



Peak Cluster: Approach to Consultation

DOC-W07-014

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1. Introduction

This document has been prepared to provide an overview of the stakeholder and community consultation programme that is proposed to support the Peak Cluster Project (the Project). It includes an overview of the objectives of the programme and the phases of activity, along with more detailed information about the phase 1 consultation.

This is not a Statement of Community Consultation but has been produced to inform stakeholders about the approach to consultation and its role in the overall planning process.

With significant changes expected to the Planning Act over the course of the Project, we may need to adapt the consultation approach to ensure compliance and adequate engagement. As such, we have developed our initial approach up to the end of the phase 1 consultation, following which we will evaluate the impact and efficacy of the engagement to-date, alongside updated regulatory requirements, and develop the next-steps.

2. Overview of Peak Cluster

Peak Cluster Limited, a joint venture company comprising of industry partners and investors, including Governments National Wealth Fund, is developing proposals to capture and store carbon dioxide (CO₂) from cement and lime manufacturing in Derbyshire and Staffordshire and transport it by pipeline to a permanent storage location in former natural gas reservoirs, deep under the seabed of the Irish Sea.

From 2030, Peak Cluster could store over 3 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions every year, which is almost a quarter of annual emissions for the Derbyshire and



Staffordshire, and support the cement and lime industry's transition to the production of carbon neutral products. The Project is in the development phase, and the proposals may change, but the Project is expected to include the following:

- New carbon dioxide capture facilities at four existing industrial locations in Derbyshire and Staffordshire:
 - Breedon's Hope cement plant
 - Tarmac's Tunstead cement plant
 - Buxton Lime's Tunstead lime plant
 - Holcim's Cauldon cement plant
- A new, buried pipeline system to gather the carbon dioxide emissions from the cement and lime plants in Derbyshire and Staffordshire, and transport them across Cheshire, to the network exchange point in the Wirral.
- Associated above-ground facilities that will be used for inspection and maintenance once the pipeline is operational.
- New infrastructure on the Wirral peninsula – potentially including a compression station to facilitate the transport of the CO₂ to offshore storage in former gas fields in Morecambe Bay.

Works on the Morecambe Net Zero (MNZ) offshore pipeline and undersea storage will be conducted by Spirit Energy, our storage partners, under a separate planning regime.

3. The Development Consent Order (DCO) process

The Project is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), and will be consented under the Planning Act 2008, requiring Peak Cluster Limited (as the Applicant) to apply for a Development Consent Order (DCO).

The application for the Project would be examined by an independent Examining Authority appointed by the Planning Inspectorate, who would make a recommendation on the application to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero. The Secretary of State makes the final decision on a DCO application.



Prior to submission of the DCO application, Peak Cluster Limited will engage with the local community and appropriate stakeholders through a Project relaunch, phase 1 and phase 2 consultation, and ongoing engagement to help shape the proposals.

A Scoping Report detailing the methodology of the Environmental Impact Assessment submitted in early 2026 and feedback from statutory consultees will be provided via a 'Scoping Opinion' in the subsequent months. This will inform the Preliminary Environmental Information Report which will be published for comment during phase 2 - currently planned for late 2026.

Peak Cluster Limited intends to submit the application in 2027. Peak Cluster Ltd will submit one DCO application to cover all onshore infrastructure.

4. Consultation principles

Peak Cluster is in the development phase, and gaining input from a wide range of stakeholders is critically important to develop a Project that is able to anticipate, understand and address potential local impacts. As such, delivering an effective process of consultation and engagement is a critical element of the Project programme, as follows:

- November – December 2025: Project relaunch
- Early 2026: Phase 1 consultation
- Late 2026: Phase 2 consultation
- 2027: Submission target

The key principles which will guide our approach to consultation throughout each phase include:

Accessibility – all consultation events and activities will be designed to be as accessible as possible, using appropriate language and a range of different communications tools – both digital and physical - to enable people to understand what is being proposed and its likely impacts.

Timelines – consultation will take place at points in the Project programme when



feedback from the public and stakeholders can still have a meaningful impact on how Peak Cluster is designed, constructed and operated.

Transparency – all appropriate information about Peak Cluster will be made available to help build understanding and to enable the public and stakeholders to make informed decisions and provide meaningful feedback.

4.1. Our phase 1 consultation has been designed to achieve the following:

- Continue to build awareness of the Project, and a clear understanding of the proposals among key stakeholders and local communities to secure their buy-in;
- Identify any potential issues with the current proposals in consultation with key stakeholders and the public ahead of future design changes;
- Continue to build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders to ensure they feel engaged and part of the Project development process.

4.2. How we will consult

4.2.1 Programme of consultation and engagement

We plan to undertake a multi-phase programme of consultation in the run up to the DCO submission, with the initial phase 1 consultation planned for early 2026 (see above for further information on the timetable for consultation).

We will adopt a hybrid approach to our engagement activities, consisting of digital and in-person events to ensure that the public and stakeholders have multiple opportunities to view our proposals and provide feedback. Our engagement throughout the pre-application process will be informed by principles provided by the Cabinet Office (2018), which recommended that consultation:

- Should be clear and concise;
- Should have a purpose;
- Should be informative;



- Is only part of a process of engagement;
- Should last for a proportionate amount of time;
- Should be targeted;
- Should take account of the groups being consulted;
- Should be agreed before publication;
- Should facilitate scrutiny.

Following the feedback received from the phase 1 consultation, we will be able to prepare a more advanced design for the Project, with greater detail, including providing information about how potential impacts have been assessed and how we plan to manage or mitigate them. This will inform our phase 2 consultation.

Prior to launching our phase 2 consultation, a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) will be prepared, which will explain in greater detail how we intend to undertake the second phase of consultation, and all relevant local authorities will be consulted on our approach.

4.2.2 The consultation zone

We acknowledge that Peak Cluster is a large-scale Project and will potentially interest people from a large area of the country, stretching from the Peak District to the Wirral.

In order to enable people who are likely to be most impacted by the Project to participate in consultation, we are establishing a primary consultation zone (PCZ), which covers all landowners and interests, along with communities directly impacted by the proposals. The PCZ:

- covers approximately 1km either side of the potential Project boundary (scoping boundary);
- incorporates core settlements across Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Cheshire and the Wirral;
- follows existing landmarks and roads, thereby avoiding intersecting residential streets, or established communities; and
- extends around key infrastructure to include wider communities that will



be most impacted.

We have identified approximately 90,000 premises in total within the PCZ that will be consulted. The people, organisations and businesses within the PCZ will be contacted directly via a Project newsletter, informing them about consultation events, explaining how they can participate in consultation and where to access information about the Project.

Similarly, a Secondary Consultation Zone (SCZ) has been established, which covers a wider area designed to capture people who work, travel through or visit the primary zone, as well as interested individuals and groups who are less directly impacted. The SCZ covers boundaries to neighbouring local authorities. Rather than being contacted directly, individuals, organisations and businesses from within the SCZ will be informed about consultation indirectly, via the local media, social media, and the Peak Cluster website.

5. Project relaunch and phase 1 consultation

The following provides a description of the initial phases of consultation and engagement for the public relaunch of the Project and phase 1 consultation. Details of the second phase of consultation will be provided in due course in the formal SoCC.

5.1. Peak Cluster relaunch: November – December 2025

Peak Cluster has been in the public domain for a number of years, and is now at a stage where it can begin to formally engage stakeholders and consult about our emerging plans. Some stakeholders have already been engaged with the Project in varying levels of detail and some may be aware of it but not engaged. Others may not be aware and therefore, prior to formal consultation beginning, it is important to undertake an initial programme of awareness raising and public information, to support understanding and encourage engagement and participation.

This relaunch programme will take place from November to December 2025,



ahead of phase one consultation in 2026. The relaunch phase of the Project includes undertaking a number of engagement activities, and publication of a range of materials, including:

Engagement activities

- Media engagement – we will engage local media across the Peak Cluster region, through a press release but also offers of media briefings to explain the Project in greater detail.
- Social media engagement – we will issue a range of social media posts on Peak Cluster channels (Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn) to help build engagement and awareness. These channels will be monitored daily and comments / feedback responded to accordingly.
- Letter distribution – letters will be sent to a range of stakeholders from across the Peak Cluster area, including representatives of parish councils, local authorities and combined authorities, MPs, businesses and community groups.
- Webinars – in order to explain the Peak Cluster Project and to respond to initial questions we will be hosting a series of webinars aimed at both stakeholders and the public.

Materials

- A Project 'purpose' rationale – a short overview of Peak Cluster to set out the purpose behind the Project, to explain why the Project is needed, and its core elements;
- Refreshed Project website – the Peak Cluster website will be updated with new information about both the Project and how the community can participate in consultation; and
- A newsletter – launching of a regular Project newsletter to initially introduce Peak Cluster, build understanding and engagement within the Project with regular updates. Prior, during and after the consultation, the newsletter will provide a channel to explain how local people and stakeholders can influence the Project.

5.2. Phase 1 consultation activities: January – March 2026



The first phase of consultation for Peak Cluster is expected to take place in early 2026. This will set out the need for the Project, an overview of potential benefits, but also possible impacts of the Project and how they are being assessed. The public will also be shown initial Project designs and potential location for the proposed CO₂ pipeline and associated infrastructure at the four cement and lime operations in Derbyshire and Staffordshire and onshore infrastructure in the Wirral.

To facilitate engagement and participation, phase 1 consultation is planned to take place over a six-week period, during which time will carry out a range of engagement activities including:

- Virtual webinars;
- Several public-facing in-person exhibitions;
- Community drop-in events; and
- Stakeholder events, grouped by local area.

We will hold the in-person events at easily accessible locations around the carbon capture plants and along the pipeline route to make it easier for a range of consultees to attend. We will organise a mix of daytime and evening events to give consultees the best opportunity to attend.

6. How we will make the public and stakeholders aware of the consultation

We will ensure the community is made aware of the consultation through the following channels:

- We will launch a dedicated consultation portal as a subsite of the existing Peak Cluster website for the Project, enabling local people and stakeholders to find clear and accessible information about the Peak Cluster and to submit consultation responses;
- We will develop social media posts encouraging users to engage with the consultation;
- We will send a short, informational Project newsletter to all premises in the PCZ;



- We will issue a press release to local publications in the PCZ and SCZ, to provide key Project information and to advertise the consultation; and
- We will develop adverts and posters to be featured in local publications in the PCZ and SCZ prior to commencement of the consultation period. The eye-catching adverts and posters will convey key information about the consultation and details of the events taking place.

6.1. Materials we will produce for the consultation

In addition to the publicity materials above, the following materials will be produced to inform the community about the Project and provide an opportunity to give feedback. All materials will be designed in a clear, accessible format to ensure there are no barriers to understanding the information or responding:

- **Stakeholder letter:** A letter to publicly announce the start of consultation to all identified stakeholders, to invite them to relevant events and to provide feedback;
- **Consultation brochure:** A clear and accessible information booklet to explain the Project in greater detail;
- **Feedback form (online and print):** A questionnaire hosted online to gain formal feedback on the Project;
- **Project newsletter consultation section:** A feature on the consultation in the Project newsletter that will be circulated to all data-base stakeholders during consultation;
- **Webinar and public event presentation slides:** Location-specific presentations aimed at providing each section of the route tailored information about the Project;
- **FAQs:** Up-to-date FAQs to be publicly available on the website;
- **Event materials:** Materials to be shown at events, including, but not limited to, informational banners and maps.

6.2. How the public will be able to participate and respond

The public will be able to participate in, and respond to, the consultation through:



- In-person and virtual consultation events;
- The online webform on the consultation website;
- Information points – local community venues that will host Project consultation materials and information about how to provide feedback; and
- The Project contact centre, which comprises an online webform, dedicated Project email address, freephone line, freepost address. These are described further below.

6.3. In-person and virtual consultation events

We will hold a range of drop-in events in the Project area, which will enable consultees to find out more about the proposals, meet the Project team, and ask any questions they may have.

6.4. The online webform on the consultation website

A dedicated consultation portal will be set up as a subsite of the existing Peak Cluster website, which will:

- Provide a single source of truth for stakeholders to visit to understand, and engage with the Project.
- Explain the consultation process and how people can participate;
- Provide access to both technical and non-technical consultation materials;
- Provide access to an online feedback form, which enable the public and stakeholders share their views

6.5. Information points

While we are adopting a digital-first approach to our consultation where possible, we also acknowledge the need to provide hard copies of our materials for members of the public to view (in particular those who may not be able to use, or have access to digital versions e.g. older generations). In order to be as inclusive as possible during the consultation, information points along the route will provide consultees with a destination in which to engage with the Project

and access materials outside of our scheduled events. The information points will be in publicly accessible locations, which the target audience are likely to frequent (e.g. shopping hubs or libraries).

6.6. Project contact centre

Members of the public will be able to find more out about the consultation, ask questions and request documents through the Project freephone line and email address. People will also be able to submit feedback to the dedicated Project email address and freepost address. The details of the contact centre are:

- Email: consultation@peakcluster.co.uk
- Phone: 0800 0129 167 (free phone number)
- Freepost: FREEPOST PEAK CLUSTER

7. How we will record feedback and respond to it

We will consider all feedback received during the phase 1 consultation period. The feedback will be processed into a secure database and then read and analysed. The feedback will then be categorised into key themes and passed on to the technical team for consideration. The technical team will then take time to analyse the feedback and make changes to the proposals where appropriate. We will be in touch to communicate any updates or changes following the phase 1 consultation.