EIA Quality Mark
Case Study

Energy from Waste Facility, Protos, Ince, Cheshire

Key Issues –
This project presented a unique opportunity to be able to utilise the results of an Environmental Statement (ES) completed for a consented development (2007) and the results of other environmental assessments undertaken at Protos, to inform the likelihood of significant effects arising in connection with a smaller proposed development in 2016, and to thus define the scope of future assessment work in a more informed way.

Purpose of the project
The project comprises a 35 megawatt (MW) Energy from Waste (EfW) Facility and associated development. The site of the EfW Facility has an existing permission for a similar, but larger (95MW), energy from waste facility which has been implemented by the commencement of development (but not completed). This development was the subject of ES in 2007. After a review of the consented development, and in light of an altered market context, a smaller EfW Facility was proposed as an alternative to the larger consented facility.

Description of the project
The EfW Facility forms one part of a wider authorised and emerging development, known as ‘Protos’. Protos comprises 134ha of land for energy, innovation and industry related developments.

The EfW Facility would combust approximately 350,000 tonnes per annum (tpa) of waste to generate up to 35MW of electricity. The EfW Facility comprises a principal building divided into internal subcomponents, access, and landscaping.
Lessons learnt

Importance of Scoping:

The Scoping Report for the proposed EfW Facility compared the results of the ES 2007, and other environmental assessments undertaken at Protos to identify where significant effects were, and were not, likely to arise. This involved the following actions:

- Identifying the current baseline information and current circumstances using recent surveys that had been undertaken at and surrounding the site;
- Using the conclusions of the ES 2007 and other assessments regarding the potential for likely significant effects to inform the scoping opinion request process.
- Reviewing the new, smaller scale, project to understand how the project would be constructed, operated, and decommissioned differently to the consented scheme;
- This comparative exercise also informed the iterative design process for the smaller EfW Facility whereby a greater level of mitigation was able to be ‘embedded’ into the design and thus likely significant effects avoided, in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy.

Lessons learnt cont. -

- Where different or more significant effects were identified, or where there was likely to be significant environmental affects that hadn’t otherwise been adequately assessed in earlier work, further assessments were scoped in to the remaining EIA process and the results were reported in the ES; and
- Engaging in continuous dialog with the Local Planning Authority and statutory consultees during the preparation of the Scoping Opinion to agree in principle the environmental assessments which can be ‘scoped out’.

Undertaking a detailed scoping exercise, informed by a review of previous assessment work, enabled the ES to focus on those aspects of the project that truly were likely to cause significant environmental effects and identify measures to protect the environment to reduce the significance of the effects.

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