

Minutes of Meeting.

Meeting title	Community Liaison Group – Substation North
Location	Alford – St Wilfred's Community Hall
Date/time	Thursday 10 August 2023, 7-8pm
Originator	ODOW
Attendees	<p>Roisin Alldis – Group Facilitator – ODOW - RA David Wright – Land Manager – ODOW – DW Dan Clark – Minute Taker - DC</p> <p>Hannah Fairfield – Willoughby & District Parish Council – HF Philip Lapczuk – Huttoft Parish Council - PLHu Kevin Pryce – Alford Town Council – KP Lynette Pryce – Alford Town Council - LP Annie Maynard – Chapel St Leonards Parish Council - AM Malcolm Poole - Chapel St Leonards Residents Association – MP P Leany – Well Parish Meeting representative– PLW Eric Cooper – Bilsby Parish Council – EC Norman Gaston – Bilsby Parish Council - NG Roger Dawson - District Councillor for Chapel St Leonards - RD Tim Kaye – Anderby Creek Resident Cllr Fisher – Anderby Parish Council - CF</p>
Apologies	None
Purpose of meeting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To involve key local stakeholders in the design and development of the Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind project (landfall, onshore cable route and substation) through presentations, discussions and planned workshop activities. 2. To act as a two-way communication channel between local communities and the project team. 3. To help foster local involvement and ownership of the project.

Chair's welcome and introductions

DW and RA opened the meeting and attendees introduced themselves. Due to late circulation, the minutes of the last meeting would be approved via email. The minutes of this meeting would be sent out for approval within the next two weeks prior to posting on the website.

Phase 2 consultation update

DW gave an update on the PEIR consultation. The main topics of raised at the events were: Noise, traffic & dust, Grade 1 land, Running silts, Proximity to substations and Impact to health.

437 people had attended across the five consultation events with 31 attendees on the two webinars. 162 feedback cards were submitted with many more emails, phone calls and letters.

RD asked which villages would be affected. Using the map RA confirmed where the cables would run and that it was kept inland to avoid the Wash.

RD asked what distance it would be from the villages and how close they would run to the villages. EC said that he should not worry. DW confirmed the cables would be completely underground and that proximity to residential areas would be considered.

KP asked if the cable would also incorporate future projects. DW confirmed this is for ODOW only. KP asked if ODOW would lay cables for others to connect to in future. DW confirmed that the cables are 1.5GW and built for ODOW.

Onshore Works

It is necessary to validate ground conditions at key crossing locations where Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) will be deployed, for example at the landfall and under main rivers. Sampling ground conditions will allow engineers to optimise engineering for the underground cable installation works. Samples were taken from a single borehole, a few inches in diameter at a depth of roughly 20m, together with some trial pits. The soil samples were now in laboratories for testing.

Substation and Cable Route Update

DW: National Grid have completed their appraisal work of the two connections options included within the original Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) Report (July 2022) and decided that Weston Marsh will be the connection point for the project. Development work associated with the connection option for Outer Dowsing referred to as 'Lincolnshire Node' would be ceased. At this stage, it is not possible to say whether the connection will be at the Surfleet Marsh study area (previously called Weston Marsh North) or at the Weston Marsh Study area (previously called Weston Marsh South).

National Grid and ODOW will each require to consent and build a substation and are working closely together to determine the most efficient locations. The CLG would be briefed in the Autumn on the outcome of these discussions prior to the launch of a public consultation.

MP asked why the Northern plan had been scrapped. DW confirmed that there was less infrastructure in this region and that National Grid would need to build this – however the substation was a National Grid decision. The substation in the South means that the ODOW project would be connecting

to existing infrastructure. The second update was in respect of the two cables routes either side of the A52. As a result of route assessments and consultation feedback, it was agreed that the soil conditions were more optimal in the route to the northwest of the A52 and that the route southeast of the A52 would result in greater environmental impact due to the engineering challenges involved. Therefore, the Phase 1A route northwest of the A52 would be progressed.

RD asked if there were any legal issues with the project and whether the decision is set in stone. DW confirmed that the substation decision was a National Grid decision and it was not for ODOW to get involved.

RD asked why offshore substations were not considered and whether would be a better decision. DW said it may potentially be a cheaper option but again the decision was down to National Grid. EC said that it is London and the South East that need the power so the decision will have been made by National Grid with that in mind. DW reinforced the point that this would be connecting into existing overhead lines without the need for further infrastructure.

The update information had been sent out to local councillors, attendees of previous events, social media, local media and was mailed to 11,000 local residents within the consultation zone.

EC asked if there was planning for storage facilities. DW said there wasn't and that it was outlined as an option in the scoping report and that this was no longer needed – the scoping report has been superseded by the PEIR document. DW and RA confirmed the process and how this has helped narrow down the proposals through surveys, studies and consultations.

EC asked if spare cable would be laid for future projects to use. DW said that the costs and investment along with the fact that no other wind farms are in development would mean that this would be a significant risk with no guarantee of return.

DW said that as a result of more detailed discussions with National Grid, there may be a requirement to go outside of the existing red line boundaries and this would require another round of consultation events in the autumn. The CLG would be briefed ahead of these.

TK asked what would be visible. DW said that the wind farm is 54km offshore, so you would only be able to see the tips of the blades in very specific weather conditions – probably around six days per year. He also confirmed that onshore there would be manhole-type covers for the jointing pits, ideally on the edge of fields, 800m apart. He said that there would be a raised area at landfall, which would just be a mound of grass. He confirmed that there would be no buildings, apart from the substation.

CF asked if there were to be depots for the cable laying. DW and RA confirmed they would be temporary compounds along the haul road every 7km or so - the online PEIR gives the proposed locations for the compound. RA specified the work plan documents as the source for this information.

Q&A

DW said that the team would be working closely with National Grid would be back in the autumn with further consultation and more details.

However, the engagement wouldn't stop there. After submission there would be a 17-month examination period with six months of hearings held locally where members of the public could engage with the process and submit written questions.

As well as taking onboard feedback from the consultation events, the project would also learn from previous schemes in the area.

NG asked if anyone was likely to get overhead pylons built with the Northern substation when it is built. DW said that that is a National Grid decision and nothing to do with the ODOW project.

NG asked whether ODOW had considered what they were doing is very bad and with no indication of building size, that he felt the images weren't indicative of this, that it worried people and that ODOW should apologise. DW confirmed the building concepts in the images were to scale. It was reiterated that this was a National Grid decision and that any issues should be raised with them directly.

Both DW and RA reiterated the process undertaken had to be transparent and consider all potential scenarios ahead of the substation confirmation (otherwise the project would have been 18 months later than scheduled) to ensure that residents were aware of all potential outcomes. DW apologised if that wasted some people's time for those not affected by these works, but considering the UK need for secure, renewable energy, this approach was the best to take to expedite the project.

LP said that the information provided throughout the process had been transparent and clear and thanked ODOW for their co-operation and communication during the process. This was received with thanks by DW and RA.

EC asked attendees to consider a June report from National Grid, which gave two proposals for Lincolnshire Node – but confirmed that this was nothing to do with ODOW and they had no decision in the matter.

RD said that he believed ODOW was used as bait by National Grid to understand the potential reaction. DW said that ODOW is not in a position to discuss National Grid decision. RD asked about what was being done to

connect from the substation to pylons. DW confirmed that the ODOW substation would connect to the existing overhead lines.

Next Steps

RA and DW confirmed that those in the consultation zone would have a leaflet sent to confirm the location decision. RA confirmed this was 11,000 leaflets sent. The next round of consultation would take place in the autumn.

Now the grid connection was known, the project could start looking in more detail at Community Benefit Funds. Although this was not associated with planning, they wanted to start looking at this in more detail.

RA confirmed that when the DCO is submitted there will just be one substation and one cable route option.

AOB

None

Chair's closing remarks and next steps / next meeting

The next CLG is expected to be in the autumn prior to the consultation events but AA will be in touch with details nearer the date.