

**Minutes of Meeting.**

<b>Meeting title</b>	Community Liaison Group – Cable Route South
<b>Location</b>	Butterwick Village Hall
<b>Date/ time</b>	Tuesday 17 October 2023
<b>Originator</b>	ODOW
<b>Attendees</b>	<p>Andrew Acum – Group Facilitator – ODOW – AA  Roisin Alldis – Onshore Consents Manager – ODOW – RA  Chris Jenner - Development Manager – ODOW – CJ</p> <p>John Baxter – Boston Borough Council – JB  Callum Butler – Boston Borough Council – CB  John Grant – Benington Parish Council – JG  Sarah Sharpe – Boston Borough Council - SS</p>
<b>Apologies</b>	None
<b>Purpose of meeting</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>2. To act as a two-way communication channel between local communities and the project team.</li> <li>3. To help foster local involvement and ownership of the project.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>1. Chair's welcome and introductions</b></p> <p>CJ opened the meeting and attendees introduced themselves.</p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting were approved.</p>

2.

## Project Update

### Communications and Autumn Consultation overview

Communications to date;

- Mailer advertising the public information day has been sent to 11,000 households,
- Section 48 public notices have been printed in national and local papers
- Section 42 notices have been sent to statutory consultees
- Adverts for the public information days have appeared in local papers
- The events have been posted on Facebook and social media,
- Almost 200 HOT sent to landowners

Communications to follow;

- Site notices have been placed on posts in fields
- A press release will be issued Oct 20th
- Consultation events will take place – both in person and online
- Consultation launch – libraries, online etc,
- Interactive map with measuring tool will be available online
- An online interactive 3D model will be available at the events

JB asked if landowners receive compensation for use of their land. CJ confirmed that they receive compensation for crop loss during construction and a payment on the cable easement. Landowners have a group for representation.

JB said that local residents were fairly familiar with cable routes passing through the area and that he personally had been impressed by the reinstatement by previous companies. Local residents can see how well it has been done. CJ added that this was not any reason for complacency and ODOW will try and deliver the project even better.

**Autumn Consultation**

This is final phase of the Statutory Consultation in preparation for the DCO application in Feb 2024.

The consultation will cover the Environmental Update Report, Onshore Substation Visualisations and associated plans, and will run between 20 October and 24 November.

CJ ran through the locations for all of the consultation events plus the locations where consultation documents could be accessed.

JB asked if the events had been well-attended. AA commented that Old Leake had been the best attended as they have very active community Facebook page, but all the events so far had around 100 people attend. JB said feedback from the community was that the Project team was very approachable and helpful. CB agreed with this.

**Survey update**

The geotechnical surveys finished in August and the results fed into the refinement of the proposals and the chosen cable route.

The surveys involved a mixture of boreholes and geophysical surveys using a flux gradiometer – a hand-pulled device which measures electromagnetic field in the subsurface. The results will be studied by the archaeologists and if there is anything of interest, trial trenches may be dug from next year to further investigate. There is one area of the cable route that has already been identified as an abandoned Medieval village and the cable route will be directionally drilled underneath this section so as not to disturb it.

	<p><b>3. Briefing on PID content</b></p> <p><b>Cable Route, including compounds &amp; accesses.</b> CJ outlined what had been updated since the last consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporary compound refinement</li> <li>• Highway improvement areas</li> <li>• Passing bays</li> <li>• Construction traffic routes</li> <li>• Reduced footprint at landfall</li> <li>• Substation location</li> <li>• Substation height and footprint – based on conversations with National Grid</li> </ul> <p>Minimum tip height of the turbines has increased to 40m above sea level and the maximum number of turbines has increased from 93 to 100 – this was to keep supplier options as broad as possible and doesn't affect the overall capacity of the project.</p> <p>The maximum number of gravity bases that could be used as a foundation option has reduced to 50% to reduce impacts on the seabed. The Offshore Reactive Compensation Platform has been moved further offshore so there will be lower visual impact.</p> <p>The cable route has been further defined – originally a 300m search zone, this is now a proposed 80m construction corridor.</p> <p>The substation footprint has increased slightly based on feedback from what National Grid will require. This doesn't affect the GIS option, but does affect the AIS option, although this is a lower height than the GIS technology. The PIDs will show both AIS and GIS visualisations combined with proposed mitigation planting schemes. The GIS building height has also been slightly reduced from 19m to 16.5m.</p> <p><b>Onshore Substation</b> Following a decision from the National Grid that the connection point would be in the vicinity of Weston Marsh, Lincs Node was removed from the Project Scope.</p>
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The Project has subsequently selected Surfleet Marsh as the optimum site for the substation taking into account multiple factors including engineering, traffic and environmental considerations.

There will also be a need for a National Grid substation and associated enabling works within the vicinity of the project's onshore substation which the Project will connect to using 2x 400kV underground cables running between the project substation and the substation that which will be developed by National Grid Electricity Transmission.

CJ explained how offsite planting along existing field boundaries would provide additional screening for the substation.

#### **Onshore Substation Design Process**

A Local Design Panel will be formed from the Fosdyke CLG to include:

- Expert topic groups
- ODOW staff
- Landscape architects
- Council members
- LPAs
- Council landscape architects
- Local Flood Authority
- Appointed consultants

The Fosdyke CLG would be used as a design panel to give feedback on preliminary proposals for screening and other elements such as roof design, materials, colour palettes, landscaping, fencing, etc. The aim would be to work together to minimise the visual impact.

The visualisations to be displayed at the PIDs were based on the "worst case scenario" based on two potential technologies still under consideration that will impact the footprint:

- Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS)
- Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS)

	<p>CJ said that another critical factor was getting the right species of trees for the planting and this is something the Design Panel would be consulted on.</p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Timeline and Next Steps</b></p> <p>CJ said that the Project was aiming to submit the DCO application in Q1 next year, which would then be followed by an 18-month examination period including six months of hearings (roughly June to December) where everyone can get involved. The hearings are recorded and transcripts of all the meetings will be available on the Planning Inspectorate's website. The Project is currently looking for venues to host the hearings. A number of members suggested Boston United Football Club.</p> <p>The Inspector would then write a report with recommendations which would be sent to the Secretary of State for a decision around July 2025.</p> <p>The process is designed to test the project against national planning policy.</p> <p>JB asked if the Secretary of State was involved in the process or whether they just make a decision based on the recommendations. CJ said that the panel of inspectors will conduct the hearings where the Project will face a number of written questions and issue specific hearings. The inspectors then have three months to write a report for the Secretary of State, who then has a further three months to consider the report.</p> <p>CJ said that the DCO application will consist of around 200 technical reports and be 15-20,000 pages long.</p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>JB said that the project runs through three districts and asked if planning was needed to drill under fields and rivers. CJ said everything is wrapped up into the DCO and doesn't need local planning application.</p>

The Project has a Planning Performance Agreement with the three Local Planning Authorities, led by South Holland District Council. This means that the district councils and the Project work closely in terms of providing technical responses to the project on planning matters, but the project doesn't need a Town and Country Planning Act consent. RA added that the DCO may have conditions attached to it which would need to be discharged by the local planning authorities.

JB asked about noise and the impact on wildlife. CJ said that the project had been undertaking ecology surveys for the last 1.5 years covering birds, newts, badgers, bats, water voles, etc. In June the Project consulted on the Preliminary Environmental Information Report and this will be supplemented in the DCO in February. In addition, the Project is looking at Biodiversity Net Gain in order to leave the environment in a better condition than before the Project. The Project is looking at opportunities around the substation including planting, as well as talking to Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, RSPB and Boston Woodland Trust about potential projects.

CJ said that there would also be a Community Benefit Fund. The team is currently putting together the themes for the fund and assessing how it could be delivered pre-construction, during construction and during operations. The Project was keen to maximise the positive impact of the fund in the region.

RA pointed out that the Autumn Consultation officially launches on Friday and all of the consultation materials will be available on the website. CJ added that there is also an interactive map which allows users to view the cable route and substation location and measure distances from it.

RB asked if the cable route as indicated would be the final cable route. CJ said that the consultation was showing the refined cable route and construction corridor that the Project intends to submit in February. If someone comes forward with serious material reasons for changing it, these would be looked at but

	<p>it is not anticipated that there will be any major deviations from the route indicated.</p>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Chair's closing remarks and next steps / next meeting</b></p> <p>The next CLG is expected to be in January/February prior to the DCO submission but AA will be in touch with details nearer the date.</p>

<b>Meeting Protocol</b>	
Distribute agenda before meeting	Fix responsibilities for each item
Start on time	Finish on time
Set out your ground rules	Publish minutes / actions
Stick to the agenda	Continuous improvement