

Subject:	Scout Moor Update	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Council	Date:	26th September 2012
Report of:	Planning Manager	Portfolio Holder:	Environmental Services and Development Control
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	Yes	Attached: Yes
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	That the contents of the Report are noted and that the Director of Business is authorised to organise a presentation to members by Coronation Power at an appropriate time.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 This Council Report informs members of ongoing negotiations with Peel Energy on a Planning Performance Agreement, progress on Coronation Power’s proposals for Rooley Moor and next steps in the process.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:

- **A clean and green Rossendale** – creating a better environment for all.
- **A healthy and successful Rossendale** – supporting vibrant communities and a strong economy.
- **Responsive and value for money local services** – responding to and meeting the different needs of customers and improving the cost effectiveness of services.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- Failure to engage effectively may result in a scheme that has negative effects on the Borough and does not maximize potential benefits
- Failure to obtain a Planning Performance Agreement could impose large unplanned additional costs on the Council and affect service delivery

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

5.1 Peel Energy proposes to at least double the size of the existing Scout Moor Wind Farm. Because of the size of the proposal the scheme will be considered by the National Infrastructure Directorate (NID) and decided by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change. Rossendale Borough Council as one of the host authorities has a number of legal responsibilities that must be fulfilled, including commenting on the adequacy of the consultation process and preparing a “Local Impact Report”.

5.2 In January Peel submitted an Environmental Scoping Report to NID (at that time called the Infrastructure Planning Commission-IPC). Rossendale Borough Council worked closely with Lancashire County Council and Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council to develop a joint response on the Environmental Scoping Report which was submitted by the deadline in March. The NID response effectively accepted all the comments made by the three authorities

as well as other major consultees such as the Environment Agency. The applicants were advised to work together with all the major parties to identify a mutually acceptable way to dealing with the issues. However there has been minimal progress on this due to various land issues that Peel has been seeking to resolve that are outwith the planning process. The project is now a number of months behind schedule with a new Project Schedule yet to be discussed with the Councils. The scheme to be taken forward may or may not include the Rooley Moor element of the scheme.

- 5.3 Members may be aware from Press reports in mid August that the existing Wind Farm has been sold by Peel to Munich Re, an Asset Management firm. This is apparently normal company practice that allows money raised to be invested in new projects. It will not impact on the proposals to expand Scout Moor.
- 5.4 At the last meeting members were informed that the three authorities have been seeking to negotiate a Planning Performance Agreement with Peel Energy. This defines a framework for co-operation; specifies roles and sets out a charging schedule. It is intended Rossendale BC will provide the Lead Officer role (Principal Planner-Forward Planning) whose responsibility is to co-ordinate the work of the host authorities and liaise on a day to day basis with Peel Energy and their consultants. Administrative support has also been included in the costings. However due to the issues identified in Paragraph 5.2 no progress has been made on finalising the PPA. It is however anticipated that further progress will be made this autumn.
- 5.5 In July members were informed of a competing proposal for eighteen 135 metre turbines at Rooley Moor/Brandwood Moor being put forward by Coronation Power. As the scheme taken as a discrete project is just below the National Infrastructure Commission threshold of 50MW it falls within the jurisdiction of Rossendale and Rochdale to decide. An Environmental Scoping Report was received in July with a joint response made by the two Councils on 14th September. The Response document takes into account issues previously indicated on the Peel scheme as well as consultee responses. A number of concerns have been raised about the proposed approach to be taken in the Environmental Assessment including:
- The historical significance of Rooley Moor Road which is proposed as the main access (via Edenfield and Rochdale).
 - Affects on Peat particularly deep peat which could affect both carbon loss and water quality.
 - Impacts on recreational and other users and the measurement of economic impact.
 - The selection of 2.5MW power output turbines rather than the 3MW machines normally used for the size of mast and blades proposed. This impacts both CO2 savings and whether or not the scheme falls within the NID threshold.
 - How the specific turbine sites have been chosen-no site selection criteria are given.
- 5.6 It is understood that Coronation Power wish to bring their scheme forward as soon as possible and that a planning application may be submitted before the end of the year. In order to understand the reasoning behind the Coronation Power scheme it is suggested that the Director of Business be authorised to approach the company to request a presentation of their proposals to members before an application is lodged.
- 5.7 The current picture is somewhat unclear but the coming months should present a clearer picture of how the two competing schemes will progress. It is important that a consistent approach is taken to both schemes.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

6.1 Members are reminded of item H1 and paragraph 16 of the minutes re Council 20th July 2011.

7. MONITORING OFFICER

7.1 Comments included in the body of the report.

8. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

8.1 No HR implications arising from the report.

9. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

9.1 Within Rossendale officers from different Directorates have been kept informed of progress.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 Scout Moor/Rooley Moor Wind Farms are among the largest development proposals to affect the Borough at the current time. There is a degree of conflict and uncertainty at the present time with duplicate schemes absorbing officer time. It is hoped that a Planning Performance Agreement can be agreed with Peel by the end of the year to resource at least part of the work. A consistent approach will be taken to both schemes to ensure that any impacts are minimised.

Background Papers

Document	Place of Inspection
2012/0362 Rooley Moor Wind Farm submission and Scoping Report	One Stop Shop, Lord Street, Rawtenstall, BB4 7LZ http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/site/scripts/planx_details.php?appID=2765