

Subject:	Rampion Windfarm; Response to draft Environmental Statement		
Date of Meeting:	11th July 2012		
Report of:	Strategic Director Place		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Mike Holford	Tel: 29-2501
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE/ EXEMPTIONS

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 To update members on the progress of the proposed Rampion off-shore windfarm and to authorise the Strategic Director Place to respond to the draft Environmental Statement on behalf of the City Council

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee is asked to agree the recommendation to:

Authorise the Strategic Director Place to produce a response for the City Council on the draft Environmental Statement in liaison with Adur District Council and the Shoreham Port Authority, in consultation with the Chair and Opposition spokesperson.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

Background

- 3.1 E.ON is developing proposals for an offshore wind farm. The project has been named as the Rampion Offshore Wind Farm and is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project which will be determined by the Planning Inspectorate. The City Council along with other adjoining authorities is a statutory consultee. There has been an ongoing dialogue with E.ON on environmental, social and economic issues since E.ON were awarded the rights from the Crown Estate to search for an appropriate location for an offshore wind farm off the Sussex Coast.
- 3.2 The site of the proposed wind farm is located 13–23 km off the Sussex coast covering an area of approximately 270km² (see map in appendix). The water depth within the site area ranges from 19m to 63m. There are likely to be around 195 turbines although this depends on the model chosen which will influence the total number installed. It is estimated the site could generate more

than 2,100 gigawatt hours (GWh) of electricity each year. In a typical year, E.ON estimate the project could generate enough electricity for the domestic needs of the equivalent of around 450,000 homes, which is more than two thirds of the homes in the whole of Sussex.

- 3.3 The proposals comprise offshore wind turbines, associated offshore cables, two offshore substations as well as installing an underground onshore cable route from the coast and building a new substation near the existing Bolney Substation in Mid Sussex.

Public Consultation on Draft Environmental Statement (ES)

- 3.4 The draft ES has been made available from **13th June to 8th August** and statutory bodies, Local Authorities, landowners and the wider public are being asked to comment. The document can be downloaded at www.eon-uk.com/rampion and will be on display at six council offices in Sussex including Hove Town Hall.
- 3.5 This information is also being publicised in a statutory notice published in several regional newspapers.
- 3.6 An earlier 12 week consultation period on the proposals ended on 6th May and featured 12 public exhibitions across Sussex. This generated significant interest, attracting over 4,500 visitors from the local community and generating around 1,500 consultation responses. During this response, some non-statutory organisations asked for more time to consider the proposals in greater detail once the draft ES was published which is why the statutory consultation period of 28 days has been extended to eight weeks for the current round.

What Happens Next

- 3.7 After consultation on the Draft ES, public and stakeholders will be able to comment on the final application once it has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate later in the year.
- 3.8 It is anticipated that E.On will refine their proposals following the consultation responses from statutory consultees and the public following the current round of consultation before applying to the Planning Inspectorate for a Development Consent Order (DCO) which is anticipated in late 2012.
- 3.9 The Inspectorate will consult statutory consultees (which includes BHCC) once the application is submitted. We are then obliged to set out a representation in the form of a Local Impact Report (LIR) which will scope out what we believe the benefits and negative impacts of the proposals are likely to be on the city and people of Brighton & Hove. The LIR will also make suggestions for potential mitigation.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 E.On is required to consult at various stages before submitting the application for a draft DCO under section 42 of the Planning Act 2008. Consultation has taken place in the following ways:

- Formal public consultation for 12 weeks between 13.02.12 and 06.05.12 which included a public launch and road shows across Sussex.
- Briefings for local councillors, 02.05.12.
- Consultation on draft Environmental Statement with statutory consultees including B&HCC and the public from 13.06.12 to 08.08.12.
- Ongoing consultation with key stakeholders throughout the development of the project

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Finance Officer Consulted: James Hengeveld Date: 29/06/12

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert Date: 27/06/12

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 None specifically arising from this report.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The windfarm proposes to generate the enough power for the (equivalent) of two-thirds of the homes in Sussex. The draft Environmental Statement should identify sustainability issues.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 None arising specifically from the report.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 None arising specifically from the report.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 The draft Environmental Statement should identify these if any.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.8 There are potential economic benefits for the City arising from the proposal. Any arising should be identified in the draft Economic Statement

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

6.1 An alternative would be not to provide any comments

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 As a statutory consultee and the importance of the windfarm proposal it is important that the City Council provides appropriate comments.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Location Map

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None