



MILLBROOK POWER  
PROJECT

Millbrook,  
Bedfordshire

Statement of Community Consultation

May 2017

[www.millbrookpower.co.uk](http://www.millbrookpower.co.uk)

This Statement of Community Consultation ("SoCC") is published in connection with a proposed up to 299 MW gas-fired power station, its associated gas and electrical connections and other related infrastructure at Rookery South Pit situated in the Marston Vale, approximately 3 km north of Ampthill and 7 km south-west of Bedford in Central Bedfordshire (the "Project").

The capacity of the gas-fired power station will be in excess of 50 MW. As such, it is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project ("NSIP") under the Planning Act 2008. The Project therefore requires a Development Consent Order ("DCO") in order for it to be built. Any DCO would be made by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

The Project was initially taken through the first stages of the DCO planning application process in 2014. However, in March 2015, the project was put on hold due to market and political uncertainty. Under new ownership (see below) the Project is now once again being taken forward.

This SoCC is part of a consultation process, required by the Planning Act 2008. This SoCC explains how Millbrook Power Limited ("MPL"), the promoter of the Project, proposes to consult people living in the vicinity of the Project, businesses and other organisations about the Project, in advance of submitting an application for a DCO for the Project before the end of 2017.

MPL carried out both statutory and non-statutory consultation as part of its work in 2014. As part of the 2014 statutory consultation, a SoCC was published after having been consulted on with the local planning authorities and this SoCC is closely modelled on the 2014 SoCC. MPL have had regard to the responses received as part of the 2014 non-statutory and statutory consultation and these have influenced the further iteration of the Project design that is now being consulted on in 2017.

MPL has consulted Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedfordshire Borough Council, as the local planning authorities, about the content of this Statement of Community Consultation and has had regard to their responses.

As noted above, a consultation/communication plan was published in 2014 and this plan has been updated and revised. Both documents are available from MPL or via its website [www.millbrookpower.co.uk](http://www.millbrookpower.co.uk).

MPL is a company owned by Drax Group plc ("Drax") (acquired in December 2016). Drax is seeking to develop gas fired power stations at Rookery South Pit and elsewhere in the UK to support the Government's drive to a low carbon economy and its gas generation strategy.

### **This SoCC explains:**

- key details about the Project;
- how MPL is publishing preliminary environmental information about the Project;
- how MPL is going to consult local people and communities about the 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 Project before a DCO application is submitted by putting forward their views to influence the Project; and
- how people can provide feedback to MPL from consultation activities and ensure that they are informed about the Project.

### **The Project**

The key details of the proposed Project are:

- the construction of a Power Generation Plant with a rated electrical output of between 50 and 299 MW of electricity. The plant will have one stack, of up to 35 m in height. It will include a new purpose built access road which will either be from Green Lane to the site of the generating element of the Project, or will connect from the site of the generating element of the Project to an access road constructed for the Rookery South Resource Recovery project from Green Lane into Rookery South Pit;
- the site for the Generating Equipment covers an area of approximately 4 ha;

- the Power Generation Plant will produce electricity from natural gas. As such, fuel for the Power Generation Plant will be provided by an underground pipeline connection and will not be delivered by road to the site;
- it will include the construction of a new electrical connection (including up to 500 m of underground cable) to the National Grid Electricity Transmission System and the construction of a new underground pipeline (up to 1.82 km in length) to bring natural gas to the Power Generating Plant from the National Transmission System;
- it will create approximately 150 jobs during a construction period lasting two years and create up to 15 permanent jobs once commercial operations have begun;
- it responds to the Government's need for new gas generation in order to underpin the country's energy security and its transition to a low-carbon economy; and
- the station would emit about 50% less carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) than an equivalent sized coal-fired power plant, and is designed to operate flexibly so that it can respond quickly and efficiently to short-term variation in customer demand and intermittent output from wind power generation.

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 the operation of the Power Generation Plant, the visual impact of the stack and impacts on the local and regional transport network as a result of construction traffic. An Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") is being undertaken; the EIA helps to understand and seeks to reduce the potential effects of the Project's construction and operation. An Environmental Statement will be submitted as part of the application for a DCO for the Project. More information on this process is provided below. The EIA process is also considering the potential positive effects of the operation of the Project.

### **The Planning Process**

DCO applications for NSIPs are submitted to the Planning Inspectorate which will process and examine the application before making a recommendation on that application to the relevant Secretary of State. The final decision on the application is made by the Secretary of State and if it is successful, a DCO will be made.

The Government's policies in relation to NSIPs 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 Networks Infrastructure) 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."*

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 other considerations apply, including where she/he is satisfied that the adverse impact of a proposed development would outweigh its benefits.

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 MPL to understand and minimise the impacts of the Project and to allow a thorough examination by the Planning Inspectorate. MPL is required to submit a Consultation Report with its application for a DCO. This report will include details of the local community feedback received (both in 2014 and in 2017), explain how MPL has had regard to relevant feedback and will detail how MPL 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 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 notification of the Project under Section 48 of the Planning Act 2008.

Information on the planning process for NSIPs and the NPSs can be found at:

<http://infrastructure.planningportal.gov.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/consents-and-planning-applications-for-national-energy-infrastructure-projects>

## **Environmental Information & Impacts**

The Project will be designed and developed to meet or exceed current quality, safety and environmental standards and efforts will be made to minimise its impact on the local environment, both during its construction and its operation. The extent and scale of the development and MPL's 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.

Because of the nature and size of the Project, MPL is undertaking an EIA pursuant to the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009. The Project falls under the EIA Regulations 2009 regime and not the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regulations 2017) regime. This is because a scoping opinion was requested from the Secretary of State under the EIA Regulations 2009 before the commencement of the EIA Regulations 2017. This means that, in accordance with the transitional arrangements at Regulation 37 of the EIA Regulations 2017, the EIA Regulations 2009 will continue to apply to the Project.

The EIA considers the likely significant environmental effects of the Project including those on air and water quality, noise, visual and landscape, traffic, local ecology, archaeology and heritage, socio-economics and cumulative impacts of the Project considered together with other development.

MPL has consulted with various statutory bodies concerning the scope of the EIA, including local authorities, the Environment Agency, Highways England, Natural England and utility providers. A request for a Scoping Opinion was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on June 20<sup>th</sup> 2014, accompanied by a Scoping Report. The Scoping Report outlined which environmental topics would be covered by the EIA and how the assessments would be undertaken. The Planning Inspectorate issued its formal Scoping Opinion on July 28<sup>th</sup> 2014.

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

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

As part of the pre-application consultation materials on the proposed Project, MPL will publish a Preliminary Environmental Information Report ("PEIR") and a non-technical summary ("NTS") of the same. The PEIR presents the information gathered to date and provides the results of MPL's preliminary assessments as to the likely significant environmental effects of the Project. It does not set out the final findings but will include information on provisional mitigation measures. During consultation, MPL will make available details on landscaping proposals and other measures to mitigate the Project's impact. MPL will provide copies of the PEIR and the NTS to Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council as the local planning authorities. Both documents will also be made available at: the main office of Central Bedfordshire Council in Chicksands, Shefford; at Bedford Borough Council's Customer Service Centre in Bedford; at the Marston Vale Forest Centre; local libraries; at public exhibitions and on the MPL website. Technical appendices to the PEIR will be available in electronic form only at the council offices, libraries and Forest Centre but printed copies will be available to view at the exhibitions details of which are given below.

When the EIA process is complete and MPL 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 will explain the mitigation measures to avoid or reduce these.

### **Public Consultation**

The views of the local community about the Project are important. In June 2014, MPL carried out a non-statutory consultation process sharing its initial plans with the public at three exhibitions held in the local area. In October/November 2014, a 35 day period of statutory public consultation was carried out, with four public exhibitions held in the local area – at Marston Moretaine, Stewartby, Lidlington and Ampthill. During 2014,

MPL 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 March 2015, MPL chose to put on hold its plans for the Project and notified interested parties by letter and information posted on the Project website that this was the case. Under the ownership of Drax, MPL now wishes to resume the DCO application process for the Project. Accordingly, and given MPL's open and engaged approach to consultation in 2014, MPL wishes to commence a second phase of statutory consultation commencing on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2017 (and finishing on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2017), seeking views on the overall scope and impact of the Project, including the associated electrical connection and gas connection. Only after MPL has had regard to the consultation responses received will the application for a DCO for the Project be finalised and submitted.

Responses will, in particular, be invited on:

- The Project, as currently proposed, including changes since the 2014 consultation;
- The layout of the Generating Equipment within the Generating Equipment Site;
- Proposed amendments to The Rookery South (Resource Recovery Facility) Order 2011; and
- The findings of the preliminary assessment on the likely significant environmental effects of the Project during construction and operation, as set out in the PEIR.

The consultation explained in this Statement will run for 35 days ending on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2017. Comments about the project must be received by MPL by this date.

**b. Who will we consult with?**

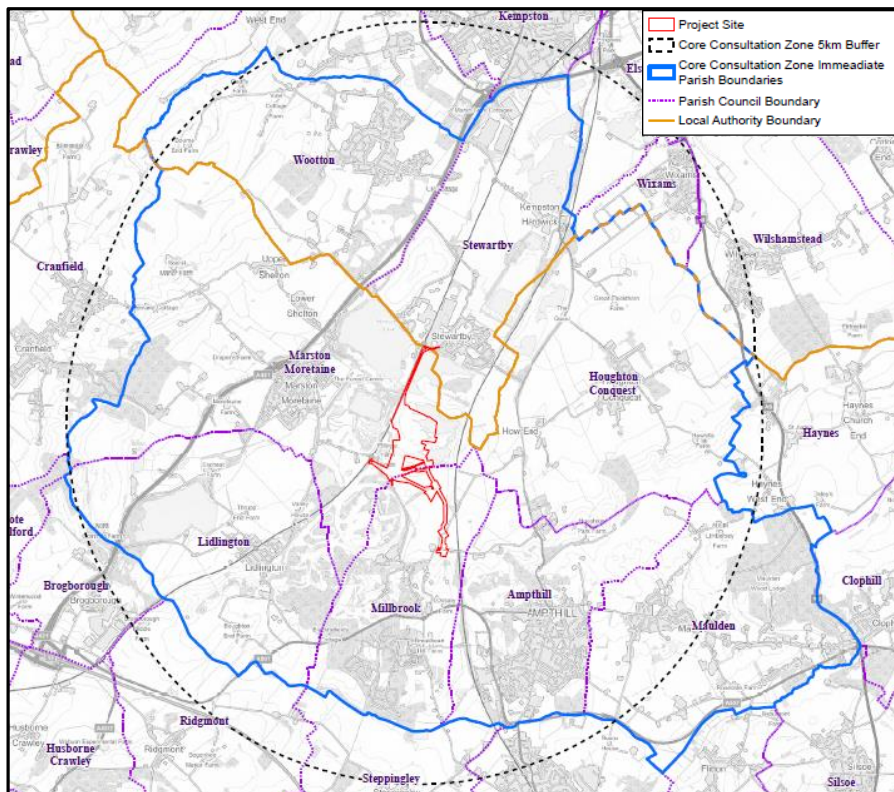
The Planning Act 2008 states that those '*living in the vicinity of the land*' should be consulted. We have discussed the scope of our consultation with Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council as the local planning authorities, and have



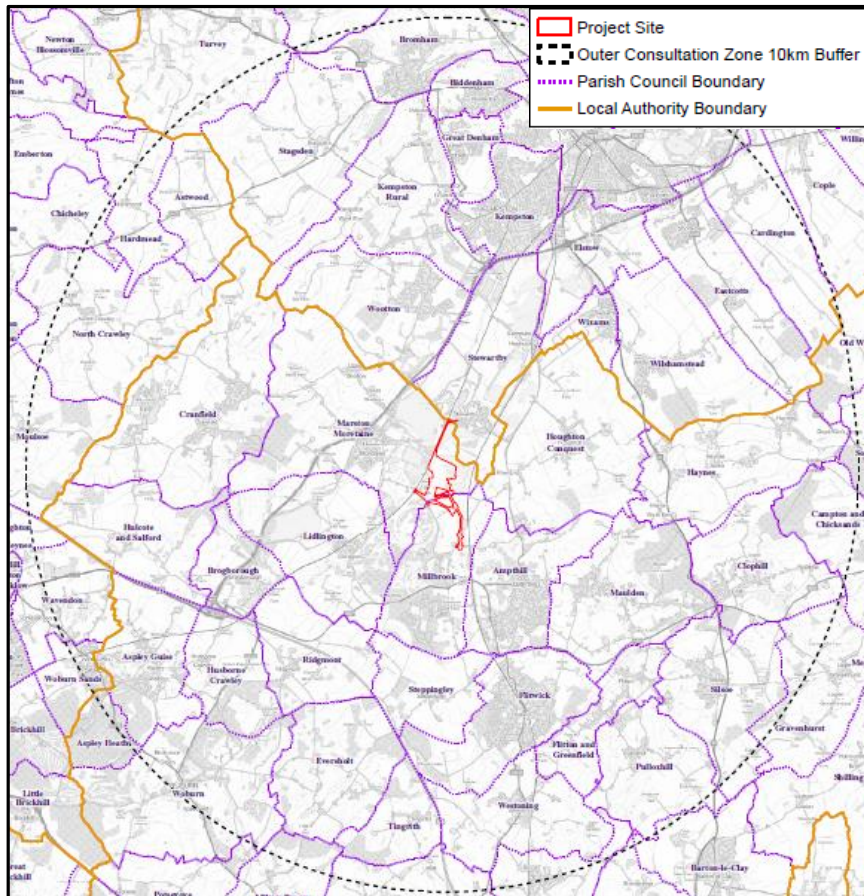
identified and agreed the Consultation Zones that form the basis of our community consultation.

MPL will carry out its community consultation activities in two areas: a Core Consultation Zone (CCZ) that equates to a 5 km radius from the Power Generation Plant Site (Figure 1) and an Outer Consultation Zone (OCZ) that equates to a radius of 10 km (Figure 2). These consultation zones were chosen following feedback from local elected representatives and are the same as those used by MPL during 2014.

The CCZ has been designed to include the main population areas in the vicinity of the Power Generation Plant Site that have the potential to be impacted by the Project and expected to have the greatest interest in the Project. The zone includes all or parts of the following parish council areas: Marston Moreteyne, Millbrook, Houghton Conquest, Ampthill, Maulden, Lidlington, Stewartby and Wootton. An information leaflet will be sent to households, businesses and institutions in the CCZ and the CCZ will be the focus of public exhibitions (see below).



**Figure 1 - Proposed CCZ – approx. 5 km radius from the Power Generation Plant Site**



**Figure 2 - Proposed OCZ – 10 km radius from the Power Generation Plant Site**

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

MPL does not anticipate that the communities and businesses that lie within the OCZ will be significantly impacted by the Project's construction and operation although MPL recognises that those living and working within the OCZ may be interested in the Project. Outside the two zones, there may well be others interested in MPL's plans. These people will also be reached through local/regional newspaper advertising and media coverage (print, broadcast and social media). Feedback that is received within the consultation period will be considered by MPL as it finalises its proposals for the Project.

**c. How will we consult?**

MPL will seek and receive people’s views through a number of activities:

- Public exhibitions will be held at Lidlington, Marston Moretaine, Stewartby and Ampthill within the CCZ (see the table below for locations and dates of the public exhibitions);
- An information leaflet will be sent to households, businesses and institutions in the CCZ, and made available at local council offices, local libraries and other civic community venues in the area. The leaflet will also be sent to those groups that are defined as “hard to reach” (such as the Community Engagement Network, the Older People’s Reference Group and the Youth Parliament). It will give background on the Project, the consultation process and how individuals can engage in the consultation. The leaflet will be made available at libraries and council offices in the OCZ;
- Copies of the leaflet, the SoCC, a Consultation Document that will explain the Project as well as the proposed amendments to the Rookery South (Resource Recovery Facility) Order 2011, the Preliminary Environmental Information Report<sup>1</sup> and the Non-Technical Summary as well as other information about the Project will be available (in addition to the main council offices of Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council’s Customer Service Centre) at Marston Vale Forest Centre, Marston Moretaine, MK43 0PR which is open seven days a week between 10.00am and 4.00pm, as well as the following libraries:

<b>Bedford Library</b> Harpur Street, Bedford, MK40 1PG	Mon/Tues/Wed/Fri 09.00 – 18.00 Thurs 09.00 – 13.00 Sat 09.00 – 17.00 Sun Closed
<b>Ampthill Library,</b> 1 Dunstable Street, Ampthill, Bedford, MK45 2NL	Mon/Wed/Fri 10.00 – 18.00 Tues Closed Thurs 14.00 – 18.00 Sat 10.00 – 13.00 Sun Closed

<sup>1</sup> Note that the technical appendices to the PEIR will be provided electronically at the libraries, council offices and the Forest Centre. Printed copies will be available to view at the public exhibitions.

<b>Wootton Library</b> Lorraine Road, Wootton, MK43 9LH	Mon/Fri	14.00 – 18.00
	Tues	Closed
	Wed	10.00 – 13.00 / 14.00 -18.30
	Thurs	Closed
	Sat	10.00 – 13.00
	Sun	Closed

- The information leaflet and other information about the Project can be made available in other formats (e.g. large print or braille) and languages upon reasonable request;
- A website ([www.millbrookpower.co.uk](http://www.millbrookpower.co.uk)) provides information on the Project as well as access to documents, and provide visitors with the opportunity to ask questions or make comments online;
- An e-mail address to which individuals can write to provide their feedback is [info@millbrookpower.co.uk](mailto:info@millbrookpower.co.uk);
- A Freepost mailbox to which people can send questions or comments is Freepost plus RTXR-ZKKX-XYLT, Millbrook Power Ltd, 49 York Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3JD;
- MPL 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, MPL 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 Community Engagement Network, the Older People’s Reference Group and the Youth Parliament), and local business groups. MPL 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 where correspondence about the response can be sent. Responses may be made public, subject to data protection laws.

Comments made at any stage of the consultation process will be recorded and carefully considered by MPL as part of the process of preparing the final proposals for its application to the Planning Inspectorate.

<b>KEY DATES</b>	
15 <sup>th</sup> May	Statement of Community Consultation published
29 <sup>th</sup> May	Consultation period starts
9 <sup>th</sup> – 13 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS</b>
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> June 1500 -1930	Marston Moretaine Village Hall, Bedford Road, Marston Moretaine, MK43 0LD
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> June 0900 - 1300	Stewartby Club, Stewartby Way, Stewartby, MK43 9NB
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> June 1600 - 2000	Wingfield Club, 37 Church St, Ampthill, Bedford MK45 2PL
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> June 1230 - 1530	Lidlington Village Hall, High Street, Lidlington, MK43 0RT
2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Consultation period closes
December 2017	DCO application submitted

### Contact details

MPL welcomes questions and comments:

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

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