

Portishead B Power Station

The Site

The station site is situated on the south coast of the Bristol Channel on level ground between Portishead A power station and the Portishead dock. The area of the site on which the station actually stands is 26½ acres.

The outdoor switching station is situated on the east side of the dock. This, together with land also on the east side of the dock, allocated to ash disposal, and with a further piece of land available as a future coal store, amounts to a further 89 acres. This makes the total area some 115½ acres.

Originally the site was in use by the Port of Bristol Authority and the British Transport Commission and before access could be obtained the existing Portishead Railway Station and sidings had to be re-sited about half a mile south. Transit sheds and a grain mill had to be demolished and three 132,000-volt overhead transmission line circuits and several 33,000-volt underground cables had to be diverted.

Preliminary site work was commenced in May 1951 as soon as the consent of the Minister of Fuel and Power had been obtained for the construction of the station. Full access to the final portion of the site was not obtained until January 1955.

The rock outcropping in the hillside forming the western boundary falls away generally towards the dock. It was also found that the outcropping was occurring at lower levels towards the south-east corner of the power house and advantage was taken of this to provide a basement for a building for the accommodation of stores, etc. the basement width varying from approximately one-third full width to full width as the south end is approached, to suit the rock formation. This was estimated to be more economical than mass concrete at this depth plus the provision of storage space elsewhere. The fact that considerable excavation would be necessary for the pump and condenser pits was responsible for the decision to excavate generally to rock and to use mass concrete for the foundations. The overburden consists mainly of soft blue alluvium covered by some made-up ground.

The general level of the site is 30 feet Ordnance datum.

Extracted from CEGB booklet published 1960.