

Minutes of Meeting.

Meeting title	Community Liaison Group – Cable Route North
Location	Wainfleet
Date/time	Friday 11 August 2023, 7-8pm
Originator	ODOW
Attendees	Jennifer Marsden – Communications Manager – ODOW - JM David Wright – Land Manager – ODOW – DW Dan Clark – Minutes Taker - DC Joe Taylor – Thorpe St Peter Parish Council – JT Paul Jones – Wainfleet All Saints Parish Council – PJ Jean Hart – Wainfleet Parish Council – JH Carleen Dickinson – Friskney Ward ELDC – CD Mick Rust – Wainfleet St Mary Parish Council – MR
Apologies	Dr Clive Shrubsole, Parish Councillor- Wainfleet St Mary
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 JM 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.

CJ 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.

PJ asked if the vehicles are road legal. DW confirmed the vehicles used are road legal. The ones that are not are transformers but this would not affect this region – and that they would come in with police escort due to abnormal loads at the night. In Wainfleet, the cable drum is the biggest piece of equipment which would come on a standard lorry.

CD said within the region they were used to farming equipment being moved. PJ just wanted confirmation on whether they would take up two lanes instead of one, but vehicles are confirmed to be within the standard width.

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.

JH spoke about the team completing the bat surveys and that she had spoken to them personally. DW confirmed surveys were undertaken during both day and night to understand habitats and also to ensure that the project would not impact on flight paths and interconnectivity for the bats.

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.

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

MR asked whether the wind farms had any impact on shipping routes. DW confirmed that shipping routes would not be affected and ODOW had been in discussion with ferry companies, but not many travel 30 miles offshore. DW

spoke about the examples of the wind farms in the Channel and the impact on ferry routes there.

PJ asked about the visibility of the turbines and their impact on the horizon. DW confirmed that they would only have the blade tips visible in certain weather conditions approximately five days of the year. PJ confirmed that this was good to maintain the mental health benefits of visiting coastal areas and having a clear view of the horizon.

PJ asked whether the Wash had been considered. DW confirmed that it is already significantly used and the impact on the environment meant that the option chosen was better and more cost effective. There was discussion on the potential tidal barrage linking Lincolnshire to North Norfolk but this was not part of the ODOW project.

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.

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.

JH asked about community funding and when they would be able to start utilising this. Both DW and JM confirmed that the project had started to look into this but an assessment of community funding gaps needed to be completed first and feedback would help to determine where support was needed and where growth could be supported.

CD highlighted the points raised on social media with regards with wider residents' concerns. JM said that it was important that ODOW works with residents.

MR highlighted the benefits of this project and the surface area this would save compared to solar panel farms.

CD asked for further clarification on community funding. JM confirmed that any funding would be through equity funding – through the company itself, or project loans, using pension schemes, as an example to fund projects. The route for this funding had not been confirmed at this point.

MR confirmed his appreciation for the transparency of the exhibitions and consultations to keep people informed throughout the project timeline. DW thanked MR for his comments and reaffirmed ODOW's approach in being transparent and honest with all.

CD asked about the cabling works in more detail. DW confirmed the trenching approach and the excavation works required for the duct, which would then be backfilled.

DW highlighted the usefulness of the consultations in identifying the running silts which had ensured that ODOW had identified the optimal route. DW confirmed the cable would be installed in 800m sections and the cable would be pulled through the ducts. DW confirmed that the works would usually be between 7am to 7am on Monday to Friday, and 7am to 1pm on Saturdays.

PJ asked about the life expectancy of the turbines and cable. DW said that the design life is around 30 to 35 years but that National Grid had infrastructure in place that was installed in the 1960s. JT said that the timescale was not long, but DW reiterated the advances in technology since the first windfarm installation in the early 2000s and the progression since then, alongside the fact that we have not experienced a full wind turbine lifecycle yet so true life expectancy was an estimate and not a confirmed figure.

MR asked where everything would be manufactured. DW said a supplier had not been selected yet, but it would go to competitive tender. JM confirmed commitments within ODOW to work with local supply chains. DW also confirmed that local drainage companies were employed to speak to land owners based on recommendations made at consultations by said land owners and that this was beneficial due to the unique issues in the area.

CD asked where the base would be to monitor the wind turbines. DW said it is too early to confirm but Grimsby dock has bases there and that may be a possibility.

JH asked if roads would be resurfaced after completion of works. DW confirmed that roads would be restored or enhanced to the standard expected after works are completed. DW confirmed ODOW is in touch with Lincolnshire Highways.

Next Steps

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.

AOB

JM explained that all parish council clerks had been emailed regarding changing membership after the elections.

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.