

MINUTES FOR THE PRESENTATION – GridLink
DATE: 28 October 2019
ROOM 9, GUN WHARF

Attendees

Cllr Roger Barrett
Cllr Tashi Bhutia
Cllr Nick Bowler
Cllr Mrs Diane Chambers
Cllr Simon Curry
Cllr Sylvia Griffin
Cllr Dan McDonald
Cllr Martin Potter
Cllr Chrissy Stamp
Cllr Stuart Tranter

Council Officers

Dave Harris

PRESENTATION BY: Uniper & GridLink

MINUTES TAKEN BY: Jonathon Simon & Timothy Piercy

Prior to GridLink presenting to members, Uniper, as landowners, gave a presentation relating to the wider site of the former Kingsnorth Power Station which has been renamed as Medway 1. The site comprises of 175 acres of developable land which is well connected to Medway and beyond. The majority of the land is to be developed through the Local Plan process, with the exception of a portion of the site, formerly a heavy oil tank farm, where GridLink are looking to locate their Interconnector.

GridLink Presentation

Previously presented to members back in February 2019. Reason for the second presentation is due to this being proposed on a different piece of land to the first presentation.

Proposal is for a 1400MW Interconnector from Kingsnorth to Dunkirk, France. This is because France has a good source of renewable energy.

The project has Product of Common Interest (PCI) status and there is also a £15.2m grant from the European Commission for the project. This is unaffected by 'Brexit' whether the UK leaves the EU or not.

The proposed cables are subsea cables and they will be buried 2m below the seabed. Where the cables need to be on land, they will be underground and there will be no overhead cables at all. The principles of the project are the same both in the UK and in France.

This site is a much better choice than the previous site as it is a more direct route, both on land and at sea, and there is no third-party land ownership involved.

The aim is to submit the application in May 2020 with determination likely coming around August/September 2020 and Construction to begin in June 2021. Looking to do another presentation to members around March/April 2020 prior to the submission. There are lots of public consultations to be happening.

<p>1</p>	<p>Cllr Tranter Q: You mentioned that there are 12 planned interconnectors in the UK, are any of those planned for this area?</p> <p>A: There is only one other planned for this area, which is NeuConnect in Grain. If this one and NeuConnect's one both go ahead, then there won't be any connections left. There can only be others proposed if there are spare connectors at the National Grid's facilities.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Cllr Bowler Q: Was here for the earlier presentation. Why do we want to send and receive power? Who benefits from this the most? If the benefits are equal, then what is the point of this?</p> <p>A: It is dependant on when and where. The environment will benefit, and renewable energy sources won't have to be turned off when the network is at capacity. The connector allows for access to bigger markets as there are more people able to use the power. Also ensures that renewable resources are not wasted. There are more opportunities to bring power in and currently power is cheaper in France. It goes both ways and the benefits are mutual. In the beginning of the interconnectors life, we're more likely to import power but after 10 years it could be the other way around where we're exporting more.</p> <p>Q: So if we're importing the power from France, it'll mean that there's cheaper power bills for those over here?</p> <p>A: Yes, this could mean lower energy bills as. In the long term, France will have to close down its nuclear power plants and then we'll be more likely to be exporting more. Important to know that this is a 25-40 year project.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Cllr Potter Q: Do you charge the National Grid to use your Interconnector?</p> <p>A: No, we don't charge the National Grid. Anyone who wants to buy or sell power can transport it through our interconnector. We are an extension to the National Grid; we provide a conduit to transport the power.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Cllr Tranter Q: Haven't we been doing this for decades?</p>

	<p>A: Yes, the first Interconnector was opened in 1986 and we've been running interconnectors to Ireland for about 10 years.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Cllr Curry</p> <p>Q: In terms of the market and the power companies, how does this work? If there's a demand for this type of thing, will we see 4 or 5 more companies come along asking to connect in this area?</p> <p>A: Don't think that you'll get any more as you can only add the connections if there is space for the connections to the National Grid. Also, due to the limited space on the seabed, especially with all the wind farms, there isn't much room to lay the cables. Thirdly, there is a limit to the number of interconnectors needed from the UK to the rest of Europe. If all the planned projects go ahead then it will likely fill the capacity for Interconnectors. Lastly the European Commission and the UK Government have stopped giving their support to these projects as they feel there is enough.</p> <p>Q: So the Interconnectors respond to the demand, they're not competing?</p> <p>A: The shorter the Interconnector, the cheaper it is to transport the power. The cheaper ones are better. Ours is 130km and there are two others that are around 260km, ours will be cheaper than these and that gives us a commercial advantage. But there is also one that is about 30-40km which is the cheapest and we won't be able to compete with this one.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Dave added comments at the end to remind members that the planning application is aimed to be submitted next year with there to be another presentation just before then if it is felt that this is required.</p>
	<p>Dave Harris closed the presentation at 7:05pm</p>