

**PROGRESS POWER**

**POWER GENERATION PROJECT**  
**EYE AIRFIELD, SUFFOLK**

**STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**  
**SEPTEMBER 2013**

This Statement of Community Consultation is published in connection with a proposed gas-fired electricity generation project which includes a power generation plant and gas connection at the former Eye Airfield in Suffolk, together with an electrical connection and substation to connect the power generation plant to the existing nearby overhead transmission line (the Project). It explains how individuals living and working in the vicinity as well as other interests such as local businesses and local civic/community organisations can comment on the proposals to construct, operate and maintain the Project.

The proposed Project is being promoted by Progress Power Limited (PPL), a company established by Watt Power Limited. Watt Power is seeking to develop gas-fired power stations at Eye and elsewhere in the UK to support the UK Government drive to a low carbon economy.

PPL has consulted Mid Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council about the content of this Statement of Community Consultation and has had regard to their responses.

The capacity of the proposed power generation plant will be in excess of 50 MW of electricity. The Project is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and associated development under the Planning Act 2008, which means that a Development Consent Order (DCO) is required to build, operate and maintain it. It is possible that the electrical connection and substation will need to be consented separately from the DCO and not as part of the Project (this is subject to ongoing discussions with National Grid). At present it is PPL's intention and preference to include these elements in its proposed DCO application. Consultees will be requested to assume these elements form part of the Project when responding to the consultation.

This Statement of Community Consultation is part of a consultation process that PPL is carrying out before it makes a formal application to the Planning Inspectorate and the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (Secretary of State) for a DCO.

**This Statement explains:**

- what the proposed Project is about;
- how PPL is publishing preliminary environmental information about the proposed Project;
- how PPL 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 PPL 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 generating up to 299MW of electricity; that is enough energy to supply up to 400,000 homes;
- the power generation plant will have up to five stacks, each up to 30m in height;
- the site for the power generation plant covers an area of approximately 10ha and is located within the Eye Airfield business and industrial estates; 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;
- the proposed Project includes the construction, operation and maintenance of a new underground electrical connection together with a new substation and equipment (referred to as a sealing end compound) to connect the power generation plant to the existing nearby overhead power line which is part of the National Electricity Transmission System. The substation with dimensions approximately 160m x 150m, up to 12.5m in height and sealing end compound with dimensions approximately 45m x 25m, up to 10m in height are together referred to as the electrical connection compound;
- it will also include the construction, operation and maintenance of a new underground pipeline to bring natural gas to the power generating plant from the National Gas Transmission System, located close to the site;
- subject to public consultation, planning and financing, the power generation plant could enter commercial operation in 2018;
- 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 (CO<sub>2</sub>) than an equivalent sized coal-fired power plant; and
- 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 30m stacks and the substation. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) 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 EIA process is also considering the potential positive effects of the Project.

At this stage the preferred route options for the gas and electrical connection corridors have yet to be finalised. The location and layout of the electrical connection compound have also to be finalised, although two site options of approximately 12ha have been identified, and preliminary preferred locations for the electrical connection compound site identified within each site. Continued consultation and environmental assessment on the connection route options and possible electrical connection compound sites is required before each can be confirmed. In addition, although a preliminary preferred location of the power generation plant within the 10ha site 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, who process and examine the applications before making a recommendation to the relevant Secretary of State. The final decision on an application is made by the Secretary of State.

The Government's policies in relation to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects 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 the Project is established through the NPSs and is therefore not a topic for consultation.

When determining a DCO application, the Secretary of State must have regard to the relevant NPSs and must make a decision in accordance with these unless she/he is satisfied that the adverse impact of the proposed development would outweigh the identified need in the NPSs.

When considering whether to accept an application for examination, the Planning Inspectorate must be satisfied that the applicant has undertaken effective pre-application consultation. Pre-application consultation is essential in allowing PPL to understand and minimise the impacts of the proposed Project and to allow a thorough examination by the Planning Inspectorate. PPL 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 PPL has had regard to the feedback and will detail how PPL has 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 statutory nature conservation bodies) 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 publication 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](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planninginspectorate)

[www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/meeting\\_energy/consents\\_planning/nps\\_en\\_infra/nps\\_en\\_infra.aspx](http://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 and current quality, safety and environmental standards. Efforts will be made to minimise its impact on the local environment, both during its construction, its operation and maintenance. The Project and PPL's provisional proposals to mitigate its impacts will be consulted upon locally and 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, PPL is undertaking an EIA. Therefore, 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 cumulative impact, traffic, local ecology, archaeology and heritage and socio-economics.

PPL has consulted with various statutory bodies concerning the scope of the EIA, including local authorities, the Environment Agency, the Highways Agency, Natural England and utility providers. A request for a Scoping Opinion was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 17 May 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 26 June 2013.

All documents are available on the Progress Power website ([www.progresspower.co.uk](http://www.progresspower.co.uk)) and via the dedicated section on the Planning Inspectorate's website:

<http://infrastructure.planningportal.gov.uk/projects/eastern/progress-power-station/>.

As part of the pre-application consultation materials on the proposed Project, PPL will publish a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and a non-technical summary. The PEIR presents the information gathered to date and provides the results of PPL'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, which 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 does include information on provisional mitigation measures. The non-technical summary presents a summary of this information.

PPL will provide copies of the PEIR and the non-technical summary to Mid Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council. Both documents will also be made available at the main office of Mid Suffolk District Council (High Street, Needham Market IP6 8DL – 01449 724500), local libraries, at public exhibitions and on the PPL website.

When the EIA process is complete and PPL 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 May 2013, PPL shared its initial plans with people living in the vicinity of the site at an exhibition held over two days at Eye Community Centre. At the exhibition and since, PPL 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 phase of consultation commencing on 3 October 2013, PPL will seek views on:

- the Project, including the location and layout of the proposed power generation plant within the 10ha site;
- the options for the location and layout of the electrical connection compound;
- the route options of the gas connection; and
- the findings of the preliminary environmental studies including construction and operation impacts, for example, the visual impacts of the Project.

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

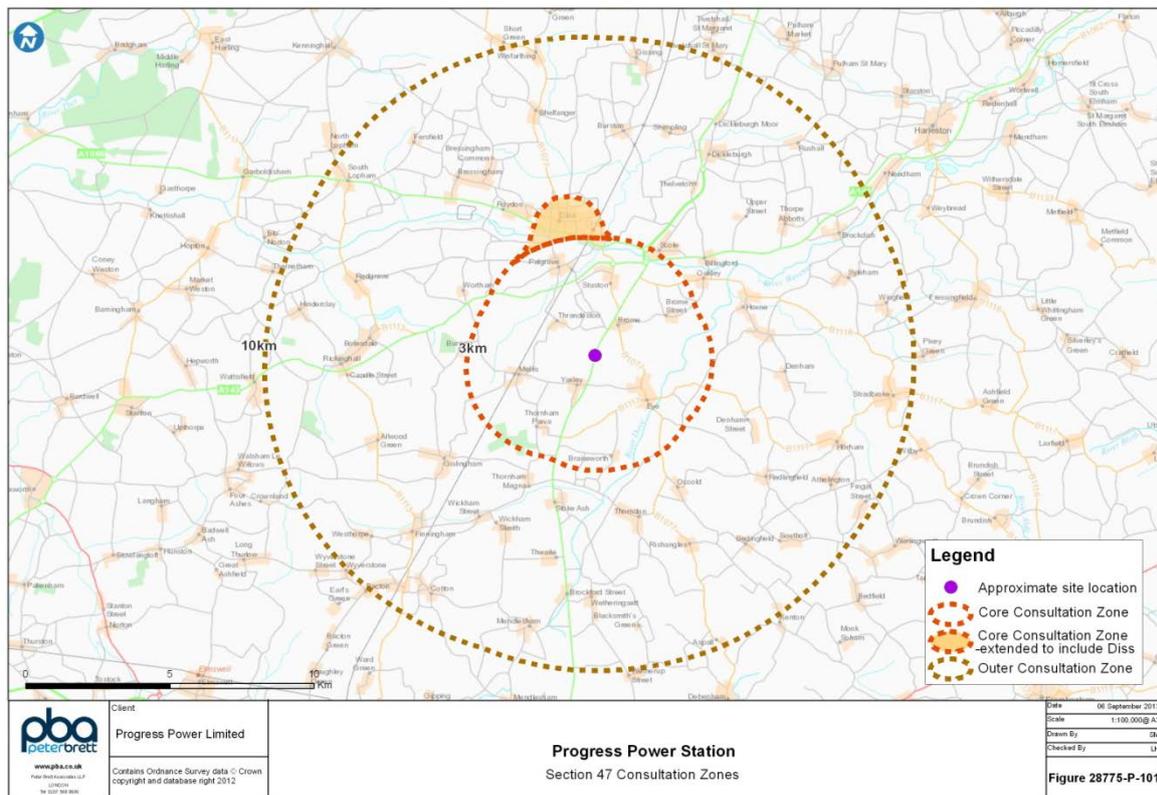
The consultation explained in this Statement will run until 7 November 2013. Comments about the Project must be received by PPL by this date.

**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 Mid Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council and have identified Consultation Zones that form the basis of the consultation.

PPL will carry out its consultation activities in two areas: a core consultation zone (CCZ) that equates to an approximate 3km radius from the Project and an outer consultation zone (OCZ) that equates to an approximate radius 10km.

The CCZ has been designed to include the main population areas in the vicinity of the site that have the potential to be impacted by the Project and expected to have the greatest interest in the Project, namely the town of Eye and the villages of Mellis, Yaxley and Palgrave as well as the town of Diss, which is slightly further afield at 4km from the site. The zone includes all or parts of the following parish council areas: Eye, Yaxley, Mellis, Brome & Oakley, Palgrave, Stuston, Thornham Parva, Braiseworth and Burgate.



Communities within the OCZ will be informed about the Project (via newspaper advertisements, posters, media coverage and contact with local parish councils and relevant local organisations) and given the opportunity to comment on the plans. The outer zone includes the main population areas of Stradbroke and Dickleburgh.

PPL does not anticipate that the communities and businesses that lie within the OCZ will be significantly impacted by the Project's construction, operation and maintenance, although PPL recognises that they may be interested in it. Outside the two zones, there may well be others interested in PPL'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?**

PPL will seek and receive people's views through a number of activities:

- Public exhibitions will be held at five locations within the CCZ;
- A leaflet will be delivered to households, businesses and institutions in the CCZ, and made available at the main office of Mid Suffolk District Council in Needham Market, 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 in the OCZ;
- These local libraries and the main office of Mid Suffolk District Council (High Street, Needham Market IP6 8DL – 01449 724500) will host copies of the Statement of Community Consultation, and from 3 October will also host the leaflet, the PEIR and the non-technical summary :

Local Libraries (opening times vary)

<b>Ipswich County Library</b> , Northgate Street Ipswich IP1 3DE, 01473 263820
<b>Diss Library</b> , Church Street, Diss IP22 4DD, 01379 642609
<b>Eye Library</b> , Buckshorn Lane, Eye IP23 7AX, 01379 870515
<b>Ixworth Library</b> , Village Hall, High Street, Ixworth IP31 2HH, 01359 231493
<b>Stradbroke Library</b> , Court House, Queens Street, Stradbroke IP21 5HG, 01379 384768

- The leaflet and other information about the Project will be made available in other formats (e.g. large print or braille) and languages upon request;
- A website ([www.progresspower.co.uk](http://www.progresspower.co.uk)) provides information on the Project as well as access to documents including, from 3 October, the PEIR and non-technical summary, and provides visitors the opportunity to ask questions or make comments online;
- An e-mail address to which individuals can write;
- A Freepost address (*Freepost RTEY-JYYB-ERSR, Progress Power Ltd, 49 York Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3JD*) to which people can send questions or comments;
- PPL will also notify the local community about the Project and the consultation events via posters on local noticeboards, newspaper advertisements and media coverage;
- In addition, PPL will contact a broad spectrum of local stakeholders. These will include elected representatives, local community, special interest groups (including those “*hard to reach groups*” such as the young, elderly and the disabled), and local business groups. PPL will provide them with information on the Project and undertake briefings where appropriate.

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 PPL as part of the process of preparing the final proposals for its application to the Planning Inspectorate.

<b>KEY DATES</b>	
Thursday, 12 September	Statement of Community Consultation published
Thursday, 3 October	Consultation period starts
<b>PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS</b>	
Friday, 11 October 1430-1830	Hoxne Village Hall St Edmund's Village Hall, Goldbrook, Hoxne, IP21 5AN
Saturday, 12 October 0900-1300	Mellis Memorial Village Hall Mellis Common, Mellis, Eye, IP23 8DW
Monday, 14 October 1600-2100	The Park Hotel 29 Denmark Street, Diss, Norfolk IP22 4LE
Tuesday, 15 October 1500-2000	Cornwallis Arms Rectory Road, Brome, Eye, IP23 8AJ
Friday, 18 October 1200-1730 Saturday, 19 October 0900-1300	Eye Community Centre Magdalene Street, Eye, IP23 7AJ
Thursday, 7 November	Consultation period closes
Q1 2014	DCO application submitted and examination timetable published

### Contact details

PPL welcomes queries and comments:

Website: [www.progresspower.co.uk](http://www.progresspower.co.uk)

Email: [info@progresspower.co.uk](mailto:info@progresspower.co.uk)

Freepost: Freepost RTEY-JYYB-ERSR,  
Progress Power Ltd, 49 York Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3JD

Phone: 01603 417722