

# Report to Planning Committee

29 October 2018

Agenda Item No.6

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## Report of the Director Of Place And Community

### ISSUES PAPER – 18/01303/FULM

**PROPOSED GAS FIRED ELECTRICITY GENERATING FACILITY (GENERATING UPTO 49.99 MW OF ELECTRICITY) INCLUDING FORMATION OF NEW ACCESS ROAD AND ASSOCIATED STRUCTURES / FACILITIES**

### ISSUES PAPER – 18/01423/FULM

**FORMATION OF NEW ACCESS ROAD TO SERVE PROPOSED GAS FIRED ELECTRICITY GENERATING FACILITY (GENERATING UPTO 49.99 MW OF ELECTRICITY)**

**LAND NORTH OF BELLAMOUR LANE, COLTON, RUGELEY**

## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To inform Members that a full planning application (ref: 18/01303/FULM) has been received for the erection of a Gas Fired Electricity Generating Facility (generating up to 49.99 MW of electricity) including formation of new access road and associated structures and facilities.

1.2 A further full application has been received (ref. 18/01423.FULM) for the formation of an access road to serve a Gas Fired Electricity Generating Facility (generating up to 49.99 MW of electricity). The road whilst serving the above identified Facility, would also serve a near identical electricity generating facility, sited immediately to the west of this site, known as Rugeley West, which is located within boundary of Stafford Borough Council, who are the determining authority for this application (their reference 18/29199/FUL. Given that the development within Stafford could be developed independently of the Lichfield scheme, a separate full application for the road is necessary.

1.3 The purpose of this 'Issues Paper' is to highlight to members the fact that two major applications have been recently submitted to the Council and explain the process that is to be followed in terms of consultation and publicity. In addition, the paper will highlight the key planning issues, which will need to be considered when the full report comes before the Committee for their determination. This will inform members of the process and will also allow an opportunity for them to raise key planning issues that either they wish to be expanded upon or added to in the full report at the decision making stage. This report is therefore a precursor to the main report, which will be presented at the end of the planning application process - it is not a report for debate or decision making, but rather an opportunity to raise issues.

## **2. Site and Location**

2.1 The site is located to the west of Colton Road, Colton where it crosses an existing agricultural field to join onto Bellamour Lane, whereupon it extends onto further agricultural land to the west of this road. The site lies to the west of the village of Colton and totals approximately 5 hectares. The site is bounded by arable agricultural land to the north, east and west, with the West Coast Main line running to the south. To the north of the site, within the agricultural land runs overhead electricity pylons. The application site encloses, or is immediately adjacent to, the residential dwellings known as Rugeley Lodge and Colwich Lodge and also a Sewage Pumping Station and Oil Distribution Depot, the former being on Colton Road and the latter two properties on Bellamour Lane.

2.2 The application site currently contains arable farmland, which is enclosed by a mature hedgerow and several mature trees.

2.3 Members will note that the site lies within open countryside outside of any designated area for development. The proposal therefore falls to be considered under the Policy Rural 1: Rural Areas of the Local Plan Strategy. .

## **3. Summary of Proposals**

3.1 The application for the Gas Fired Electricity Generating Facility (reference 18/01303/FULM) was registered on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2018, whilst the application ofr the associated access road (reference 18/01423/FULM) was registered on the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Appendix 1 describes the site and proposals in more detail. In summary, the applications propose the erection of Gas Fired Electricity Generating Facility (generating up to 49.99 MW of electricity) (known as Rugeley East) including formation of new access road and associated structures and facilities and the formation of the same access road to serve a near identical electricity generating facility, known as Rugeley West, which is located within the boundary of Stafford Borough Council, who are the determining authority for this application.

3.2 As is required under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017), a Screening Opinion was undertaken prior to the submission of this application, which determined whether an Environmental Statement was to be submitted with the application. The LPA determined in accordance with national guidelines that an ES was not required to accompany either of these planning applications.

3.3 The application, is supported by an Air Quality Assessment, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Impact Assessment, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Biodiversity Statement, Ecological Appraisal, Geophysical Report, Archaeological Desk Based Assessment, Emissions Report, Noise Assessment, Construction Traffic Management Plan, Planning, Design and Access Statement, Heritage Statement and a Topographical Survey

3.4 A copy of the proposals will be available for viewing in the lobby area to the Council Chamber from 5.30pm onwards on the evening of your Committee on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018. In addition, the plans and all associated documents are available on the Council's website by visiting the planning application search page at [www.lichfielddc.gov.uk](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk) (viewed by entering the application numbers).

3.5 Members are invited to raise issues in relation to the current applications, which they may feel require further clarification or detail when the application is reported in full for determination.

3.6 Members are also invited to discuss the application further with either Mike Brown (Planning Case Officer) or Claire Billings (Planning Development Manager) outside of the Committee meeting, if there are specific issues of detail on which you require further clarification.

#### **4. Consultation**

4.1 The applicant has undertaken a pre-application public consultation exercise. A summary of this is provided below:

- A public exhibition was held on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018 between 5pm and 8pm at the Colton Village Hall, Bellamour Way, Colton.
- Over 1,000 letters were distributed to local residents in July 2018 to advise local residents of the proposal and the public consultation event. In addition, the event was also advertised on the Parish Council's website, social media groups and posters were displayed within the local area.
- Pre-application discussions with the LPA.

4.2 Following receipt of the planning application, the Council, as Local Planning Authority has undertaken extensive consultation, including with statutory and non-statutory consultees. This consultation has included the appropriate Parish Council. A notice was published in the local press on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and 3 site notices have also been displayed adjacent to the site. In addition individual notification letters have been sent to 24 properties in the vicinity of the site.

#### **5. Recommendation**

5.1 The Planning Committee are recommended to note the items for information and raise any relevant planning issues on which they require further clarification and which are requested to be addressed in the subsequent reports to Planning Committee when these applications are formally considered.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **SUMMARY OF SITE AND PROPOSALS**

#### **Site and Location**

The site is located to the west of Colton Road, Colton where it crosses an existing agricultural field to join onto Bellamour Lane, whereupon it extends onto further agricultural land to the west of this road. The site lies to the west of the village of Colton and totals approximately 5 hectares. The site is bounded by arable agricultural land to the north, east and west, with the West Coast Main line running to the south, beyond which lies further agricultural land. The application site encloses, or is immediately adjacent to, the residential dwellings known as Rugeley Lodge and Colwich Lodge and also a Sewage Pumping Station and Oil Distribution Depot, the former being on Colton Road and the latter two properties on Bellamour Lane.

The application site currently contains arable farmland, which is enclosed by a mature hedgerow and several mature trees. The land forms part of a designated Landscape Park associated with the former Bellamour Hall.

#### **Proposals**

The gas fired electricity generation facility comprises:

- A total of five 10MW gas engine units enclosed in a 37.6 metre wide, by 28.0 metre deep building, which has a height to ridge of 9.5 metres.
- The exhaust gases generated by the engines will be vented via five 12 metre high flues.
- A gas metering compound containing a GRP Kiosk and Boiler house (maximum building height 2.7 metres).
- Five 3 metre high Radiators.
- Substation (maximum height 5 metres).
- Switch House (6 metres wide, 19 metres long, by 4.4 metres high).
- Spare Parts shipping container (2.4 metres wide, 12.2 metres long by 2.9 metres high).
- A gas connection compound, linking into the existing high pressure gas main, which runs under the site. The compound is to be enclosed by a 2.5 metre high paladin fencing.
- Formation of an attenuation pond.
- The formation of an approximately 760 metre long by 4 metre wide crushed stone access track, running from Colton Road across the northern boundary of an existing agricultural field, to link to Bellamour Lane. Whilst the temporary passing places formed adjacent to the road will be removed from site on completion of the development the road itself will be retained to allow for large pieces of electrical equipment to be brought onto the site to replace any failed equipment during its operational life.
- A temporary contractor's compound comprising a crushed stone access track, parking for 13 vehicles and the installation of 10 portable units.
- The realignment of the existing overhead power line and erection of a new 27 metre high tower.

The facility is designed to provide flexible back-up power at short notice to the national grid. Unlike a traditional power station, the engines would be operated as a flexible peaking plant, becoming rapidly operational at times of peak demand. The plant may need to be run up to 2750 hours per year in the future, although current EA permitting guidelines limit the hours of operation to 1500-2250 hours.

#### **Summary of Key Issues to be considered in the Determination of the Application:**

- Policy and Principle of Development;
- Sequential Assessment (Justification for Location);
- Loss of Agricultural Land;
- Highways Issues, including access, indicative off street car parking provision and impact on the surrounding highway network including Strategic Network;
- Impact on Public Rights of Way;
- Noise, Odour and Air Pollution Issues and Impact on Amenity of Existing Residents;
- Contaminated Land;
- Impact on existing landscape features and new landscape and planting;
- Impact on the wider landscape setting;
- Ecological and Biodiversity Impacts (including impact upon the Cannock Chase and Pasturefields SACs)
- Impact upon Heritage Assets including Archaeology;
- Refuse Collection;
- Urban Design;
- Flood Risk and Drainage;
- Protection of HS2 and the West Coast Mainline;
- Waste Management; and
- Impact upon existing electricity and gas infrastructure.

Members are invited to comment on the detail of any of the above issues and to identify any matters, which they consider have not been highlighted at this stage.