

Severn Tidal Power Feasibility Study - September / October 2008 update

Welcome to the latest news update on the Severn Tidal Power feasibility study. These updates, which we send every couple of months, summarise progress with the feasibility study. A reminder of who's involved with the study and the timing for our two public consultations can be found at the end of the bulletin.

Further information is also available on our website www.berr.gov.uk/energy/severntidalpower or www.wales.gov.uk/severntidal or you can contact the team at severntidalpowerunit@berr.gsi.gov.uk or energy@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Headlines

- On 3 October the Prime Minister announced the creation of the [Department of Energy and Climate Change \(DECC\)](#), headed by Secretary of State [Ed Miliband](#). This means the Energy teams from BERR (including the Severn Tidal Power team) and the Climate Change teams from Defra have now left BERR and Defra to join DECC. For the time being our contact details and web address remain the same.
- In our last e-bulletin, we told you that the first public consultation (on the scope of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and short-listing of tidal power schemes) would be around the end of this year. Work has been continuing over the summer and we now expect the consultation to be from January to April 2009, subject to a decision by Ministers to proceed with phase two of the study. This decision will be taken following the first internal review (which will consider whether any issues have emerged so far to suggest that Government is not interested in promoting a Severn scheme) planned for December.
- In September we appointed (with the help of the Royal Academy of Engineering and other professional engineering bodies) seven professional engineers to serve on a Technical and Engineering Expert Panel. The panel has started reviewing some of the technical outputs of the feasibility study and is providing us with independent engineering advice.
- Our next quarterly stakeholder meeting will be in mid November, date and venue to be confirmed shortly. The main focus will be on providing an update (and opportunity for questions) on progress with the study, rather than break-out sessions on specific topics. There will be an opportunity for discussions on specific topics at our stakeholder events over the consultation period in the new year.

Feasibility Study Workstream Progress

- **Environmental**

Over the last couple of months work has been continuing on setting the scope of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (i.e. scoping the environmental impact of a tidal power project, as well as the areas and detailed work to be done in phase 2). The PB consortium (who manage the SEA work for us) have been assessing the information gathered through the Call for Evidence and specialist workshops and have developed a number of 'topic papers' covering the likely range of environmental and social effects that may need further assessment in phase 2. The information in these papers will be drawn together into a scoping report, which we will consult on in our first consultation in the new year.

- **Technical and Engineering**

Assessment of the ten potential schemes on our [long list](#) is ongoing. We are gathering information on technical feasibility, costs, energy outputs and carbon dioxide savings for each scheme together with high level information on potential environmental and regional social and economic impacts for a range of representative schemes. The information gathered will feed into the review by Ministers at the end of this year and we will then (subject to a decision to proceed with phase 2) use this information to consult on a proposed short-list of schemes in our first consultation in January.

We have appointed an industrial secondee from EdF to provide advice on the technical and engineering work of the study. He is a hydraulic and civil engineer with 20 years' experience in dams and hydropower schemes, and more recent experience in marine energy (tidal barrage, tidal current and wave).

- **Economic**

PricewaterhouseCoopers work to assess options for ownership and finance is ongoing. Their final report will feed into the review by Ministers and we will publish the report at the same time as the consultation.

- **Regional**

DTZ work on identifying the potential economic impact of a tidal power scheme on the Welsh and South West of England economies is ongoing. The work is focussing on identifying any significant overall positive or negative economic effects to the regions and for specific industry sectors. The information gathered through this work will feed into the review by Ministers and will be published with our first public consultation in January.

- **Planning**

An initial assessment of potential regulatory requirements for Severn tidal power projects has been made. The detailed analysis will begin in Phase 2 of the study when we have short-listed tidal power options.

- **Stakeholder Engagement and Communications**

The slides from our second stakeholder event (held in Cardiff in July) are available on [The Environment Council](#) website. As mentioned above, our third stakeholder quarterly meeting will be in mid November. This will focus more on us providing an update with progress, rather than break-out sessions on specific topics. There will be an opportunity for discussions on specific topics at our stakeholder events over the consultation period in the new year.

The next Parliamentary and Regional Forums, scheduled for 24th October have been postponed. These will be rescheduled as soon as possible depending on Ministerial availability.

For more information on how you can get involved in the feasibility study please contact the team at severntidalpowerunit@berr.gsi.gov.uk or energy@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Feasibility study background - how it all fits together

The Government's Severn Tidal Power feasibility study aims to decide, after public consultation, whether or not a Severn tidal power scheme could be supported and if so on what terms. This decision will be taken in the context of the UK's wider climate and energy goals and will be a question of relative costs, impacts and benefits as compared to the alternative options for achieving these goals.

The Severn Tidal Power feasibility study is being carried out by a cross-Government team led by the Department of Energy and Climate Change and including representatives of the Welsh Assembly Government and the South West Regional Development Agency. The team is also taking external advice and the following teams of consultants have been appointed to work with us:

- A [Parsons Brinckerhoff led consortium](#) were appointed in May 2008 to manage the Strategic Environmental Assessment and initial technical options assessment – you can contact the PB team at severnsea@pbworld.com

- PricewaterhouseCoopers has been appointed to provide advice on how a Severn tidal power scheme could be financed and ownership options - contact via severntidalpowerunit@berr.gsi.gov.uk
- DTZ in collaboration with MDS Transmodal and Arthur D Little appointed to undertake an initial assessment of the potential regional economic impact of a Severn tidal power scheme – contact via severntidalpowerunit@berr.gsi.gov.uk

There will be **two public consultation periods** - in addition to the ongoing stakeholder engagement - over the course of the feasibility study. These will provide an opportunity to input on the assessments and recommendations to date:

- Early 2009 – This will occur following Ministerial review (and subject to the outcome of that review) and will include;
 - the scope of the Strategic Environmental Assessment that is being carried out within the feasibility study
 - which of the 10 possible Severn tidal power schemes under consideration will be short-listed for detailed assessment during 2009
 - how the feasibility study is being conducted, the issues it is considering and how these are being approached
- 2010 – Consultation on the evidence gathered and Government recommendations. This will include consultation on the environmental report, which will contain all the information specified by the SEA Directive.

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