



<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>NAS06: Hunterston Mixed Fuel Power Station</b>
<b>Details:</b>	<b>Masterplan and design strategy for new power station</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Hunterston, near Largs, North Ayrshire</b>
<b>Use type:</b>	<b>Public Realm / Infrastructure</b>
<b>Client / Developer:</b>	<b>Ayrshire Power Limited</b>
<b>Lead Designer(s):</b>	<b>RMJM</b>
<b>Planning Authority:</b>	<b>North Ayrshire</b>
<b>Planning Status and Ref:</b>	<b>Public consultation prior to Application to Scottish Government under Section 36 of the Electricity Act</b>
<b>Issue Date:</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b>

## **Introduction**

This report relates to proposals for the new Hunterston Power Station in North Ayrshire presented at an A+DS Design Review meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2009 at the Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow.

## **A+DS Views**

### **1 Introduction**

1.1 We welcome the opportunity to comment on the outline proposals for this major piece of infrastructure, at an early stage in the development of designs and whilst various approaches are still being considered. This facility is a designated National Development in the National Planning Framework and will have an enormous impact on the visual environment of the Clyde Estuary, national power supplies, and regional and global environments.

### **2 General**

#### **2.1 Design process**

We are pleased to see the involvement of architects in the design team at a relatively early stage in the project and to assist with the difficult job of integrating such large piece of infrastructure into a sensitive setting.

#### **2.2 Carbon capture resolution**

The principle of need for this facility has been established in the National Planning Framework, although we understand there still remains a question over the methodology and required viability of the CO<sub>2</sub> capture process. It will be the responsibility of other parties to comment on this and its related issues. However, the uncertainty over the facilities needed on site has consequences for the design process, and clarification on this matter is necessary if the designs are to be developed with confidence.

#### **2.3 Other emissions**

Regardless of CO<sub>2</sub>, there will still clearly be a number of other pollutants produced by this major new industrial plant e.g. smoke. It must be established that this location does not create unacceptable levels of air pollution for areas downwind of the chimney, which has not been an issue until now given the lack of such emissions from the existing nuclear power plants.

## 2.4 Associated facilities and impacts

We recommend that the impact of all associated service facilities and strategies, such as those for coal and bio-mass offloading and waste removal, need to be technically clarified at this stage and incorporated in the design proposals. Further impacts in the wider area, such as those on the traffic system by deliveries and worker commuting, or the effects on the economy of surrounding towns, are likely to be significant and need to be further reviewed and considered.

## 3 Design proposals

### 3.1 Scope of proposals

While it is clear that there are many positive design ideas being developed in the work carried out thus far, much of the analysis and most of the proposals presented address only the area within the limits of the designated site. A development of this size and visibility needs to address its surroundings on a larger scale. We suggest that a wider design framework for the development of the Hunterston area is required, to include the future transshipment hub, and the existing nuclear power stations through their ongoing decommissioning.

### 3.2 Proposed approaches and possibilities

The design approach to the massing and ordering of the site has been promising so far, and has started to engage with the intricacies and materiality of this huge and inevitably 'engineering led' complex. These 'design measures' cannot be seen as just add-ons, even if much of the layout is determined by the industrial processes. Exciting combinations of the sculptural and dramatic qualities of such buildings with landscape can be achieved, provided sufficient funds are made available to achieve the level of resolution required on a suitably large scale.

### 3.3 Visual impact

The scale of the development, in the height of its major structures, their distribution over a large site, and the position right on the waterfront, creates a particular design challenge. Opportunities for using the drama and vitality of these elements should be grasped in the design approach, and we urge the design team to be bold, to create a positive feature of the landscape and an object of beauty at different scales, both day and night. We encourage continuing co-operation between the Council and the Design Team in refining the visual properties of the building from agreed viewpoints, and look forward to the progress of the designs in this light.

### 3.4 Site and context analysis

Much of the site appears to be flat reclaimed land. It is not apparent how the proposals relate to the surrounding much more varied topography (e.g. the slope to the east, the site of the power stations, or the waterfront), and we suggest that a sectional analysis is required.

## 4 Landscape proposals

### 4.1 Proposals within the site

We welcome the proposals for a landscape 'boulevard' at the entrance / office area, though this idea needs to be developed to ensure that it is not overwhelmed by the massive scale of the adjacent plant buildings. However, the proposed ordering grid indicated over the whole site appears somewhat imposed and it was not clear how or why this would extend into the landscape, or how it relates to the coastal site.

#### 4.2 Scope of landscape considerations

As noted above, the scope of the landscape strategy, and the relation of landscape proposals to the surroundings, should be reviewed. The proposals need to develop beyond measures such as screening belts of trees to mediate this artificial industrial environment with the landscape. This may involve making proposals for areas outwith the site as part of an expanded vision, noting that where such large structures have been integrated into their surroundings in the past, that funds have often been allocated for such related landscaping work.

It is clear that this landscape can accommodate large buildings, and the landscape proposals need to work with and incorporate the massive built elements, to relate to both the local landscape (the bay, the hills, Hunterston House and its estate) and the wider landscape (the Clyde, the distant islands and mountains, the existing cluster of power station buildings). These principles need to guide and be integral with those which we have suggested above as needed for the wider development of the Hunterston area.

#### 4.3 Potential roles of tree planting

Given the inclusion of a bio-mass element, and the need to establish reliable supplies for this power source, we suggest that the planting and management of related forests on or around the site could be an opportunity to combine the power supply function with the landscape strategy, and provide further local work opportunities.

### **Conclusion**

We welcome the appointment of architects to address the various major design impacts of this important national development. From promising beginnings, the design proposals need to be developed into a clear and bold vision for the buildings, and to address their relationship to the wider landscape and area. This process should seek to achieve a high level of design, and the Design Team need to be given the opportunity and resources to propose the measures, both within and outwith the designated site, which are needed to make this highly prominent complex into an asset for the grand Clyde Estuary landscape. Equally, it is crucial that the various technical issues and impacts on the area and the environment are assessed, to ensure that this facility in this location will truly be sustainable. We look forward to reviewing the proposals again in the near future following further design development.

### **Appendix**

#### **Presenting Team:**

RMJM  
Enviros

Patrick Wilson & Paul Stallan  
Rebecca Sturrock

#### **A+DS:**

Chair:  
Panel:

Rob Joiner  
Alison Blamire, Karen Cadell, Chris Rankin, Brian Veitch

Staff lead:  
Staff:

David Seel  
Angela Williams and Tony Reilly

**Other participants:**

North Ayrshire Council, Planning  
Scottish Government Energy Consents  
Unit  
Historic Scotland  
Scottish Natural Heritage

Robert Forrest and John Michael  
Lesley McNeil  
Luke Wormald  
Dave Batty