylfa but timescales cannot yet be accurately determined.

Tim Proudler then gave more detail of the current plans for the Oldbury site and addressed specific questions which had been raised prior to the meeting. It was emphasised that whilst Horizon are still working on plans for Oldbury, these are not yet determined in full detail; councillors were given the current most likely scenarios but details may change in the future. Lessons learned at Wylfa will inform the Oldbury planning and development process. There are also additional challenges at Oldbury including the need to raise the site level and to construct cooling towers.

There is ongoing low-key engagement regarding the Oldbury site; the website and information line are still operational and Horizon are involved in various local charitable and educational initiatives.

Land requirement: Horizon's land holding includes the ~150 hectares which forms the site boundary as submitted during the UK 'call for sites' process. This will be sufficient land for the operational power station. More land will be required during the construction phase but the size and location of the additional requirement cannot yet be determined. It is not expected that the land requirement during construction will be as large as the Wylfa site. This is due to differences in terrain and historical land purchase decisions at Wylfa which have meant that part of the Wylfa land holding is unlikely to be actually used.

Bunding vs. raising the site level: the committee had asked why the site could not be banded instead of raising the site above likely flood levels. It was explained that there are different flood protection requirements depending upon what is to be protected (e.g. 1:200 year for conventional planning compared to 1:10,000 year events for critical nuclear infrastructure). In addition, hazard assessments will need to consider 'cliff edge' effects, where small increases above the design basis assumptions could lead to a disproportionate increase in consequence. Conventional flood defences e.g. bunds/sea walls have the potential for a 'cliff edge' effect – if they fail, the levels of flooding can be very significant with rapid water level rises. For mitigation methods such as site raising, if it did fail then the effects would be more gradual. However it is acknowledged that a solution based only on site raising would be more disruptive during construction and would cause more visual intrusion. It is likely that a 'hybrid' approach would be used, with improved sea defences combined with site raising to various levels in strategic areas. Previous high level assessments concluded that sea defences would need to be raised, with site raising then being applied on the site the scale of which would be dependent upon what is being protected. High risk areas (including all nuclear areas) may need to be raised to 11m AOD – equivalent to the existing Magnox site – with less critical areas raised to around 8.5m AOD (NB: these numbers are not yet fixed). For comparison, much of the site is currently around 6.5m AOD.

Cooling towers: It was emphasised that the preferred option for cooling towers is to use a hybrid design, giving a lower overall height.

Marine offloading facility: current plans are expected to include a MOLF but again, the exact size and location cannot yet be determined. If big components can be brought in by sea, this could reduce the land area needed as the requirement for on-site fabrication and construction will be correspondingly lower. Any MOLF will be planned as part of an overall transport strategy for the development which may also include use of rail heads, local quarrying, new haul roads etc. Previous claims of thousands of lorry movements per day through Oldbury parish were put about by a pressure group; Horizon confirmed that lorry traffic via Oldbury Lane will not be the main way of transporting bulk materials to the site.

4. Questions and Discussion

Q: Are Horizon factoring in the large level of current & planned development in Thornbury into their plans?

A: This is more likely to be a concern for SGC (e.g. more dwellings will be in the off-site emergency planning area) rather than for Horizon but they are still keeping an overview as there could be some effects. For example, new developments might restrict the options for transport links to the site.

Q: What is the expected power output of the site?

A: 2.7GW once both units are fully operational.

There was some discussion about the potential for revised designs to increase the final output capacity; Horizon explained that current thinking is that any gains in potential output would be negated by the increased risk of using new designs rather than those which have already been tested elsewhere.

Q: Are tsunami risks being considered?

A: Yes. Potential tsunami waves would be encompassed within the “worst case” storm surge / tidal height situation as part of the hazard assessments required by the nuclear regulator.

Q: Can timescales for Wylfa site development be clarified?

A: Wylfa is expected to have all required permissions/consents by end 2019 with a final investment decision around 2019. Brexit may cause some delay, as consents previously issued through the EU will need to move to the British government and the way in which this will be done is currently unclear.

Q: When do you expect to start the formal development consent process for Oldbury?

A: The working assumption is that this will be around the same time as the final investment decision for Wylfa.

Q: When do you expect the Generic Design Assessment (GDA) to be approved?

A: This is scheduled for completion before the end of 2017. Approval is expected as although the reactor type is new to the UK, there are very similar units already in operation in other countries. Horizon expect to receive the Design Acceptance Certificate by Christmas.

Q: Is the existing distribution network connection sufficient for the new plant?

A: The existing two lines to Iron Acton will need to be upgraded to carry higher load but the current pylons will be used.

Q: What is the status of the planning applications at Wylfa?

A: Two applications have recently been submitted under Town & Country Planning legislation. These are for i) road improvements and ii) site preparation and clearance. It is expected that they will be granted within the next six months. This will mean that the required road improvements can be in place before the main construction period starts.

Q: Any temporary worker accommodation on or near the site will be in the flood plain – how does this sit with planning constraints preventing construction of dwellings in flood zones?

A: This still needs to be worked out. The same will be true for all construction up until the flood defence works are complete.

At this point, Cllr Sullivan thanked the Horizon team for attending and they left the meeting.

5. A.O.B.

GDA for Bradwell power station:

The Environment Agency is starting the process of design assessment for the Bradwell power station. The committee discussed whether we need to be involved; it was decided that there is no need for involvement at this stage as the technology planned there is very different to the Oldbury site. TA pointed out that if a different developer later adopted Oldbury, they could choose a different reactor. Therefore it was agreed to keep a watching brief and TA agreed to do that.

Planning application for waste drying & processing plant at the Magnox station.

A planning application has recently been submitted to SGC for this new building on the old power station site. KS expressed concern that the application was for 'construction, operation and subsequent decommissioning' of a facility which will handle nuclear material and questioned whether a council planning officer or committee were qualified to determine such an application. The general belief was that the planning application covered only the construction and operation of the building, not the processes to be carried out within it, and that the operations would be covered by the existing or by new regulation from the Environment Agency and/or the Office for Nuclear Regulation. KS pointed out that whilst this may well be the case, this was not mentioned within the application documents although they did reference relevant items such as production of radioactive effluents. It was agreed that the Clerk should draft a response requesting clarification of this point.

Action: Clerk to draft a response to planning application as agreed
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6. Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 15:50.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 6th February 2018 at 7:30pm.