

Agenda Item 4

Subject - Local Impact Report for Viking CCS Project.

The following report is provided to Planning Committee for information in regard to the above development which is subject to a Development Consent Order (DCO) which is being processed by the National Infrastructure Planning Unit.

North East Lincolnshire Council is an interested party within this process and is required to provide a Local Impact Report on the proposals.

The examination process for the DCO is ongoing and hearings have commenced.

These are being attended by North East Lincolnshire Council.

PLANNING ACT 2008 (as amended)

INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (EXAMINATION PROCEDURE)
RULES 2010

LOCAL IMPACT REPORT

SUBJECT: Viking CCS Pipeline

APPLICANT: Chrysaor Production (UK) Limited

INTERESTED PARTY:

**NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE
COUNCIL**

Interested Party Reference number: 20047168

YOUR REF: EN070008

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Following the Rule 6 Letter of the 15th February 2024, sent on behalf of the Examining Authority and setting out the examination timetable and procedure, North East Lincolnshire Council (NELC) has given further consideration to the scheme and its implications. As the unitary Local Planning Authority, NELC is the host local authority for the element of the proposed development that falls within NELC.
- 1.2 The development is detailed as;

The overall Viking CCS Project is a carbon capture and storage scheme that will take carbon dioxide captured by emitters in Immingham (Lincolnshire) to be transported via an underground pipeline of approximately 55.5 kilometres in length to Theddlethorpe (Lincolnshire) via the Viking CCS Pipeline, for onward transportation to a permanent storage site within depleted gas reservoirs beneath the Southern North Sea. The transportation of carbon dioxide between Theddlethorpe and the offshore storage site will be via an existing offshore pipeline (known as the Lincolnshire Offshore Gas Gathering System (LOGGS) pipeline) and a newly installed spur pipeline.
- 1.3 The documentation relating to this application can be found on the National Infrastructure Planning website via the Viking CCS project webpage. <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN070008/documents>
- 1.4 There have been on-going discussions with Chrysaor Production (UK) Limited (the applicant) as to possible implications of this development for North East Lincolnshire.
- 1.5 It is important to note that NELC's considerations of the proposed development lie with the physical presence of works and associated infrastructure required and the sensitivity of the areas in which the pipeline spans.
- 1.6 In writing this Local Impact Report regard has been had to the submitted information, in particular the various chapters of the Environmental Statement, and the on-going discussions with the applicant through the application process.

2.0 Policy Framework

- 2.1 North East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2013-2032 (NELLP) adopted March 2018 is the development plan for the area.

The relevant policies of the NELLP are:

Policy 1 - Employment land supply

Policy 5 - Development boundaries

Policy 6 – Infrastructure

Policy 22 - Good design in new developments

Policy 31 - Renewable and low carbon infrastructure

Policy 32 - Energy and low carbon living

Policy 33 - Flood risk

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Policy 34 - Water management

Policy 39 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Policy 41 - Biodiversity and geodiversity

Policy 42 – Landscape

- 2.2 The Planning Design and Access Statement provided with the DCO application goes into detail of how the proposed development accords with the various strategic and specific Policies of the NELLP.

3.0 Site Description and Surroundings

- 3.1 The Viking CCS Pipeline project comprises a new 55 km (approx.) onshore underground pipeline which spans various Local Authority jurisdiction however, approximately 22 km of the route falls within the administrative boundary of North East Lincolnshire Council (“NELC”), specifically along the western part down towards the southern boundary although the connection point, and the starting connection, falls within the administrative boundary of North Lincolnshire Council.
- 3.2 The land within the Order Limits is defined as the ‘Site Location’, as portrayed on the Location Plan [EN070008/APP-013] and comprises all the land required for the construction and operation of the Project. The Site falls within the administrative boundary of “NELC”, as portrayed on the Land Plans [EN070008/APP-016] specifically as shown on Plans 2 to 17.
- 3.3 For the connections area in Immingham, the surrounding area is characterised by industrial uses. This then passes through agricultural land and through Habrough before crossing the A180 trunk road. The area also passes through Stallingborough, Barnoldby Le Beck and Ashby Cum Fenby, mostly within open land areas, before entering East Lindsey District Council’s administrative area south of Fenby Hall located off Barton Street.

4.0 Relevant Issues

4.1 Issue 1 – Principle of Development

- 4.1.1 The Local Plan recognises the importance of renewable and low carbon infrastructure. Policy 31 supports such developments where significant adverse impacts can be satisfactorily minimised and any residual harm is outweighed by the public benefits of a proposal. Furthermore, Policy 32 seeks to minimise waste and re-use material derived from excavation and demolition. The proposal represents a significant mitigation in that the pipeline would capture CO₂ emissions at the source, in an area known for its high rate of emissions, in order to transport this and store in underwater storage compartments within the North Sea. This is considered a significant benefit to both local and national government agendas, in relation to net zero.

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5.2 Issue 2 - Character, Visual Amenity, Landscape and Heritage

- 5.2.1 The relevant policies in this regard of the NELLP are 5, 22, 39 and 42.
- 5.2.2 The proposed development is of a large scale both in terms of the land take and the physical length of it. However, the majority of the proposal would be positioned underground therefore limiting the visual impacts of this. It is important to note that the construction of such would likely be of greater visual impact than the proposal itself. The proposal consists of several work areas above ground which include Block Valve stations and temporary construction compounds. Two Block Valve stations would fall within NELC's area with one to the west of Barton Street, close to Keelby and Laceby, and the other positioned to the south of Thoroughfare close to Ashby Cum Fenby. In addition, the Central Construction Compound would fall to the east of Barton Street between Barnoldby le Beck positioned to the east.
- 5.2.3 The development, once complete, will not be visible in the immediate and wider landscape due to the underground nature of the project. However, there will be some physical presence due to the Block Valve Stations and Central Compound. These aspects are considered to be minimal when compared to the project as a whole and fundamental to the overall operation. The wider landscape is identified in the Local Plan Landscape Assessment as being mostly open farmland and open wooded farmland however some areas fall within the industrial landscape and sloping farmland.
- 5.2.4 In regard to Policy 22 and good design, the overall scale of the development is clearly extensive, but the underground nature of the majority mitigates visual impacts. The above ground works are relatively minor when compared with the overall development and the works are functional to what is proposed and, in many ways, common to that which is found in countryside locations in relation to infrastructure. Landscaping is also proposed to assimilate these elements into the landscape. The construction period will have visual impact, but this is temporary and typical of such a project.
- 5.2.5 The project would see the ground disturbed to facilitate the works. The Heritage Officer has reviewed the details, and further documentation, and notes that archaeological evaluation is ongoing, following the submission of the Geophysics and Desk Based Assessment, given the need for trial trenching along the route. The specification for the trial trenching has been approved. The trenching is due to begin in April 2024 and this will inform if further work is required either during the construction of the pipeline, in the form of archaeological monitoring or for set piece excavation. Should any significant finds come to light, these will be further assessed in relation to heritage and archaeology. In relation to other heritage impacts, some of the route passes within proximity to Listed Buildings however these are situated away sufficiently in that it can be considered that these would not be affected by the project. Archaeological work therefore continues to assess the project, and this will need to be completed to a satisfactory level to accord to Policy 39 of the NELLP.
- 5.2.6 The project also passes through areas of trees and 'Ferriby Wood' which is allocated as an open space and woodland and positioned to the end of the route within the NELC boundary. The Trees and Woodlands Officer has reviewed the details and confirmed that there are no issues in relation to the trees and landscaping detail. The pipeline will also go through part of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty but due to the

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underground nature of the works it is not considered that there will be adverse impact upon it.

- 5.2.7 Having regard to the above it is considered that the proposed development would accord with Policies 5, 22, 39 and 42 of the NELLP subject to appropriate mitigation through landscaping being secured through the requirements of any granted Development Consent Order (DCO).

5.3 Issue 3 - Impact on Neighbouring Land Uses

- 5.3.1 Policy 5 of the NELLP requires an assessment be made on the impact on neighbouring land uses by virtue of noise, air quality, disturbance and visual intrusion. This section ties into section 8 below which specifically relates to HSE matters.
- 5.3.2 The proposed development is located on land of an open nature with limited above ground works. The route would sit on the outskirts of some residential properties however these areas are minimal.
- 5.3.3 The proposed development would not present unacceptable impacts on the neighbouring land uses by its physical presence, given this would be underground, and therefore this is considered to be compatible and acceptable. The associated impacts in regard to noise, light and odour have been assessed through the Environmental Statement and have not given rise to any concerns. There has been full consultation with the Councils Environmental Health Officer. Control measures would need to be in place through the DCO Requirements to ensure that this remains the case.
- 5.3.4 The physical presence of the associated above ground works with the development, that of the block valve stations and compound areas, are sufficiently separated from neighbouring land uses and within the open land therefore mitigating any undue impacts.
- 5.3.5 The proposed development is therefore considered to be compatible with the adjacent and nearby land uses and would not cause undue harm. The proposal therefore accords with Policy 5 of the NELLP.

5.4 Issue 4 – Impact on the Highway Network.

- 5.4.1 Policy 5 of the NELLP requires that the suitability of the proposal with regards to access and traffic generation levels is considered. Similarly, Policy 36 promotes sustainable transport use whilst Policy 38 sets out the requirements for parking.
- 5.4.2 The proposed development would not lead to a significant amount of traffic generation once operational. These movements would be limited to management and maintenance once operational and be focused to the Block Valve stations.
- 5.4.3 The construction phase of the development is much more intensive in regard to traffic movements for both deliveries and employees. The information supplied details that the construction generation, at peak construction, would be significant however not detrimental. This has been assessed and whilst these are large numbers it would not

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result in severe impacts on the highway network. In order to control these construction traffic movements and to help reduce the impact on the network detailed conditions will be subject to approval by NELC through the Requirements of the DCO.

- 5.4.4 The Highway Officer has raised some concerns over the access points as detailed. There are ongoing discussions on this matter with the applicant and these matters will need to be addressed to ensure the project is acceptable in highway safety terms. Also, there are ongoing discussions regarding the rights to access the highway to allow for the works.

5.5 Issue 5 - Ecology

- 5.5.1 Policy 41 of the NELLP seeks development to have regard to biodiversity and geodiversity. The scale and nature of the proposed development means that there is the potential for ecological impact. Moreover, the route also passes through a Site of Nature Conservation Interest.
- 5.5.2 The Council's Ecologist has reviewed the Environmental Statement (ES) in regard to the impacts of the proposed development. The Ecology Officer has highlighted some concerns in relation to chalk streams and blow wells resulting in the lack of consideration in relation to habitats of principle importance. This has been raised with the applicant and these discussions are ongoing. It is noted that a Construction Environmental Management Plan is required to be agreed with NELC and then implemented throughout the construction phase through Requirements of the DCO.

5.6 Issue 6 - Pollution, Air Quality and Contamination

- 5.6.1 Pollution, air quality and contamination are factors which need consideration under Policy 5 of the NELLP, which requires any necessary measures to mitigate impacts to be provided.
- 5.6.2 Regard has been had to the chapters of the ES that cover pollution, air quality and contamination. Consideration has also been given to such matters through the construction phase, which can on occasion be more of an impact than the actual operation of the development. Requirements of the DCO relate to the need for a Construction Environmental Management Plan and for Construction Hours. The Environmental Health Officer has considered these matters in detail and have raised no concerns over the potential impacts, or the control measures proposed. As such the proposal is considered to accord with Policy 5 of the NELLP.

5.7 Issue 7 - Drainage and Flood Risk

- 5.7.1 Policy 33 of the NELLP seeks to mitigate flood risk impacts and requires development to be supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment with Policy 34 requiring adequate arrangements for foul and surface water drainage.
- 5.7.2 Parts of the site are located within Environment Agency Flood Zone 3, specifically to the start connection point. Sequentially, given the nature of the proposed development

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the development is deemed to be acceptable in terms of the sequential requirements of policy 33.

- 5.7.3 The development is supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment and detailed drainage strategy. This has been reviewed by the NELC Drainage Officer, as the Lead Local Flood Authority, and no concerns have been raised. It is recommended that further consultations are held with the Environment Agency and the relevant Drainage Board(s) to ensure the development is acceptable to them as well. The proposal is therefore deemed to accord with Policies 33 and 34 of the NELLP.

5.8 Issue 8 - HSE Requirements and Consultation

- 5.8.1 Policy 5 of the NELLP requires due consideration to be given to Health and Safety associated with proposed development. The nature of the project raises question in regard to the HSE requirements. This has been highlighted to the applicant that liaison with the HSE should be undertaken however the documents refer to safety being an important factor. The nature of the pipeline itself should be discussed and this is considered ongoing until such confirmation is received.

5.9 Issue 9 - Construction Phase

- 5.9.1 The proposed development is very large and involves extensive complex engineering. The construction phase reflects this and is likely to last in excess of 1 year. During that time there will be large numbers of deliveries and construction workers going to and from the site as well as additional environmental impacts. Requirements of the DCO are proposed (Construction Environmental Management Plan), 7 (Construction Traffic Management Plan) and (Working Hours) to control the construction phase of the development and create measures to protect general amenity but also environmental factors as well.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 NELC recognise the environmental benefits that the proposed development would bring, and this is well aligned with the strategic objectives of NELLP in relation to net zero by means of emission reduction. It is not considered that there are any unacceptable impacts in regard to neighbouring land uses, visual impact, drainage and flood risk. The impacts on the highway network, heritage and ecology are matters that are subject to further consideration through the Development Consent Order process, which is welcomed. This is to ensure no adverse impacts. Confirmation on Health and Safety matters has also been sought.