

REFERENCE: P/23/218/FUL & P/24/788/HAZ

APPLICANT: Marubeni Europower 95 Gresham Street, London, EC2V 7AB

LOCATION: Land at Brynmenyn and Bryncethin, Bridgend

PROPOSAL: Development of a green hydrogen production facility with electrolysers, hydrogen storage, hydrogen refuelling station, admin building, substation and back-up generator; with access, circulation, parking, lighting, 8-metre-high wall, security fencing, hard and soft landscaping, and drainage infrastructure (hydrogen pipeline omitted) on land at Brynmenyn. Together with the installation of a solar photovoltaic electricity generating station (solar farm), comprising ground-mounted solar panels, inverters, transformer units, control and storage building, switch gear and a substation; with access, circulation, parking, lighting, security fencing, hard and soft landscaping, drainage infrastructure and temporary construction compound, on land at Bryncethin. Sites to be connected via an underground electrical wire - Updated Plans and Documents including Noise Assessments, Landscape Visual Assessment Addendum etc.

Application under the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 & The Planning (Hazardous Substances) (Wales) Regulations 2015 (Regulation 7) for the storage of Hydrogen at Brynmenyn, Bridgend.

REPORT

Members will recall that at the 19 September 2024 Development Control Committee (**DCC**) meeting it was agreed to hold a special meeting to determine application reference P/23/218/FUL as described above. This was in view of the scale of the development and the level of public objection which would justify Members considering the proposal at a Special DCC meeting in line with the adopted Code of Practice. The meeting was scheduled for the 17 October 2024, however, following representations from the Health & Safety Executive (**HSE**) regarding the corresponding application under the Hazardous Substances Act 1990 (P/24/82/HAZ), the meeting was postponed. Application P/24/82/HAZ has since been withdrawn and a new application for the storage of hydrogen has been submitted under reference P/24/788/HAZ. Both applications are currently being considered by the local planning authority (**LPA**).

It is proposed to hold a Special DCC meeting on **Thursday, 20 February, 2025**, to determine both applications i.e. P/23/218/FUL and P/24/788/HAZ.

The format for the day of the Special DC Committee has been discussed with the Chair and is proposed as follows:

Times	Actions
09:30am	Briefing for all DCC members in the Council Chamber
10:00am	Depart Civic Offices - transport to be arranged
10:30am	Site visit at Brynmenyn (Hydrogen Plant Site)
11:30am	Site visit at Bryncethin (Solar Farm Site)
12:30pm	Return to Civic Offices
14:00pm	Meeting of Special Development Control Committee in the Council Chamber

All timings are approximate at this stage and may be subject to change depending on site conditions, weather and transport arrangements etc.

The Chair of the Development Control Committee has recommended that all DCC members

attend the briefing in person and do not travel to the site independently. The briefing will provide members with details of both applications, the format of the site visits and any transport arrangements.

It is also appropriate when considering major applications or proposals that where there is more than a normal level of public interest to extend the time for public speakers to address the Committee. This in order to allow adequate time to cover more complex matters.

In this case a maximum time of 10 minutes each is proposed for no more than three individual objectors. Correspondingly, the Applicant or agent will also be allowed 10 minutes to respond. The relevant Ward Member and Community Council representative will be allowed 5 minutes each in line with advice on Extraordinary Applications contained within the Notes on Procedure for Public Speaking at Development Control Committee Meetings. This will apply to both applications.

Members are also informed that planning application P/23/218/FUL is subject to a 'call in' request and the Welsh Government (**WG**) has issued a '*holding direction*'. In cases where such a direction has been issued the LPA cannot formally approve an application until such time as WG has notified the LPA that the holding direction has been removed. Notwithstanding the holding direction, the LPA may refuse planning consent. WG may also indicate that it requires the application to be determined by the Welsh Minister in which case the determination will not be made by the LPA.

Application P/24/788/HAZ is not subject to a holding direction.

Officers will liaise with the WG and issue a copy of the draft report prior to the Special Development Control Committee meeting, however, if the holding direction is not lifted or WG decide that Welsh Ministers are to determine it, Members will be requested to indicate if they are minded to approve or, in the case that determination rests with the Welsh Ministers, whether they are minded to refuse the proposal.

RECOMMENDATION: Committee is recommended to agree the following:-

- (1) That a Special Meeting of the Development Control Committee should be held to consider Applications P/23/218/FUL and P/24/788/HAZ on Thursday the 20th February 2025.
- (2) That the format for the day of the Special DC Committee should be as described in this report but subject to any changes which the Chair agrees with the Director of Communities or Group Manager Planning & Development Services.
- (3) That speaking rights for Objectors be extended to 10 minutes each for no more than three individuals and that the time for the Applicant to respond shall also be extended to 10 minutes.

JANINE NIGHTINGALE
CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None