

Jack's Lane Community Liaison Group (CLG) Minutes, 19 May 2010

In attendance: Cllr Terry Austin (TA)
Cllr Pamela Austin (PA)
Cllr Ann Harvey (AH)
Cllr Geoffrey Kemp (GK)
Cllr Gerry Taylor (GT)
Simon Peltenburg (SP) - RES
Phil Briscoe (PB, Chair), Matthew Horn - Bellenden

Venue: Stanhoe Village Hall

Apologies: Cllr Gary Sandell
Cllr Nicholas Ullswater
Cllr Adam Bunkle
Cllr Brian Poulson
Cllr Robin Maslin
Mr Jonathan Powell

Date: Wednesday, 19 May 2010

1. Apologies for absence

The Chair gave apologies for Cllr Nicholas Ullswater, Cllr Adam Bunkle, Cllr Brian Poulson, Mr Jonathan Powell and Cllr Gary Sandell.

2. Welcome and introduction

The Chair welcomed the Group to the fourth meeting of the proposed Jack's Lane wind farm CLG. He asked the members of the Group to introduce themselves.

A member of the public was permitted to submit three questions to the Group at the start of the meeting in light of his need to attend a prior engagement. The member of the public highlighted that the previous set of Minutes mentioned the fluctuation of wind whereby intermittent phases of energy production will ensue. He went on to ask what RES could do to store the electricity during peak times of electricity production and what technology can currently be used to do so. SP stated that energy storage and supply would probably be the responsibility of the National Grid and that RES is not proposing to install storage facilities at the site. SP went on to state that at peak times the National Grid would approach large scale electricity consumers to use greater amounts of electricity in return for a good price.

The member of the public stated that high towers for storage can be installed next to wind farms and asked if RES could report back about what storage facilities would be available for the site. SP stated that to his knowledge nobody in the UK is using the system of storage described. He went on to state that there are reverse pump storage facilities in the UK and that they may be used to store electricity going onto the National Grid that is not in demand, but no such facilities would be constructed at the Jack's Lane site.

The member of the public went on to ask about environmental issues regarding the site. He suggested that the members of the CLG request RES commit to ensure that hedges and trees are planted in the local area and that more actions surrounding environmental improvements are initiated by RES if successful in their planning application. SP stated that RES will be implementing environmental mitigation and enhancement schemes for the project and would welcome suggestions for the area. GT outlined that environmental improvements can only be undertaken if pursued with the landowners permission. The member of the public suggested that pressure could be put on landowners to help find places where environmental enhancements and preservation could be made.

The member of the public went on to highlight that there are notice boards around the village of Stanhoe opposing the proposed development and outlined that there is a waiting list for boards. He went on to state that although there are those in favour of the development of the wind farm in the local area there are also those who oppose it.

3. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting

The Chair asked if there were any amendments to the previous set of Minutes. There were no suggested amendments and the Minutes were confirmed. A member of the public highlighted that the link to the Minutes was not working on the Jack's Lane web site. Hard copies of the Minutes were requested to be sent through to the members of the CLG. TA stated that the members of the CLG could open the Minutes they received in the emails with the Minutes attached. The Chair stated that hard copies of the Minutes would be circulated along with the soft copies.

4. Public Questions

The Chair opened the allotted question period with the submitted question listed on the agenda;

*"The turbine at Swaffham was gearless and therefore much quieter than the ones at Pickenham. Why can't the turbines at Stanhoe be gearless?
And, at what distance would you need to be from the proposed turbines to hear no noise?"*

SP stated that the turbines in question are constructed by Enercon and RES would not commit to any single manufacturer at this time and that no manufacturer would negotiate with a developer prior to achieving planning consent. He went on to state that the key thing is that turbines noise levels are limited for properties in the locality and the Enercon gearless turbines would still need to be limited. He went on to highlight that the turbines at Swaffham may have been limited to a greater degree than North Pickenham due to their proximity to housing. SP went on to state that the answer to the second part of the question depends on proximity to the wind farm and the wind direction. He went on to state that noise levels vary and that at one of the public consultation exhibitions for the site one member of the public stated that they could sometimes hear the sea from as far inland as North Creak.

A member of the public asked if any representatives from RES lived near to a wind farm. SP stated that he lives in London but had a number of colleagues, and knows people from other companies, who live near wind farms. TA stated that he had met someone who lives close to

the North Pickenham site who stated that he is happy with the noise levels from the site. A member of the public highlighted that acceptable noise levels were a personal opinion and went on to state that they found it hard to believe that someone from RES would not find it a problem to live near to a wind farm. A member of the public went on to state that, at the last meeting, Dr. Bass could not guarantee that the turbines would not be audible. SP stated that that was true.

A member of the public stated that they were concerned by the depiction of the wind turbines in a photo montage issued by RES for the proposed site taken from Stanhoe. He went on to state that he had taken similar photos and had achieved a different perspective regarding the potential size of the turbines. SP stated that it is very difficult to achieve an accurate depiction of what the eye sees via a photograph. He stated that the photos were done by an organisation called LDA Design who adhere to the current Scottish National Heritage guidelines and are produced using software that ensures the correct perspective. He went on to highlight that those who believe the photos are misleading can make their concerns clear to the Council and state why they think the photos are inaccurate and have a third party decide. SP stated that should LDA Design be found to have produced misleading material their professional body, the Landscape Institute, would take action against them.

GT stated that photos can be taken from two to three degree variations and can cause changes in the size of an image. He stated that he agreed that the photomontages are somewhat of a misrepresentation and has had concerns voiced to him from other people regarding this issue. He went on to state that it is in RES's interest to ensure that such depictions are accurate and stated that turbines are clearly very tall and can be seen from a long way away. He went on to highlight that a view is always dependent on the background and stated that RES has done their best but, no matter what, the turbines will still be seen. He went on to state that the environment around the proposed wind farm will change and what's represented will therefore change. A member of the public highlighted that this issue related back to his comment about ensuring RES planted trees and hedges in the area. GT stated that if a tree is planted at the bottom of a garden then the site may not be seen but a view depends on the horizon and elevation of the viewing platform. SP discussed vegetation shielding effects. SP stated that the photomontages are generated to give the public an impression of what the site may look like, however, when the Council decides on the planning application they will be directed to look at wirelines which show the turbines without shielding effects of hedges and trees and that this will be done to ensure localised shielding does not affect their judgement. A member of the public stated that he still believed the photomontages were misleading, though maybe not deliberately, and that RES has probably done it best. SP stated that if the turbines had been made larger in the photo then it would not be representative of the final outcome of the site. A member of the public asked which photos will be viewed by the planners and Councillors when deciding. SP stated that photos will be used as seen at the public consultation exhibition as well as the wireline diagrams.

A member of the public asked if it was normal for planners to go to similar development sites to investigate the environmental factors prevalent from such developments. SP stated that yes it is and that he would be surprised if they had not done so already. A member of the public stated that it is surprising from how many different locations wind turbines can be seen from and that many people will be able to see the turbines from unexpected places. SP stated that that was

true but that the member of the public was basing such a criticism on the assumption that viewing the turbines is a bad thing.

GK went on to discuss base load demand and transient demand for the energy sector. He stated that he has worked in the energy sector and that the output of the wind turbines would be minimal in comparison to modern power stations and that the wind farm would end up putting power lines all over the countryside. He went on to comment that the turbines would be erected for no reason. SP stated that although wind power is intermittent, it is designed so that when they are producing electricity then dirty production of energy is reduced and that wind farms are there to reduce the amount of fossil fuels being consumed and the amount of Co2 produced. SP confirmed that the Jack's Lane project would not result in any additional overhead power lines. GK went on to state that RES were going to demand a grotesque amount of money for a tuppenny-ha'penny site as there would be considerably less turbines being installed due to reasons, he stated, everyone was aware of. GT outlined that he is neither for nor against the development of the wind farm but stated that the argument GK was putting forward was for those who direct policy that allow RES to put up wind farms. GK stated that McAlpine would not be considering erecting the wind farm if there wasn't money to be made. GT went on to state that it was RES's objective to put up wind turbines. GK stated that it was RES's objective to make money.

5. Jack's Lane Project Update &

6. Planning Timetable Update

SP informed the Group that RES is working on the Environmental Impact Assessments for the wind farm layout shown at the public consultation stages. These will then go through an internal approval process within RES with a submission of an application likely to take place in July. SP went on to state that the met mast at the site had now been taken down.

GT articulated that word has been spreading to him that the site will turn into a wind farm supersite. He went on to state that he recognised that the current application was for only six turbines but asked what guarantee RES would make that it has not got other land in the area that it may build an extension to the six turbines. SP stated that RES is not planning to develop more than six turbines at this time. He went on to highlight that if RES, or another developer, wanted to extend the site it would require another environmental assessment to take place and another planning application. He went on to state that he believed 30 turbines might not be considered appropriate for the site owing to radar constraints and landscape capacity. GT stated that the site had been reduced from 30 to six turbines due to land not being signed up by RES and asked if that land was still available for future development. SP stated that he has always made it clear that no more than 20 turbines would have been pursued and that RES felt that a 12 turbine scheme would have been appropriate for the site due to landscape studies. He went on to state that the 12 turbine figure was reduced to the final number due to land issues that GT referred to. GT stated that it was inappropriate for RES to say they reduced the turbine numbers to six. SP stated that he would happily say that RES reduced the site to six turbines. GT went on to highlight that there may be the possibility of another six turbines being added to the first six. SP stated that the current application is only for six turbines and that is what the application will be submitted for in July.

AH highlighted that she had downloaded a parliamentary question from the House of Commons library stating that a landscape of up to 6 miles would be compromised by such modern structures (wind turbines). AH went on to question what effects the turbines would have on the local historic churches. SP stated that a company called Oxford Archaeology Associates has been working on this particular issue and their professional advice helped to reduce the number of turbines to six for the site. SP is still waiting for their final report. AH stated that a lot of applications had been turned down due to their proximity to historic features. SP stated that South and North Creake churches were unlikely to be affected however Barmer church may. AH asked if this would have an effect on the planning application. SP stated that it would need to be taken into consideration and was up to the Council to decide whether the benefits of the project outweigh the negatives. GT stated that it was up to the individual to bring issues such as visual impact to the attention of the planning officers. He went on to highlight that RES would be making their case and that the public could do the same.

AH asked if any cabling would travel over any other individual's land. SP stated that all the cabling would be laid underground and would be located in the verges owned by the Highways.

TA asked if the planning submission is likely to slip beyond July. SP stated that it is a possibility and that there have been a lot of slippage for this site, but that such slippage was quite typical.

7. Public Questions

A member of the public asked if the green lanes, or merely the site access, would be considered in an Environmental Impact Assessment. SP stated that both would be taken into consideration. GT stated that the assessment of access to the site will have to be very thorough. He went on to state the example of the Fourwinds junction that, he perceived, is a disaster and that may have work done on it for the wind farm access. A member of public stated that if Barwick road was used then it would be ruined and should not be a viable option for access. SP stated that RES was discussing the removal of a few hedgerows that are species poor and there is one section that is an important hedgerow he went on to highlight that RES would replace the hedgerows with indigenous species of hedge at the time of construction and the new hedge would be in place for the length of the project.

A member of the public asked how long the construction traffic would be required. SP stated that construction traffic would go on for 12 months. He went on to state that turbines are wide and that roads will be widened by about 3m, not 6m, in some places. He stated that RES will need to straighten some bends. SP went on to state that the verges would be widened but that the Council can ask for RES to have them put back. GT stated that he was under the assumption that the road would go back to its original condition straight after completion of the development. SP stated that the road would need to remain widened for the duration of the project as replacement parts may be required. SP was asked if it would become a two lane road. SP stated that they considered various options - highways had asked for the road to be widened to 5.5m but RES consider that the additional hedge removal would be undesirable and would only widen it to 5m with additional widening on bends. SP stated that RES had considered taking exiting traffic up to Stanhoe but had decided against it after consultation. GT asked if RES needed the landowner's permission to widen the road. SP stated that the land has been signed up for the expansion.

A member of the public stated that RES would be ruining the countryside by widening the lanes and that the Environmental Impact Assessment should fail before the proposed site has even been assessed. SP stated that roads are frequently widened and that passing bays would be implemented for the lane. A member of the public stated that country lanes should not have passing bays. SP stated that he was doing his best to minimise any adverse effects of access. A member of the public highlighted her concern that the strip of road up to Barwick Hall farm would be ruined. SP stated that people can write to the local planning officer and highlight their concerns and RES will be issuing a planning reference number in a newsletter about the site which can be referenced to the planning officer along with any concerns and comments. TA asked if there would be any form of traffic control through the 1km stretch of road discussed. SP stated that the largest part of the turbines would be escorted under convoy and that that stretch would be closed as the convoy travels through. TA asked if the convoys would be taking place at night or in the day. SP stated that the police preferred to transport abnormal loads during the daylight hours. SP went on to state that there would be three passing bays on the stretch of road with space for an HGV to pass.

GT asked SP if he was aware that there were concrete batching plants in the local area. SP stated that he was, and that they may be used for the construction of the site. A member of public asked how many ready mix lorry loads were needed for each turbine base. SP stated that each base could be done in one day with about 50 loads as a worst case scenario. The transport for each concrete base would take six days in total. A member of the public stated that the noise from the lorries would devalue the local housing and people would not be able to sell their houses. SP informed the member of the public that it was unfortunate that she was unable to attend the last meeting which discussed noise issues but stated that RES would adhere to the guidelines set out for noise emissions for the site. SP went on to state that there will be six days in total of busy lorry usage for the site and highlighted the frequent lorry loads of sugar beet that use the road network in the area. GT stated that there had been concern over the amount of lorries out of the quarry on the King's Lynn road when the quarry was proposed but there have been no complaints as of yet. He went on to state that there would be six days of disruption which may happen if the site is approved. He went on to highlight that everything that has been said about the disruption depends on whether the application is approved at the planning stage.

8. Future Meeting Dates

The Chair highlighted the previous meeting's focus on noise. GT thought the presentation by Dr Jeremy Bass was very good but a lot of the information went over his head. He requested that the presentation could be put on disk and forwarded to the Group. The Chair highlighted that the presentation was on the web site. SP informed the Group that the [noise presentation](#) could be found via www.jackslanewindfarm.co.uk. TA went on to state that the noise presentation is also available on the Stanhoe web site.

The Chair suggested that the next meeting could be used to discuss the effect of the turbines on birdlife. SP informed the Group that Dr. Steve Percival was a very well respected ornithologist that has done both pre and post construction studies on birdlife at wind farms and has been studying the Jack's Lane site. A member of the public asked if he was paid by RES. SP stated that he was. A member of the public asked how long he had studied the site. SP stated that Dr. Percival had done studies of the site since 2004. A member of the public asked if he

could be impartial. SP stated that it was clearly difficult to prove his impartiality as he is paid by RES. He went on to highlight that Dr. Percival has to adhere to strict codes of practice and if he is found to be lying he could be struck off in his capacity as a registered ornithologist. TA stated that although Dr. Percival is employed by RES he will be putting his credibility on the line if he stated something that wasn't accurate. A member of the public stated that Dr. Percival is not going to come to the next meeting and state that building the wind farm would be a bad idea. GT agreed but stated that he may come to the meeting and say that geese and other wild animals may be affected by the proposed wind farm.

The Chair highlighted that he hoped the next meeting would be held at North Creake as the current meeting was unable to be held there. [As a point of reference the next meeting will be taking place at Syderstone village hall – please see below for further details].

9. Any Other Business

AH outlined an issue she had raised at the last meeting. AH stated that she had been in contact with the UKIP policy team who stated that a 2.3Mw turbine is subsidised at £300,000 per year, resulting in a £1.8m subsidy each year for the Jack' Lane site. AH went on to state that the cost of constructing a turbine was between £1.5 - £2million and that each turbine would be producing electricity worth £200,000 per annum. AH stated that the country does not gain from these costs. SP stated that a 2Mw turbine can cost about £2m to construct and erect and that there are no subsidies for putting them up. He outlined that if the turbines do not produce electricity then RES would not get paid as Renewable Obligation Certificates (ROCs), which are then sold, are only issued for clean energy that is produced. SP went on to state that electricity consumers, not taxpayers, would be paying for the electricity and it is up to the consumers to decide how dirty energy production should be discouraged – SP went on to state that either the dirty energy producers can be penalised for producing dirty sources of energy or subsidies can go to those who produce clean energy. He went on to state that it is hard to get wind farms developed in the UK and that there are therefore larger subsidies in place to encourage uptake. GK stated that there are also two power stations being built each week in China. SP stated that yes there are, but that China has a very large population and that they are constructing very large wind farms. AH questioned if offshore were not more viable. SP asked why then did offshore wind turbines get greater subsidies, he stated that an offshore turbine gets 1.5 ROCs [as a point of reference and for the sake of accuracy offshore projects accredited between April 2010 and March 2014 will get 2 ROCs per Megawatt -hour generated] to an onshore's 1 ROC for each Megawatt-hour produced. AH stated that it was a lot of money to be pouring in to just six turbines. SP highlighted that fossil fuelled electricity generating companies make significantly more money.

The next meeting will be held on 16 June at 7pm at Amy Robsart Hall, Syderstone.