



Meeting note

File reference	EN010095
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	7 September 2020
Meeting with	Boston Alternative Energy Facility (BAEF) Project team
Venue	Zoom meeting
Attendees	The Planning Inspectorate Boston Alternative Energy Facility Limited
Meeting objectives	Project update
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

Welcome and introductions

The Applicant and the Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) Case Team introduced themselves and their respective roles. The Inspectorate continued by outlining its openness policy and ensured those present understood that any issues discussed and advice given would be recorded and placed on the Inspectorate's website under section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008). Further to this, it was made clear that any advice given did not constitute legal advice upon which the Applicant (or others) can rely.

Project update

The Applicant gave a summary of the changes presented at the previous meeting held on the 28 April 2020. The Applicant is currently conducting a non-statutory consultation on the changes to the scheme (10 August 2020 – 10 September 2020) including meetings with key stakeholders.

The Applicant explained that the targeted (non-statutory) consultation on the changes to the scheme took place between the 10 August and 10 September 2020. This included the distribution of a newsletter and feedback form to all households in Boston Borough Council area. Webinars took place and a telephone surgery was arranged. There was limited interest from members of the public, perhaps reflecting the location of the proposed development in an industrial area, and the previous consultations that had already been carried out. It was noted that no-one booked a slot on the telephone surgery.

The Inspectorate enquired about the visual appearance of the energy recovery facility, given it was now proposed to clad it. The Applicant stated its intention to seek guidance from the Council about the detailed appearance of the cladding. Currently it was shown as grey. The highest part of the structure was below the height of St Botolph's church Tower (Boston Stump), which is the tallest structure in the town. The BAEF did not interfere with protected views of the church tower.

The Inspectorate enquired about whether the concern raised by Boston Borough Council in their scoping response, about the proximity of the proposed wharf to residential properties on the opposite side of Boston Haven, had been addressed. The Applicant explained that moving the proposed wharf further upstream, away from this residential area, would bring it closer to European designated sites on The Wash. The residential area in question is set back from the edge of the Haven and is screened by trees. Furthermore, the development is within an area that is allocated for the proposed use in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Letter from Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

The issues raised in a letter the RSPB submitted to the Applicant were discussed. The Applicant clarified that it will be issuing a suite of documents that clarifies the situation regarding bird surveys that RSPB had raised concerns about. The Applicant explained that the matters contained in the letter were the subject of ongoing discussions with RSPB, Natural England and the Environment Agency.

It was further explained that the need for any compensatory habitat would be clarified during the Examination and possibly in a Statement of Common Ground with RSPB.

Draft documents review

The Applicant intends to submit draft documents in batches starting at the end of September/early October 2020. The documents included in the review are: The draft Development Consent Order (DCO), Explanatory Memorandum, documents relating to Compulsory Acquisition, Habitats Regulation Assessment and parts of the Environmental Statement (ES). The Inspectorate requested that the project description of the ES was included in the review. The Applicant informed the Inspectorate that they aimed to submit draft plans for review. The Applicant was advised to highlight any novel drafting of the DCO it wanted reviewed.

Anticipated submission date

Late November 2020. The implication of a slip in submission date was discussed. It was highlighted that if the submission date slips, it could have implications for the local authorities' ability to submit Adequacy of Consultation responses on time due to the holiday season.

Any other business

The Applicant was advised to prepare for an Examination that might include both virtual and non-virtual events.