



HIRWAUN POWER LIMITED

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

OCTOBER 2013

Statement of Community Consultation

This Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) is published in connection with a proposed new gas-fired electricity generation project including a power generation plant and gas and electrical connections on land at the Hirwaun Industrial Estate, Hirwaun, Rhondda Cynon Taf (the Project). It explains how individuals and other interests living and working in the vicinity of the Project can comment on the proposals to construct, operate and maintain the Project.

The proposed Project is being promoted by Hirwaun Power Limited (HPL) a company established by Watt Power Limited. Watt Power is seeking to develop gas fired power stations at Hirwaun and elsewhere in the UK to support the UK Government's drive to a low carbon economy.

HPL has consulted Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCT) about the content of this SoCC and has had regard to their responses.

The capacity of the proposed power generation plant will be in excess of 50 MW of electricity. As such, the plant, and its electrical and gas connections, is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008. This requires a Development Consent Order (DCO) to build and operate, granted by the Secretary of State for Energy & Climate Change.

The SoCC is part of a consultation process that HPL is carrying out before it makes a formal application to the Secretary of State for a DCO.

A consultation plan has previously been developed and is available from HPL or via its website www.hirwaunpower.co.uk.

This Statement explains:

- what the proposed Project is about;
- how HPL is publishing preliminary environmental information about the proposed Project;
- how HPL is going to consult local people and communities about the proposed Project and what activities will be undertaken to give them access to information about the proposal and help them to understand what particular aspects of the proposal may mean to them, enabling them to provide informed feedback;
- how people can become involved in shaping the proposal before a DCO application is submitted by putting forward their views to influence the proposal, particularly regarding specific options under consideration; and
- how people can provide feedback to HPL from consultation activities and ensure that they are informed about the proposed Project.

The Project

The key details of the proposed Project are:

- the construction, operation and maintenance of a Simple Cycle Gas Turbine power generation plant capable of producing up to 299 MW of electricity; which is enough energy to supply up to 400,000 homes;
- the power generation plant will have up to 5 stacks and will be up to 35m in height;
- the site for the power generation plant covers an area of approximately 7.5ha and is located on land at the Hirwaun Industrial Estate. However, the footprint of the power generation plant would be smaller than the full site;
- the power generation plant is designed to provide back-up generation capacity which can operate flexibly to respond quickly and efficiently to both short-term variation in customer demand and intermittent output from renewable power generation. It is anticipated that it will operate for no more than 1500 hours per year;
- the power generation plant will produce electricity from natural gas;
- besides the plant, the project will include the construction, operation and maintenance of a new underground/overground electrical connection to the existing National Grid Rhigos sub-station and the construction, operation and maintenance of a new underground pipeline to bring natural gas to the power generating plant from the National Transmission System;
- it will create approximately 150-250 jobs during a construction period lasting up to three years and create up to 15 permanent jobs once commercial operations have begun;
- it responds to the UK Government's need for new gas generation in order to underpin the country's energy security and its transition to a low-carbon economy;
- the station would emit about 50% less carbon dioxide (CO₂) than an equivalent sized coal-fired power plant;
- it is acknowledged that during construction and operation there is potential for negative impacts on some local communities and the environment: for example, noise from on-site construction plant, impacts on the local and regional transport network as a result of construction traffic and landscape and visual impacts of up to five 35m stacks. An Environmental Impact Assessment is being undertaken to understand and minimise these and other potential effects of the Project's construction, and thereafter its operation and maintenance. More information on this process is provided below. The Environmental Impact Assessment process is also considering the potential positive effects of the Project.

At this stage the routes for the gas and potential electricity connection corridors have yet to be finalised. Continued consultation and environmental assessment on the connection route options are required before each can be confirmed. In addition, although a preliminary preferred location of the power generation plant within the

7.5ha has been identified, the final location and layout are yet to be determined. The consultation materials and events will provide further information.

The Planning Process

DCO applications for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects are submitted to the Planning Inspectorate which will process and examine the application before making a recommendation to the relevant Secretary of State. The final decision on the application is made by the Secretary of State.

The Government's policies in relation to NSIPs are set out in National Policy Statements (NPSs). The proposed Project has been developed with regard to the relevant energy NPSs, in particular, EN-1 (Energy), EN-2 (Fossil Fuel Electricity Generating Infrastructure), EN-4 (Gas Supply Infrastructure and Gas and Oil Pipelines) and EN-5 (Electricity Networks Infrastructure). EN-1 states that *"gas will continue to play an important role in the electricity sector- providing vital flexibility to support an increasing amount of low-carbon generation and to maintain security of supply."* The need for this type of Project is established through the NPSs and is therefore not a topic for consultation.

When determining a DCO application, the Secretary of State is required under Section 104 of the Planning Act 2008 to have regard to the relevant NPS (and thus the national need for such development) and make a decision in accordance with this unless contrary to other legal requirements, or if the adverse impacts of the proposed development would outweigh the benefits.

When considering whether to accept an application for examination, the Planning Inspectorate must be satisfied that the applicant has undertaken adequate pre-application consultation. Pre-application consultation is essential in allowing HPL to understand and minimise the impacts of the proposed Project and to facilitate the examination by the Planning Inspectorate. HPL is required to submit a Consultation Report with its application for a DCO. This report will include details of the local community feedback received, explain how HPL has had regard to the feedback and will detail how HPL has carried out the consultation proposed in the SOCC and complied with the consultation requirements of the Planning Act 2008.

The community consultation described in this statement is carried out under Section 47 of the Planning Act 2008. It is in addition to consultation that will be carried out with specific statutory consultees (such as Natural Resources Wales) and those with relevant interests in land (including owners and occupiers within the Project boundary) under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008. It is also in addition to wider publicity of the proposed Project under Section 48 of the Planning Act 2008.

Information on the planning process and the NPSs can be found at:

www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planninginspectorate

www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/meeting_energy/consents_planning/nps_en_infra/nps_en_infra.aspx

Environmental Information & Impacts

The proposed Project will be designed and developed to meet or exceed relevant current quality, safety and environmental standards and efforts will be made to minimise its impact on the local environment, both during its construction and its operation. The design of the development and HPL's proposals to mitigate its impacts will be amongst the issues considered by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State.

Due to the nature and size of the Project, HPL is undertaking an EIA. The Project is classed as EIA development under the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009. The EIA considers the potential impacts of the project including air and water quality, noise, visual and landscape, traffic, local ecology, archaeology and heritage, socio-economics, and cumulative impacts.

HPL has consulted with various statutory bodies concerning the scope of the EIA, including RCT, Natural Resources Wales, South Wales Trunk Road Agency, BBNPA and utility providers. A request for a Scoping Opinion was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 03 June 2013, accompanied by a Scoping Report. The Scoping Report outlines which environmental topics will be covered by the EIA and how the assessments will be undertaken. The Planning Inspectorate issued its formal Scoping Opinion on 10 July 2013.

All documents are available on the HPL website (www.hirwaunpower.co.uk).

As part of the pre-application consultation materials on the proposed Project, HPL will publish a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and a Non-Technical Summary (NTS). The PEIR presents the information gathered to date and provides the results of HPL's preliminary assessments as to the likely significant environmental effects both positive and negative, of the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning phases of the Project. It does not set out the final findings; these will be included in the Environmental Statement that will accompany the DCO application when it is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. However, the PEIR includes information on provisional mitigation measures. The NTS presents a summary of this information.

During consultation, HPL will make available details on landscaping proposals and other measures to mitigate the Project's impact. HPL will provide copies of the PEIR and the NTS to RCT; both documents will also be made available at local authority offices, local libraries, at public exhibitions and on the HPL website www.hirwaunpower.co.uk.

When the EIA process is complete and HPL submits its application for a DCO, it will be accompanied by an Environmental Statement. This will report on the likely significant environmental effects of the Project identified in the EIA and, where negative effects are identified, will explain the mitigation measures to avoid or reduce these.

Public Consultation

The views of the local community about the Project are important. In June 2013, HPL shared its initial plans with people living in the vicinity of the site at exhibitions held over three days at Rhigos Community Centre and at Hirwaun YMCA. At the exhibition and since, HPL has received and responded to comments on the proposed project and its impact on the environment, local communities and the local economy.

a. *What are we now consulting on and when?*

In a second, formal phase of consultation commencing on Thursday, 17 October 2013, HPL will seek views on:

- the Project, including the location and layout of the proposed power generation plant within the 7.5Ha site;
- the route options of the gas and potential electrical connections;
- the findings of the preliminary environmental studies including construction and operation impacts, for example, any visual impacts; and
- the community benefits anticipated for the Project.

Only after all inputs have been considered will designs be finalised and the application for a DCO be submitted.

The consultation explained in this Statement will run until Thursday, 28 November 2013. Comments about the project must be received by HPL by Thursday, 28 November 2013.

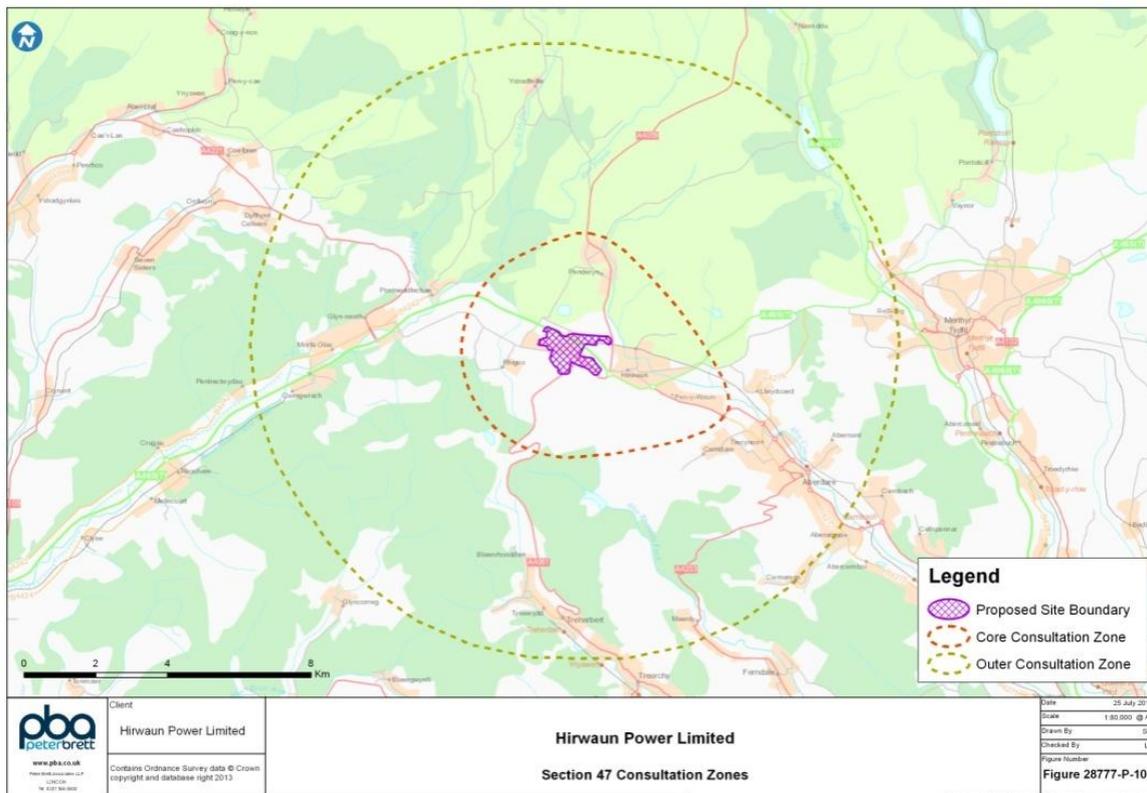
b. *Who will we consult with?*

The Planning Act 2008 states that those '*living in the vicinity of the land*' should be consulted. We have discussed the scope of the consultation with RCT and have identified Consultation Zones that form the basis of the consultation.

HPL will carry out its consultation in two areas: a core consultation zone (CCZ) of an approximate 3km radius from the site of the Power Generation Plant, and an outer consultation zone (OCZ) of an approximate 8km radius from the site

The CCZ has been designed to include the main population areas in the vicinity of the site that could be affected by the Project and where people may be expected to have the greatest interest in the Project. These are the villages of Rhigos, Hirwaun and Penderyn, as well as dispersed households in this semi-rural area. The village of

Penywaun has also been included in the CCZ, although it is beyond the 3km radius from the site, as it is contiguous to Hirwaun.



Communities in the OCZ will be informed about the Project in various ways and will be given the opportunity to comment on the plans. The OCZ includes the main population area of Aberdare to the east and Treherbert to the south. HPL does not anticipate that the communities and businesses that lie within the OCZ will be significantly impacted by the Project’s construction and operation although HPL recognizes that they might be interested in it.

Outside these zones, there may well be others interested in HPL’s plans. They will also be reached through local/regional newspaper advertising and media coverage (print, broadcast and social media). All feedback received will be considered.

c. How will we consult?

HPL will seek and receive people’s views through a number of activities:

- public exhibitions will be held at four locations within the CCZ and one in Aberdare, the nearest town and population centre of scale;
- a leaflet will be delivered to households, businesses and institutions in the CCZ, and made available at local council offices, local libraries and other civic community venues in the area. It will give background on the Project, the consultation process and how individuals can engage in it. The leaflet will be made available at libraries and council offices in the OCZ;
- these local libraries will host copies of the leaflet, the SoCC, the Preliminary Environmental Information Report and the Non-Technical Summary;

Libraries

	Hirwaun Library High Street Hirwaun CF44 9SW (01685) 811144	Aberdare Library Green Street Aberdare CF44 7AG (01685) 880050	Treherbert Library Bute Square Treherbert CF42 5NR (01443) 771232	Glynneath Library Park Avenue Glynneath Neath SA11 5DW (01639) 720776	Merthyr Tydfil Central Library High Street Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8AF (01685) 353480
Monday	9.30-13.00 14.00-17.00	9.00-18.00	9.00-13.00 14.00-18.00	10.00-13.00 14.00-18.30	8:30-18:00
Tuesday	9.30-13.00 14.00-18.00	9.00-18.00	9.00-13.00 14.00-18.00	10.00-13.00 14.00-17.30	8:30-19:00
Wednesday	9.30-13.00	9.00-18.00	9.00-13.00 14.00-18.00	CLOSED	8:30-18:00
Thursday	9.30-13.00 14.00-17.00	9.00-18.00	9.00-13.00	10.00-13.00 14.00-17.30	8:30-18:00
Friday	9.30-13.00 14.00-18.00	9.00-18.00	9.00-13.00 14.00-17.00	10.00-13.00 14.00-17.30	8:30-18:00
Saturday	9.30-13.00	9.00-13.00	9.00-13.00	10.00-13.00	8:30-14:00
Sunday	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED

- Requests for the leaflet and other information about the Project in other formats (e.g. large print or braille), will be considered upon request. Key information will be available in the Welsh language;
- a website (www.hirwaunpower.co.uk) provides information on the Project as well as access to documents, and provide visitors the opportunity to ask questions or make comments online;
- an email address to which individuals can write;
- a dedicated free telephone line on which people can ask questions or submit comments;
- a Freepost address (*Freepost RTEY-JYYB-ERSR c/o Hirwaun Power Ltd, 49 York Place, Edinburgh EH1 3JD*) to which people can send questions or comments;
- HPL will also notify the local community about the Project and the consultation exhibition events via posters on local noticeboards and other community locations, newspaper advertisements and media coverage; and
- in addition, HPL will contact a broad spectrum of local stakeholders. These will include elected representatives, local community and special interest groups (including those 'hard to reach groups' such as the young, elderly and the disabled), and local business groups. HPL will provide them with background material on the Project and undertake briefings where appropriate.
- The consultation period will be open until Thursday, 28 November. HPL will however endeavour to take into account responses and comments received after this date and before submission of the application, during the finalisation of the plans.

Individuals and organisations wishing to respond should include their name and an address. Responses may be made public, subject to data protection laws.

Comments made at all stages of the consultation process will be recorded and carefully considered by HPL as part of the process of preparing the final proposals for its application to the Planning Inspectorate.

KEY DATES BOX

Thursday, 10 October 2013	Statement of Community Consultation published
Thursday, 17 October 2013	Consultation period starts
PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS	
Thursday 24 October 2013, 13:00 – 19:00	Rhigos Community Centre , Heol Esgyn, Rhigos, Aberdare, CF44 9BX
Friday 25 October 2013, 13:00 – 19:00	Hirwaun Community Centre , Village Hall, High Street, Hirwaun, CF44 9SL
Thursday, 7 November 2013, 13:00 – 19:00	Penderyn Community Centre , Pontpren, Penderyn, CF44 9JN
Friday 8 November 2013, 13:00 – 19:00	Penywaun Community Centre , Gwladys Street, Penywaun, CF44 9DE
Saturday 9 November 2013, 10:00 – 15:00	Aberdare Community Parish Hall , Monk Street, Aberdare, CF44 7PA
Thursday, 28 November 2013	Consultation period closes
Q1 2014	DCO Application submitted
Q2 2014	Planning Inspectorate publicly notifies the acceptance of application and sets examination timetable, likely to run during Q3 2014.

Contact details

HPL welcomes queries and comments:

Website: www.hirwaunpower.co.uk

Email: info@hirwaunpower.co.uk

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