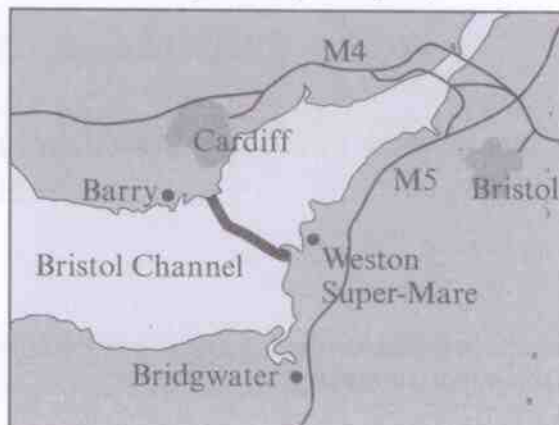


#### 4. New talks on Plan for Severn Barrage from Cardiff to Weston

UK government ministers are in talks with a private consortium, Corlan Hafren, over plans to build a multi-billion-pound barrage across the Severn Estuary which would harness tidal power between South Wales and Weston-Super-Mare to create electricity. Corlan Hafren is a consortium that includes Halcrow, which provides planning, design and management services for developing infrastructure and, engineering company Arup.



It has been estimated that a barrage could generate up to 5% of the UK's electricity needs. A government spokesman said that "this is an interesting proposition, particularly if it can contribute to the government targets for reducing carbon emissions by the year 2020. We are discussing with the consortium the next stages to develop the outline proposal, so it can be fully considered by the government to assess whether the benefits of the project in terms of economic growth and renewable energy justify the cost and the environmental consequences for the Severn Estuary."

The Department of the Environment said that potential environmental impacts of a barrage would have to be considered, a spokeswoman said that "any planned scheme needs to consider environmental impacts, for example on fish, birds and flooding as well as potential impacts on navigation and other sea users."

On its website the Corlan Hafren consortium says: "The Severn Barrage will act as a catalyst for regeneration in Wales and south-west England, bringing substantial new, permanent jobs to the region and creating an internationally recognised centre of expertise in renewable energy provision and manufacture."

The huge tidal range in the Severn Estuary could be a source of carbon-free electricity over a very long term, providing significant benefits in jobs, practical skills and supply chain.

We recognise the estuary is important for its special environmental features, and the potential impact on these must be considered in the assessment of different technologies for harnessing the energy of the tidal range".

Before making a final decision as to whether or not the consortium should be allowed to proceed with the plan, the government has decided that a cost-benefit analysis should be carried out.

Source: [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) 7 December 2011

Consider the issues that will need to be taken into account when undertaking a cost-benefit analysis of the Severn Barrage. [10]